



# Environmental Bulletin

Volume 16, Number 3  
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*from the Savannah River Site*

## **Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) Soon to be Available for NPDES Wastewater Permit Compliance Alternatives at SRS**

The Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared a draft EA to analyze potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Wastewater Permit Compliance Alternatives at Savannah River Site (SRS) (DOE/EA-1513). The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control has recently renewed SRS's NPDES Permit. This permit authorizes the continued discharge of wastewater effluents from SRS operations through 25 outfalls into State surface waters for the next five years. Compliance schedules have been negotiated with the State for certain outfalls to assist in meeting the new more restrictive permit limitations.

A range of alternative actions to facilitate permit compliance at these outfalls has been identified and will be reviewed in this EA. These alternative actions include (a) elimination of source waste discharges (e.g., facility deactivation, recycling of waste discharges), (b) treatment of waste discharges by constructed wetlands, ion exchange, or peat beds, (c) rerouting of waste discharges to the Central Sanitary Wastewater Treatment Facility or Effluent Treatment Facility for treatment and subsequent discharge, (d) relocation of outfalls to take advantage of natural attenuation processes, (e) reclassification of outfalls from industrial wastewater to storm water, and (f) rerouting of waste discharges to Upper Three Runs or Fourmile Branch to take advantage of increased stream assimilative processes. A floodplain/wetland assessment will also be included in this National Environmental Policy Act review.

The public comment period for this draft EA is scheduled for mid February, 2005. When this document is released for public comment, you will receive a notice in an Environmental Bulletin. Comments regarding and requests for copies of the draft EA should be sent to:

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U. S. Department of Energy, Savannah River Operations Office  
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e-mail: [nepa@srs.gov](mailto:nepa@srs.gov)  
Fax/telephone 1-800-881-7292

## Public May View SRS NEPA Planning Summary

The Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Site (SRS) has prepared the 2005 version of the annual *SRS National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Planning Summary* in accordance with DOE Order 451.1B. This document, which is available to the public, describes the status of ongoing NEPA compliance activities, status of environmental assessments (EAs), engineering evaluation/cost analyses (EE/CAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs) and the planned cost and schedule of each NEPA review.

DOE-SRS is currently preparing one EA and anticipates preparation of one or more new EAs over the next 12 months. DOE-SRS is not currently supporting the preparation of any Programmatic Environmental Assessments (PEAs) by other DOE offices and does not anticipate supporting the preparation of any PEAs over the next 12 months. DOE-SRS anticipates initiating three EE/CAs in the next 12 months. DOE-SRS is currently preparing no EISs and does not anticipate initiating any new EISs over the next 24 months. DOE-SRS is currently preparing one Supplement Analysis (SA) and does not anticipate any new SAs over the next 24 months. DOE-SRS is currently supporting the preparation of one DOE programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS), one DOE supplemental PEIS, and one EIS by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and does not anticipate supporting the preparation of any additional PEISs or EISs over the next 24 months.

The cost information included in the report is the most current available generally through December 2004 (projected costs are estimates). To request a copy, call 1-800-881-7292 or e-mail [nepa@srs.gov](mailto:nepa@srs.gov). Interested parties may view the NEPA planning summary electronically at <http://www.srs.gov/general/pubs/pubs.htm>.

## Hazardous Waste Permit Modification Requested

The Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Operations Office has requested from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) modifications to Savannah River Site's (SRS) 2000 Resource Conservation and Recover Act (RCRA) Part B Permit Renewal Application for Volume I. This volume of the application contains general information about each of the permitted facilities at SRS and information that is common to many of the facilities.

The revision (Rev 6 of Volume I) adds proposed new TRU Pad 26, deletes TRU Pads 2 and 7-13, and proposes alternate methods for the analysis of many radionuclides.

This notice begins a 60 day comment period. More information, including the actual permit applications, is available for review and copying at the DOE Public Reading Room located in the University of South Carolina-Aiken Library, or by contacting personnel identified in this notice. The Permittee's compliance history during the life of the permit being modified is available from SCDHEC.

A public meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 23, 3:30 p.m. at the Aiken County Public Library. Representatives from SRS will be available to answer questions on the modifications. Written Comments may be sent to SCDHEC. All comments will be considered in the final decision. For additional information, contact Jim Moore, Westinghouse Savannah River Company, Savannah River Site, 742-A, Aiken, SC 29808. Please send your comments to J. T. Litton, Director, Division of Waste Management, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201-1708.

## 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 DOE scrap metals 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, South Carolina. The schedule is uncertain.

- ***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](http://www.mpfais.com). The final supplemental PEIS has been delayed due to Congressional concerns about timing and scope of project.

- ***West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) Waste Management EIS (DOE/EIS-0337)***

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 final EIS, including impacts to workers and the public from waste transportation and waste management. The final EIS also analyzes an alternative under which certain wastes would be shipped to interim offsite storage locations including SRS prior to disposal. The preferred alternative does not involve SRS. The final PEIS was issued in January 2004 and may be viewed electronically at <http://tis.eh.doe.gov/nepa/eis/eis0337/index.html>. The publication date for the Record of Decision is uncertain.

- ***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 fuel facility would be located on the DOE's SRS 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 final EIS is available on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission web site ([www.nrc.gov](http://www.nrc.gov)) and the final Safety Evaluation Report is scheduled to be available for public review in February 2005.

- ***SRS Natural Resources Management Plan***

DOE is preparing a revised Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) for SRS. DOE prepared an environmental assessment (DOE/EA-0826) 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. The draft NRMP was made available for public review in January 2005 and the final is scheduled to be issued in March 2005. DOE will review the draft NRMP and prepare the appropriate NEPA review.

- ***National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Wastewater Permit Compliance Alternatives at SRS (DOE/EA-1513)***

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control has recently renewed SRS's NPDES Permit. This permit authorizes the continued discharge of wastewater effluents from SRS operations through 25 outfalls into State surface waters for the next five years. Compliance schedules have been negotiated with the State for certain outfalls to assist in meeting the new more restrictive permit limitations. A range of alternative actions to facilitate permit compliance at these outfalls has been identified and will be reviewed in this EA. A floodplain/wetland assessment and biological evaluation will also be part of the NEPA review. (see related article on page 1)

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## The SRS Environmental Bulletin

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at SRS, please contact:

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