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### High Explosive Test on hold at the Nevada Test Site

**LAS VEGAS, Nevada** -- A Pentagon-led experiment involving the detonation of 700 tons of high explosives at the Nevada Test Site is on hold until further notice. The test is part of an effort to design a weapon that can penetrate solid rock formations in which a country might store nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction.

The test, named "Divine Strake," will involve nearly 40 times the amount of commercial ammonium nitrate and fuel oil explosive set off in the largest open-air, non-nuclear blast at the site to date. "It is a chemical high explosive. 700 tons of ANFO (ammonium nitrate fuel oil) placed in a pit. The pit sits about 70 feet over a tunnel" says Darwin Morgan of the Nevada Test Site. The test would appear to be associated with the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator RNEP, or possibly the B61-11 Earth-Penetrating Weapon.

While there has been smaller tests conducted at the Nevada Test Site which were nuclear, this would be far from the largest cratering or surface test to be conducted at the NTS. The Sedan test conducted in 1962 (under the Plowshare program) was 104 Kilotons. This would make Sedan almost 150 times larger. See photo of Sedan crater at right.

