



Environmental Bulletin

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from the Savannah River Site

DOE Announces Availability Of Final EIS on SRS High-Level Waste Tank Closures

On May 31st the Department of Energy (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS) announced the availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed closing of additional high-level waste (HLW) tanks at SRS.

The EIS evaluated three alternatives regarding closure of the HLW tanks:

- (1) Stabilize Tanks;
- (2) Clean and Remove Tanks; and
- (3) No Action.

Under the Stabilize Tanks alternative, DOE considered three options for Tank Stabilization: Fill with Grout (preferred alternative); Fill with Sand; or Fill with Saltstone.

Under each alternative (except No Action), DOE would close 49 high-level waste tanks and associated waste handling equipment, including evaporators, pumps, diversion boxes, and transfer lines.

In November 2000, DOE issued a Draft EIS and held two public meetings during the 60-day review and comment period. The Final EIS contains a summary of the comments received during the comment period.

The Savannah River Site High-Level Waste Tank Closure EIS (DOE/EIS-0303) is available in these information repositories:

- DOE Public Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina-Aiken campus in Aiken, SC

- DOE-Headquarters Public Reading Room at the Forrestal Building (Room 1E-190), 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC

A Record of Decision on the Tank Closure EIS will be issued no sooner than 30 days after the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS and will document DOE's selection of a tank closure alternative.

Need More Information?

For further information on the Final EIS, contact Andrew R. Grainger, NEPA Compliance Officer at nepa@srs.gov or leave a message on 800-881-7292. Copies of the Final EIS are available upon request.

SRS Citizens Advisory Board Makes Recommendations to DOE

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) is a non-partisan group of individuals who are independent of federal, state and local government organizations as they relate to the mission of the CAB. The Board consists of 25 volunteers from a variety of backgrounds that represent academia, business, labor groups, public officials, environmental organizations, minority groups and the general public. The Board provides informed and timely recommendations to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) concerning decisions that affect SRS.

The Board has considered a variety of issues this year and year-to-date has issued 8 recommendations. These recommendations include the following:

Recommendation 146-PUREX Recovery Alternatives

The Board recommended that a cost benefit analysis to select the optimum treatment/disposal route for canyon PUREX solvent be prepared and presented to the SRS CAB by April 23, 2002.

Recommendation 147-Parallel Salt Disposition Strategy

A recommendation that confirmed the SRS CAB position that the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) closure schedule must be met, including start up of a full scale salt processing facility by 2010 and the closures of HLW tanks as scheduled was adopted. It asked for funding needs, permit and regulatory requirements and a synopsis of the technical plan to resolve questions about the low curie saltcake strategy.

Recommendation 148 - Low Activity TRU Facility

The Board recommended that SRS proceed with the planned modifications for the Low Activity TRU Facility and provide a status update on regulatory permits and progress. It also asked that DOE identify any potential cost savings, technology enhancements, or management modifications, which could potentially speedup the disposition of SRS TRU wastes.

Recommendation 149 - Stakeholder Input to SRS Budget Process

The Board recommended that no later than April 19, 2002, SRS develop and submit to the CAB a schedule for annual stakeholder involvement in the budget process. The schedule should include specific dates for submission of information to the CAB and establish specific dates for CAB inputs throughout all phases of the budget process.

Recommendation 150 - Cleanup Reform Appropriation

The Board supports SRS initiatives for environmental restoration and asked DOE-Headquarters to fund proposal requests. They also requested a plan of action from SRS and the opportunity to be involved in the review of integrated priority lists and scope revisions involved in ER cleanup effort for out-year budgets.

Recommendation 151 - General Separations Consolidation Unit

The SRS CAB recommended that SRS utilize the Cleanup Reform Appropriation to request additional funds to accelerate ultimate closure of the General Separations Area Consolidation

See CAB Recommendations page 3

CAB Recommendations continued from Page 2

Recommendation 151 - General Separations Consolidation Unit cont.

Unit and that SRS provide the CAB a briefing on the proposed plan including milestones and cost estimates by June 18, 2002. It also asks for a list of any and all additional areas where the consolidation unit cleanup approach can be utilized in an accelerated manner.

Recommendation 152 - PUREX Waste Alternative Treatment Evaluation

The Board asked DOE to verify in writing its plan to blend PUREX aqueous waste into the Saltstone feed as soon as practical after the Saltstone Processing Facility is restarted and that the process be targeted for completion by the end of FY03. The motion also asked for an updated schedule of planned activities to treat PUREX organic waste by direct stabilization by August 27, 2002.

Recommendation 153 - TRU Waste Priority and Offsite Shipments

The SRS CAB requested that DOE-HQ allocate the necessary number of TRUPACT II containers for SRS to meet its FY02 commitment of a minimum of 12 shipments. It also requests that DOE-HQ accelerate shipments of TRU waste from SRS by expanding capabilities such as HANDSS-55 and authorizations to package higher loading of Pu-238 and Pu-239 to maximize SRS risk reduction.

The next quarterly CAB meeting is scheduled for July 22, 23 at the Adams Mark Columbia in Columbia, SC. The general public is invited to attend. For additional meeting information or information on the CAB contact:

Mr. Jim Moore
800-249-8155
or e-mail: jim02.moore@srs.gov

NEPA Announcement

The Savannah River Site (SRS) is committed to providing copies of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents including environmental impact statements (EISs) and environmental assessments (EAs) to all interested stakeholders. By being added to our mailing list, you will be notified of their availability and receive any SRS NEPA document that is of interest to you.

If you wish to be added to the mailing list for NEPA documents, please contact:

Mr. Andrew R. Grainger,
NEPA Compliance Officer
800-881-7292
or e-mail: nepa@srs.gov.

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Did you know that the SRS Environmental Bulletin is available to you electronically in a PDF format? In an effort to allow stakeholders to receive more timely information about environmental activities, we are offering this alternative to paper copies. While we are constantly looking for ways to improve our services, we will happily continue to mail copies to those individuals who do not wish to take advantage of this offer.

To receive your copy of the SRS Environmental Bulletin electronically, please provide your name, current address, phone number and your e-mail address by leaving a message on 800-881-7292 or send us an email at nepa@srs.gov.

If you have any questions, call the Public Involvement Office at 800-249-8155.

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