

# Introduction to the Proposed Consolidated Interim Storage Facility for Spent Nuclear Fuel in Lea County, New Mexico

**H**oltec International (hereafter referred to as Holtec) has submitted a license application for a Consolidated Interim Storage Facility (CISF) for approval by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) under the requirements specified in Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 72, Licensing Requirements for the Independent Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel, High-Level Radioactive Waste, and Reactor-Related Greater Than Class C Waste. The proposed site for the Holtec CISF is located in Lea County, New Mexico.

## Holtec's License Request

On March 30, 2017, Holtec submitted an application, including a Safety Analysis Report (SAR) and Environmental Report (ER), requesting that the NRC grant a license to Holtec for the construction and operation of a CISF for spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and reactor-related Greater than Class C (GTCC) low-level radioactive waste (LLRW) generated at commercial nuclear power reactors (referred to collectively as "SNF"). Holtec's application materials are available at:

<https://www.nrc.gov/waste/spent-fuel-storage/cis/holtec-international.html>

- The proposed CISF would be located on approximately 420.9 ha [1,040 ac] of land in southeastern New Mexico. The land for the Holtec CISF is owned by the Eddy-Lea Alliance, but would be purchased Holtec prior to construction; however, access to the site and a possible rail spur would require a BLM easement.
- In its license application, Holtec requests authorization in the initial phase of the project to store 5,000 metric tons of uranium (MTUs) in approximately 500 canisters for a license period of 40 years. However, because the capacity of individual canisters can vary, the 500 canisters proposed in the Holtec license application have the potential to hold up to 8,680 MTUs. The NRC's safety and environmental analyses will take into account the maximum potential capacity of the facility, and the capacity will be clarified through NRC's Request for Additional Information (RAI) process. Any new information about the capacity of the facility may result in updates to the licensee's application documents.
- In addition to the first phase, Holtec has stated its intent to request license amendments in the future to expand the facility to eventually store up to 10,000 canisters of SNF.

## NRC's Role and Licensing Action Review

The NRC licenses and regulates the nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to protect public health and safety, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment. The NRC review of Holtec's application consists of a safety review and an environmental review to support a final licensing decision:

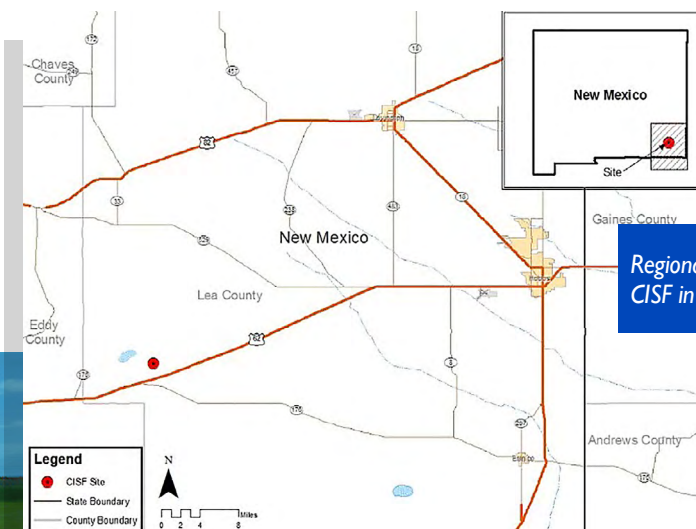
- Safety Review – A Safety Evaluation Report (SER) documents the NRC's evaluation of potential radiological consequences of Holtec's proposed action to determine if that action (constructing and operating the CISF) can be accomplished safely and securely.
- Environmental Review – The NRC's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents the NRC's thorough independent evaluation of the significance of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action and reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. During this process the public has the opportunity to comment on the scope of the review and on the draft report.

## What the EIS Will Contain

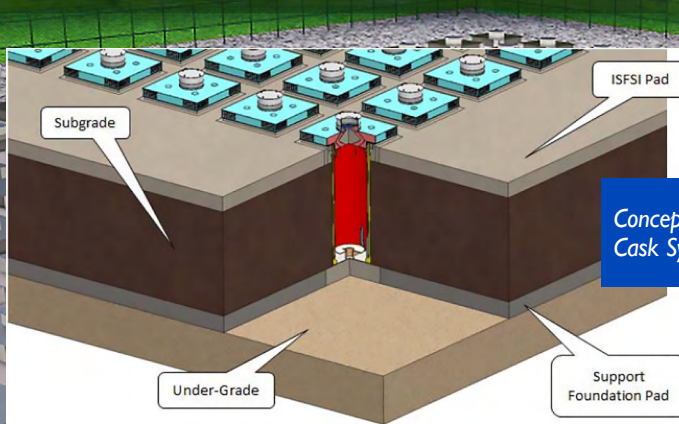
In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as well as NRC's NEPA implementing guidance in NUREG-1748, Environmental Review Guidance for Licensing Actions Associated with NMSS Programs, the EIS would contain:

- Descriptions of the Proposed Action, No-Action alternative, and Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action, as defined during the EIS scoping process
- Descriptions of the affected environment
- Evaluation of the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action, No-Action Alternative, and any other reasonable alternatives (these may be identified through the scoping process)
- Evaluation of the cumulative impacts of Holtec's proposed action and other reasonable foreseeably future actions.
- A preliminary recommendation of the preferred alternative.

In developing the EIS, the NRC will consider input from other Federal, state and local agencies, tribal input from National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 activities, information from the NRC staff site visit and audit, the Holtec CISF application, and public comments. The draft EIS will be issued for public comment prior to being finalized.



Regional Location of Holtec's Proposed CISF in Lea County, New Mexico



Conceptual Drawing of Deployed Storage Cask Systems at the Proposed CISF