

Environmental Impact Statement and Section 106 Consultation for Proposed Changes to Arecibo Observatory Operations

Arecibo, Puerto Rico

Alternatives evaluated in the draft EIS include the following:

- Continued NSF investment for science-focused operations (No-Action Alternative)
- Collaboration with interested parties for continued science-focused operations (Preferred Alternative)
- Collaboration with interested parties for transition to education-focused operations
- Mothballing of facilities (suspension of operations in a manner such that operations could resume efficiently at some future date)
 - Partial deconstruction and site restoration
 - Full deconstruction and site restoration

Potential Resources considered:

An impact is a change or consequence that results from a proposed activity; it can be positive, negative or both. It may be mitigated to lessen or remove the impact. At present, NSF has identified the following resource areas for analysis of potential impacts:

solid waste generation

geological resources

cultural resources

biological health resources and safety

traffic

groundwater resources

socioeconomics

Section 106 Process for the Arecibo Observatory:

In coordination with the draft EIS, NSF is consulting with the State Historic Preservation Officer and other consulting parties on potential effects to historic properties located within the Area of Potential Effects (APE).

- NSF proposes that the APE encompass the full Arecibo Observatory property.
- Arecibo Observatory (as the "National Astronomy and Ionosphere Center") is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district that is significant in the areas of science, engineering, and education.
- Consultation is focused on identifying potential effects and any measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse effects; in the case of adverse effects, a Memorandum of Agreement may be used to formalize such measures.