



# Environmental Bulletin

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*from the Savannah River Site*

Documents available for public review

## Remedial Action Proposed For D-Area Expanded Operable Unit

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) will release a Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan on February 11, 2004, describing the proposed remedial approach for the D-Area Expanded Operable Unit (DEXOU) at the Savannah River Site (SRS). The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) will also release a draft Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit modification for the proposed remedial action for this unit. These documents will be available for public review and copying at the locations listed below. The public comment period is scheduled for February 11, 2004 to March 26, 2004.

DOE, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and SCDHEC have reviewed the risks associated with this unit and have evaluated cleanup alternatives. The following actions are recommended for the DEXOU:

**1. D-Area Rubble Pile (DRP)** – This remedial action includes the excavation of the Aroclor-1254 arsenic hot spot, packaging of the material in appropriate containers, and disposing of it at an off-SRS approved disposal facility. The area will then be sampled for confirmation that Aroclor-1254 was removed. Coal reject materials containing unacceptable levels of arsenic will be excavated to the visual extent of the coal within the DRP and adjacent areas. Excavated materials will be transported to the 488-D Ash Basin for consolidation under a geosynthetic cover. Excavated areas will be backfilled, graded, and vegetated to minimize erosion.

**2. D-Area Ash Basin (488-DAB)** – This remedial action includes the excavation and consolidation of coal rejects and impacted soils outside of the berm into the basin from the dead and stressed vegetation area, basin exterior, and ash basin drainage. Removal of the standpipe is proposed to prevent pooled basin water from leaking into the drainage area. Dewatering of the pooled area includes treatment and release of the water. Installation of a low permeability geosynthetic cap consisting of a geomembrane, geotextile drainage layer, and two feet of soil is proposed over the basin to reduce infiltration and runoff and to prevent exposure to the waste. Institutional controls will prohibit future residential land use and provide additional protection of future industrial workers.

These alternatives will be protective of human health and the environment. They are also intended to be the final actions for the DEXOU.

The DEXOU is located in D-Area in the southwest quadrant of the Savannah River Site. The DEXOU consists of two major subunits, the 488-DAB and the D-Area DRP. A coal fired power plant has been operating at D-Area since 1952. Groundwater contamination is associated with both active and historical sources and will be addressed as a separate operable unit.

The 488-DAB was constructed in the early 1950s and used to retain and stabilize ash from the 484-D powerhouse operations. It is an unlined earthen containment basin approximately 1800-feet long by 600-feet wide by 18-feet deep. Ash was initially sluiced into the basin and in 1978 the ash-sluice was diverted into other basins in the area and the 488-DAB received only dry ash until the mid 1990's. The top four feet of ash in the basin also contains coal rejects. Coal rejects were also dumped on the north slope outside the basin. Drainage in the area has caused some of the coal rejects on the berm to become mobile and settle into an area that is now devoid of vegetation which is characterized as a dead and stressed vegetation area. Areas investigated during the characterization of the unit include the basin interior, a pooled water area within the basin, the basin exterior including the basin berms, the basin drainage, and an area of dead and stressed vegetation outside the basin.

The DRP is located northwest of the 488-DAB. It is an 8-acre heavily vegetated area used to dispose of nonhazardous materials such as metal, treated lumber, roofing materials, asphalt paving materials, and fibrous material presumed to be asbestos. There are no records indicating disposal of hazardous or radioactive wastes however,

### *Want to Comment?*

**Public comments will be accepted from February 11, 2004 through March 26, 2004 on the proposed final actions for the D-Area Expanded Operable Unit.**

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## Remedial Action Proposed . . .

coal rejects are evident in some areas. The DRP began receiving waste materials in the early 1950's until 1989.

Comments on the Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan and the draft RCRA permit modification are requested by March 26, 2004. Upon completion of the public comment period, a Responsiveness Summary that addresses public comments will be prepared. The Responsiveness Summary will be made available with the Record of Decision and the final RCRA permit decision and will be sent to each person who submits comments.

Copies of the Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan are available in the administrative record, which also contains the RCRA Facility Investigation/Remedial Investigation with Risk Assessment Report for this unit. 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, Aiken, SC
- Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

Hard copies of the Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan are available at the following:

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

The Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan is also available on the Internet in the SRS Home Page under (<http://www.srs.gov>), under "Happening Now," (<http://www.srs.gov/general/srs-home.htm>) and on the SRS Soil and Groundwater Closure Projects Home Page, under "Public Involvement," (<http://www.srs.gov/general/srenviro/erd/pub/pubinv.html>).

Copies of the draft RCRA permit modification/s are available for review at SCDHEC during regular business hours, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays, at the following locations:

SCDHEC  
Bureau of Land and Waste Management  
8911 Farrow Road  
Columbia, South Carolina 29203  
Phone: (803)896-4000  
or  
SCDHEC  
Edisto Savannah District  
Environmental Quality Control Office  
206 Beaufort St., N.E.  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: (803) 641-7670

If there is interest in discussing this recommended remedial approach, a public hearing may be requested. Comments on the

Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan should be sent to Mr. Jim Moore and Mr. John Litton. Comments on the draft RCRA permit modification or requests for a public hearing should be sent to Mr. John Litton. For additional information or to request a public meeting contact:

Jim Moore  
Westinghouse Savannah River Company  
Building 742-A  
Aiken, SC 29808  
1-800-249-8155  
[jjim02.moore@srs.gov](mailto:jjim02.moore@srs.gov)  
or  
SCDHEC  
Attn: John Litton, P.E., Director  
Division of Waste Management  
Bureau of Land and Waste Management  
2600 Bull Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
(803)896-4000

## Public May View SRS NEPA Planning Summary

The Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Site (SRS) has prepared the 2004 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 no EAs but 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 12 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 two Supplement Analyses (SAs) 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 2003 (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.eh.doe.gov/nepa/2004APS/srsaps04.pdf>.

## 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 February 2004. The final PEIS is scheduled for May 2004 and the record of decision (ROD) in June 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 SRS) 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 in the Federal Register at 68 FR 33487, June 4, 2003. The draft PEIS may be viewed electronically at [www.mpfeis.com](http://www.mpfeis.com). The National Nuclear Security Administration has recently announced that the final PEIS and the ROD have been delayed pending further consultations with Congress and the revised schedule is uncertain.

• **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 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 final PEIS was issued in January 2004 and may be viewed electronically at [www.wv.doe.gov](http://www.wv.doe.gov). Click "Inside West Valley" then "Environmental Impact Statement". The ROD will be issued no sooner than February 16, 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 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. 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.

### NEPA Announcement

SRS is committed to providing NEPA documents to all interested stakeholders. Individuals on our mailing list are notified as SRS documents are published and receive any requested copy as it becomes available.

If you wish to be added to the mailing list for NEPA documents, including any SRS EIS or EA, please contact:

Andrew R. Grainger  
NEPA Compliance Officer  
1-800-881-7292  
or  
E-mail at [nepa@srs.gov](mailto:nepa@srs.gov).

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## The SRS Environmental Bulletin

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environmental and compliance activities  
at SRS, please contact:

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