



Environmental Bulletin

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from the Savannah River Site

M Area Waste Approved for Disposal

Plans are underway to dismantle and dispose of buildings 341-M, 341-1M, and 341-8M. These buildings housed the Liquid Effluent Treatment Facility comprised of the Dilute Effluent Treatment Facility (341-M) and the Vendor Treatment Facilities (341-1M and 341-8M). The debris from the dismantlement consists of equipment such as tanks, pumps, and associated piping, the melter and the melter off-gas treatment system.

Authorization to dispose of this debris as non-hazardous is included in the July 21, 2000 "Contained-in" Determination approval from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Under this approval, EPA determined that the debris was no longer a hazardous waste concern after decontamination performed as described in the Savannah River Site (SRS) request to EPA.

This debris was at one time classified as F006 waste under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Under RCRA, wastes classified under the F-series are typically produced by a wide variety of industrial operations. The designation of F006 hazardous waste refers to waste contaminated with wastewater treatment sludges from electroplating operations. Through successful decontamination procedures, it has been determined that the debris no longer "contains" the hazardous constituents it was contaminated with during facility operations. As a result, it may be safely disposed of in the Low Level Waste (LLW) Facility at Savannah River Site (SRS) or if non-radiologically contaminated in the Three Rivers Landfill.

As part of the requirements of the "Contained-in" Determination approval, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), EPA, the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) and the general

public are to be notified prior to final disposition. The debris is scheduled to be shipped for disposal to the LLW Facility or the Three Rivers Landfill beginning in January 2004.

For additional information including a complete listing of the debris, contact:

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Hazardous Waste Permit Modification Requested

The Department of Energy (DOE) – Savannah River Operations Office has submitted a Class 1 permit modification to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) for Volume VIII, Mixed Waste Storage Buildings (MWSB) of the Savannah River Site (SRS) 2000 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Part B Permit Renewal Application. This modification contains updated contingency plan information, general administrative updates and information in response to Special Conditions for the MWSB requested by SCDHEC in the 2003 Hazardous Waste Permit.

Additional information, including a copy of the permit application will be available for review and copying at the DOE Public Reading Room located at the University of South

continued on page 2

SRS CAB Makes Recommendations

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) met on November 17 and 18, 2003 in Charleston, SC. During the meeting they elected Jean Sulc as the 2004-2005 Chair with Mel Galin as the Vice Chair. They also passed six recommendations. All recommendations were formally transmitted to DOE and appropriate agencies. The following is a brief summary of these CAB Recommendations:

Recommendation 175 - Monitored Natural Attenuation (MNA) and Enhanced Passive Remediation (EPR) The Board recommended that DOE inform stakeholders of current successes of MNA/EPR to build trust and determine how aggressive technologies affect subsequent use of MNA/EPR in cleanup of reduced contaminant concentrations in the same vadose zone or groundwater plume. The Board encouraged the three agencies to continue to work together to set clear boundaries for expanding the use of MNA/EPR and to provide periodic updates.

Recommendation 176 - Plutonium Storage in 235-F The CAB recommends that DOE verify funding availability for the 3013 Container Surveillance Project in Building 235-F and provide documentation to demonstrate its availability. It also recommends DOE ensure the capability for interim disposition and repackaging is available until the capability is established in 235-F and that DOE maintain an interim surveillance capability in compliance with the 3013 standard.

Recommendation 177 - DOE Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Disposition at SRS The SRS CAB recommends that DOE implement the Direct Disposal technology for SRS SNF and provide cost details for implementation by March 15, 2004.

Recommendation 178 - SRS Visitor Center and Museum The SRS CAB endorses the concept of an SRS Visitor Center and Museum and recommends that DOE identify a contact person and provide timely support to the Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) in the development of a strategic plan and scope of work for a center or museum at SRS or another appropriate site. The Board also requests that DOE grant CNTA "consulting party" status as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act.

Recommendation 179 - Inspector General Waste Solidification Building (WSB) Report With construction scheduled to begin in December 2004, there is a need for a coordinated effort between Environmental Management (EM) and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to resolve the issue of WSB wastes as to which organization is responsible for the disposition of this waste. The SRS CAB recommended that the DOE Secretary resolve this issue and if DOE-SR is assigned the disposition of WSB-treated waste, then DOE-SR formally include the task in the site's long-range plan and develop a cost and schedule baseline for its disposal. They also recommended that DOE Headquarters (HQ) ensure communications between DOE-EM and DOE-NNSA and their stakeholders where overlapping responsibilities occur.

Recommendation 180 - Burning Paper Pellet Update The SRS CAB recommended that DOE-SR ensure that DOE-HQ is aware of the paper pellet project and the successful cooperation between SRS and SCDHEC and that the site explore more opportunities for getting the word out to the general public and technical community regarding the project.

continued from page 1

Hazardous Waste Permit

Carolina-Aiken library, or by contacting the personnel listed below:

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South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
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or

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Current NEPA Actions Affecting SRS

• **Disposition of Scrap Metals Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) (DOE/EIS-0327)** This PEIS will evaluate alternatives for disposition of scrap metals from DOE sites that may have been in radiological areas. The disposition options to be analyzed include continuation of the suspension on unrestricted release of metals for recycling, unrestricted release of scrap metals for recycling, and disposal. The notice of intent (NOI) for this PEIS was issued on July 12, 2001. A public scoping meeting was held on July 31, 2001, in North Augusta, SC. The draft PEIS may be issued in December 2003. The final PEIS is scheduled for April 2004 and the record of decision (ROD) in May 2004.

• **Supplemental PEIS on Stockpile Stewardship and Management for a Modern Pit Facility (DOE/EIS-0236-S2)** This PEIS will evaluate alternative sites (Los Alamos National Laboratory, Nevada Test Site, Pantex Plant, Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, and Savannah River Site) for a Modern Pit Facility, to provide the capability to manufacture plutonium pits for the United States nuclear weapons stockpile. This PEIS will be followed by a site-specific EIS to address the impacts of construction and operation of the Modern Pit Facility at the selected site. The NOI for this PEIS was issued on September 23, 2002. A local public scoping meeting was held on October 29, 2002, in North Augusta, SC. Information regarding the draft PEIS can be found at 68 FR 33487, June 4, 2003. The draft PEIS may be viewed electronically at www.mpfais.com. The final PEIS is projected for March 2004, and the ROD is scheduled for April 2004.

• **West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) Draft Waste Management EIS (DOE/EIS-0337D)** DOE's proposed action (and preferred alternative) is to ship radioactive wastes that are either currently in storage on the WVDP site, or that will be generated from WVDP operations over the next ten years, to offsite disposal locations, and to continue managing its onsite waste storage tanks. The potential environmental consequences of the proposed action are evaluated in the draft EIS, including impacts to workers and the public from waste transportation and waste management. The draft EIS also analyzes a No Action Alternative, under which most wastes would continue to be stored over the next ten years, and an alternative under which certain wastes would be shipped to interim offsite storage locations including SRS prior to disposal, along with the addition of retrievable grout to the waste storage tanks for interim stabilization. Indefinite waste storage onsite was considered but not analyzed. The draft PEIS can be viewed at <http://tis.eh.doe.gov/nepa/docs/deis/eis0337D/TOCindex.html>. The final PEIS is scheduled to be available during December 2003 and the ROD during January 2004.

• **Construction and Operation of a Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility at SRS (NUREG-1767)** DOE has contracted with Duke Cogema Stone & Webster to design, construct, and operate a proposed Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility

that would convert depleted uranium and weapons-grade plutonium into MOX fuel. The proposed MOX facility would be located on the DOE's Savannah River Site in South Carolina. Use of the proposed facility to produce MOX fuel would be part of the DOE's surplus plutonium disposition program. The purpose of the DOE program is to ensure the plutonium produced for nuclear weapons and declared excess to national security is converted to proliferation-resistant forms. The draft EIS can be viewed electronically at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1767>. The comment period for the draft EIS is closed. Due to project scope changes, the final EIS, the final Safety Evaluation Report, and the record of decision schedules are now uncertain.

• **Natural Resources Management Activities at SRS (DOE/EA-0826)** DOE prepared an environmental assessment (EA) in 1993 to analyze the potential environmental impacts of continued management of SRS natural resources. Based on the analyses in the EA, DOE determined the proposed action was not a major Federal action significantly affecting the human environment within the meaning of NEPA, and issued a finding of no significant impact (FONSI). In 2000, DOE issued a revised FONSI that determined implementation of a revised red-cockaded woodpecker Management Plan would have impacts no greater than those described in the 1993 EA. DOE now proposes a second revised FONSI which will address minor differences between the 1991 Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) and the next issue of this plan. The NEPA review is on hold until the next version of the NRMP is finalized.

• **Revised Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Expansion and Operation of SRS Borrow Pit (DOE/EA-0826)** In 1997 DOE prepared an EA (DOE/EA-1194) and issued a FONSI for expansion and operation of the Central Shops borrow pit. Now, in order to reduce the cost of disposal of inert construction and demolition debris (which has been going to the Three Rivers landfill), Westinghouse Savannah River Company proposes to use Phase 1 of the 632-G borrow pit (39.8 acres) for South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control permitted disposal of such inert debris. The pit would be closed in accordance with the landfill permit requirements. Because using the borrow pit as a landfill was not described in the EA, DOE has revised the FONSI to reflect the determination that no significant environmental impacts are expected as a result of this change in scope and the new proposal does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act. Therefore, an EIS is not required and DOE has issued a revised FONSI. If you would like a copy of the revised FONSI, or the original EA and FONSI, please contact: Andrew R. Grainger, NEPA Compliance Officer, U. S. Department of Energy, Savannah River Operations Office, Building 742-A, Room 185, Aiken, SC 29808, e-mail: nepa@srs.gov, fax/telephone: 1-800-881-7292.

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The SRS Environmental Bulletin

For more information on this or other
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