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U.S. ITER Project Office, a Partnership of Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Is Relocating to ORNL

The U.S. project office for ITER, a major international fusion experiment, is relocating from Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL) to Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) to optimize the roles of the two Department of Energy (DOE) national laboratories, PPPL and ORNL announced today.

Ned Sauthoff of PPPL remains the U.S. ITER Project Manager, and PPPL will continue to have a major role in the ITER project.

The U.S. ITER Project Office is responsible for project management of U.S. activities to support construction of the international research facility.

In recent months, the multi-national ITER parties have made significant progress toward a final agreement on the project, including selection of the ITER site, appointment of a Director General Nominee, the resolution of most issues, and the addition of a seventh ITER partner.

ITER is an international fusion experiment which holds the promise of leading to an abundant, environmentally benign, and economical energy source. A fusion power plant would produce no greenhouse gas emissions, use abundant and widely distributed sources of fuel, shut down easily, require no fissionable materials, operate in a continuous mode to meet demand, and produce manageable radioactive waste.

The centralized U.S. ITER Project Office, a partnership between PPPL and ORNL since July 2004, is moving to ORNL so that the U.S. ITER program can take better advantage of the project management experience developed by ORNL during the construction there of the Spallation Neutron Source (SNS). The \$1.4 billion SNS, a neutron scattering facility that will make the U.S. the leader in the next generation of materials research, is the largest civilian science project in the country and is on schedule and on budget to be completed in June 2006.

In June 2005, the ministers representing the six ITER parties (China, the European Union, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States) announced that the international fusion experiment would be located at the European Union site in Cadarache, France. In November, the ITER parties agreed to appoint the Japanese Ambassador to Croatia, Kaname Ikeda, as Director General Nominee of the ITER Organization. In December, India joined the original six ITER parties as a full partner in the ITER Project. As a result, countries representing more than half of the world's population are participating in ITER.

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