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NNSA CHANGES COURSE ON CONSTRUCTION MGMT. CONTRACT

The NNSA is officially abandoning its plan to hire a contractor to perform complex-wide design and construction management activities in favor of a significantly scaled back opportunity for construction management services that could be used across the weapons complex. The agency officially announced that it was killing the construction management contract in an announcement on the procurement website yesterday, jettisoning the potentially lucrative portion of opportunity that had initially energized the Department of Energy contracting community but had stalled over the last 12 months as it became clear several of the agency's biggest projects would not be part of the contract. The agency had said the construction management opportunity was designed to help it strengthen its project management activities while aiding efforts to get off the Government Accountability Office's High-Risk List.

The Enterprise Construction Management Services contract that will replace it was expected to be a portion of the original solicitation, albeit a minor part. According to the notice posted on the construction management procurement website, the contract will provide the NNSA with expertise, processes and systems in all aspects of construction project planning, management and integration including the coordination of conceptual design development, and the development and analysis of project alternatives for construction projects across the Nuclear Security Enterprise (NSE), filling gaps in the agency's project management portfolio. In an interview with Nuclear Weapons & Materials Monitor yesterday, Bob Raines, the NNSA's new Associate Administrator for Acquisition and Project Management, suggested that the new approach would help the NNSA deal with one of its glaring weaknesses, front-end project planning, while providing more flexibility for contracting design and construction activities. "We will have acquisition support at the table at the inception of any project we do now and that's something we haven't had before," Raines said. "And we will keep our contracts and our projects in contemporaneous alignment as we go through the lifecycle of a project."

NNSA officials said the contract will be worth up to \$125 million and would run for five years (a two-year base with three one-year options), though the actual value of the contract is likely to be in the \$47 million range. In its announcement, the agency said a Request for Quotations will be released in the "near future"—believed to be next week—and the opportunity will be on the General Services Administration Federal Supply Schedule 871 (professional engineering services). The RFQ is expected to be released on www.fedconnect.com.

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