



# Environmental Bulletin

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*from the Savannah River Site*

## **Action Memorandum and Responsiveness Summary Issued for the C-Area Reactor Area Cask Car Railroad Tracks as Abandoned at the Savannah River Site**

U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) has selected the preferred alternative for the non-time critical removal action for the Savannah River Site's (SRS) C-Area Reactor Area Cask Car Railroad Tracks as Abandoned subunit that is part of the C-Area Operable Unit (CAOU). A thirty (30) day public comment period for the Removal Site Evaluation Report/Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis for the C-Area Reactor Area Cask Car Railroad Tracks as Abandoned was held from January 14, 2011 to February 13, 2011.

The CAOU is one of the area OUs identified at SRS. The C-Area is located in the central portion of SRS. The C-Area Reactor began operating in 1955 and was shut down in 1986. During the operation of the Reactor, spent fuel from the reactor was transferred into metal casks and loaded onto railroad cars for transportation to other areas. Surface contamination from the transfer casks resulted in the spread of the radioactive contaminants onto the rail bed surface. This localized area of contamination along the rail bed is referred to as the C-Area Reactor Area Cask Car Railroad Tracks as Abandoned subunit.

DOE has selected Alternative 2, Excavation and Removal as the preferred removal action alternative. Contaminated soil and gravel that exceed concentrations greater than 10 pCi/g of Cesium-137 will be removed to a depth of approximately 2 feet. This alternative provides overall protection to human health and the environment. Removal and disposal of the contaminated soil and gravel protects the future industrial worker and prevents the spread of contamination by rain or wind. This alternative will not preclude any additional remediation of the CAOU and is consistent with the current and future land use. The rail bed gravel, cross-ties, and track will be replaced in kind so that the historical appearance of this resource is retained.

Radioactive contaminated waste will be characterized in accordance with DOE requirements for disposal and will be sent to the SRS E-Area Low Level Waste Facility (LLWF), a CERCLA Off-Site Rule approved facility. It is anticipated that the railroad tracks will be clean or can be decontaminated; otherwise, the tracks will also be disposed of at the E-Area LLWF.

The selection of the preferred alternative is documented in the Action Memorandum. DOE has worked with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the removal action is consistent with all applicable environmental requirements.

A copy of the Action Memorandum and Responsiveness Summary is available in the Administrative Record File. The Administrative Record File is available in the information repositories listed below:

- DOE Public Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina Aiken campus in Aiken, SC; and
- Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC.

Hard copies of the Action Memorandum and Responsiveness Summary are available at the following locations:

- Reese Library Government Information Section at Augusta State University in Augusta, GA; and
- Asa H. Gordon Library at Savannah State University in Savannah, GA

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