



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

Sunspot, New Mexico

Alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS will be refined through public input. Preliminary proposed alternatives include the following:

- Continued NSF investment for science-focused operations (No-Action Alternative)
- Transition to full operations with interested parties for solar astronomy research
- Transition to partial operations with interested parties, and decommissioning or mothballing of facilities not proposed to be used
- Mothballing of facilities limited to basic maintenance
- Deconstruction and site restoration

Potential Resources to be 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 preliminarily identified the following resource areas for analysis of potential impacts:

air quality

geological resources

biological resources

solid waste generation

health and safety

socioeconomics

traffic

cultural resources

groundwater resources

Section 106 Process for the Sacramento Peak Observatory:

In coordination with the EIS, NSF will consult 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 Sacramento Peak Observatory property.
- Consultation would be focused on identifying potential effects, if any. If there are adverse effects on National Register of Historic Places-eligible or listed historic properties, consultation with Consulting Parties would include measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate those effects; often, a Memorandum of Agreement is used to formalize such measures.

