



Environmental Bulletin

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from the Savannah River Site

Documents available for public review

Interim Record of Decision Remedial Alternative Selection for the C-Reactor Groundwater Operable Unit

The United States Department of Energy (DOE), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) have selected an interim remedial action for Savannah River Site's (SRS) C-Reactor Groundwater (CRGW) Operable Unit (OU). A 30-day public comment period for the Interim Action/Proposed Plan was held from March 18 to April 16, 2004. The interim remedial decision is documented in the Interim Record of Decision document. This document includes a responsiveness summary that addresses any public comments submitted to SRS on the action. The DOE has worked with SCDHEC and EPA to ensure the interim remedial action is consistent with all applicable environmental requirements.

DOE, the EPA, and SCDHEC determined that an interim remedial action is necessary for this unit. The interim remedial action was selected to minimize the impact to groundwater by removing the contamination from the source area.

The preferred interim alternative for the CRGW source unit is Electric Resistance Heating (ERH) with Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE). ERH uses the electrical resistance of soil to heat the soil in-situ by passing an electrical current through the soil. The heat vaporizes volatile organic contaminants in the soil. These vapors are withdrawn by the SVE system and treated and discharged per an air quality control permit.

The CRGW is located at the SRS in Barnwell County, South Carolina. The trichloroethylene (TCE) vadose zone source unit, which is the subject of the interim remedial action being proposed in this document, consists only of

TCE contaminated soil above the groundwater portion of the CRGW OU. A remedy decision dealing with contamination within the groundwater portion of this OU is not being made at this time, but will be proposed for public comment in the future.

Copies of the Interim Record of Decision are available in the Administrative Record. The Administrative Record 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.

Copies of the Interim Record of Decision are also available at the following:

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

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Correction - *SRS Environmental Report for 2000*

During a recent data review, WSRC discovered a transcription error in the *SRS Environmental Report for 2000*. Several uranium values in table 6, "Radioactive Liquid Releases by Source," are listed incorrectly. The errors and appropriate corrections are summarized below:

- The U-234 value for separations was reported as 2.05E-05; the correct value is 2.50E-05.
- The total U-234 value was reported as 2.87E-05; the correct value is 1.64E-04.
- The U-235 value for separations was reported as 1.20E-06; the correct value is 1.34E-06.
- The total U-235 value was reported as 6.18E-06; the correct value is 6.32E-06.

All potential radiation doses are correct because they were calculated using the correct values—and therefore do not change.

CAB makes Recommendations

Recommendation 197- Yucca Mountain Waste Acceptance Criteria

The SRS CAB has been a proponent of Yucca Mountain and is very interested in seeing it open on schedule in 2010. In order to facilitate the effective, timely, and responsive shipment of waste from SRS to Yucca Mountain, the SRS CAB recommends that DOE-HQ work diligently with Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and EPA to meet the 2010 opening date for Yucca Mountain and take all appropriate steps to accelerate the schedule wherever possible. The Board also recommends that DOE-HQ assure the SRS CAB by July 1, 2005, that the required shipping casks will be designed and tested by OCRWM, and then licensed by NRC to support the projected start shipping date in Fiscal Year 2010. By January 31, 2005, the SRS CAB requests that the SRS shipping facility be identified as a priority and sufficient funds made available to begin design in Fiscal Year 2007 with construction to be completed by Fiscal Year 2010. The Board also requested that the interface between the SRS shipping facility and the Yucca Mountain Receiving facility be sized appropriately to meet the integrated shipping/receiving schedule for the Accelerated Clean-up Plan and also requested annual updates.

Recommendation 198- TRU Waste Program Challenges

Concerned about the availability of shipping containers for transuranic waste, the SRS CAB recommends that DOE maintain the flow of TRUPACT II shipping containers to SRS to ensure an average of 20 shipments per month. The Board also recommended that DOE build new TRUPACT II shipping containers and designate at least one new container to SRS in order to meet the 2008

target date for removal of all legacy Transuranic (TRU) waste at SRS. The Board asked that DOE work with NRC for an early approval date for TRUPACT-II (Safety Analysis Report Package (SARP) – Revision 21) which is to ensure all SRS high activity drummed TRU waste is removed by 2008 and requested a presentation on the status by January 25, 2005. The Board also requested an update on the licensing effort, including the schedule and the procurement status for the TRUPACT-III shipping containers and an update on the nondestructive assay equipment deployment.

To prevent any slowdown on shipments from the impact of drum repackaging, the Board recommended that DOE-SR expedite the installation of the Modular Repackaging Facility and maintain the accelerated TRU waste shipments at 20 per month. The Board also suggested a backup plan regarding variances and disposition of Pu-238 contaminated TRU waste in the Risk Based End State document.

Recommendation 199- Building 235-F Decontamination

The Board asked DOE to present the options for removing plutonium-238 holdup in the Building 235-F process cells. The CAB requested information regarding alternatives that may include fixing the plutonium contamination in place and asked DOE to document how the proposed actions will impact reaching the planned end state for Building 235-F. The Board requested this information by November 16, 2004.

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.mpfeis.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 ROD is scheduled to be issued in December 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 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 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 ROD 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. The NEPA review is on hold until the next version of the NRMP is finalized.

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