



Environmental Bulletin

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from the Savannah River Site

Record of Decision for the R Area Operable Unit at the Savannah River Site Available to the Public

The Record of Decision (ROD) Remedial Alternative Selection for the R Area Operable Unit (RAOU) is being issued by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the lead agency for the Savannah River Site (SRS), with concurrence by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 4 and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. The ROD selected a combination of Monitored Natural Attenuation for groundwater and Land Use Controls (LUCs) for the RAOU subunits.

The ROD was completed to meet the terms of the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) for SRS governing the investigation and cleanup of waste units. The FFA integrates the requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.

The R Reactor operated from 1953 to 1964 with a mission of producing nuclear materials for the defense program. Reactor operations resulted in the generation of chemical and radioactive wastes. The primary sources of radioactive contamination in R Area are activation products, fission products, and tritium. Groundwater is contaminated with volatile organics and tritium.

The RAOU consists of multiple subunits, some of which were previously selected for early remedial actions or non-time critical removal actions. The selected final remedy is combination of Monitored Natural Attenuation for groundwater and LUCs. This final remedy will achieve the remedial goals for the residual hazardous substances that remain at the RAOU that could pose an unacceptable risk to future industrial workers. LUCs will be implemented in the short-term through the SRS Site Use Program, which provides access controls for on-site workers, and through site access control against trespassing (e.g., fencing, warning signs and entry control systems). In the long-term, if the property is ever transferred to nonfederal ownership, the deed shall include restrictions precluding residential use of the property. In addition, groundwater and surface water will be monitored to verify that the groundwater plumes are not expanding beyond LUC boundaries and surface water remains to be unimpacted. Monitoring will continue until contaminants are below safe drinking water levels.

Copies of the RAOU ROD 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 (USC) Aiken campus in Aiken, SC; and
- Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at USC in Columbia, SC.

Hard copies of the RAOU ROD 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.

For additional information, contact Paul Sauerborn at the address listed below:

Paul Sauerborn
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC
Savannah River Site
Building 730-1B
Aiken, SC 29808
1-803-952-6658
paul.sauerborn@srs.gov

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**For more information on this or
other environmental and compli-
ance activities at SRS, contact:**

Paul Sauerborn

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC

Aiken, S.C. 29808

Public Involvement

(803) 952-6658

email: paul.sauerborn@srs.gov
