



The ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN *from the Savannah River Site*

Chem-Nuclear shipments across SRS

The Department of Energy (DOE) has determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to analyze potential environmental consequences associated with commercial shipments of low-level radioactive waste (LLW) across the SRS.

The proposed action would include DOE granting permission to Chem-Nuclear Systems (CNS) to use SRS for landing transport barges at the existing SRS boat ramp and off-loading trailered

low-level radioactive waste packages for movement across the SRS to the nearby CNS facility.

Project activities would include modification of the aforementioned boat ramp on the Savannah River as needed for off-loading activities and construction of a bridge across Lower Three Runs.

A notification of DOE's intent to prepare this EA was sent to South Carolina and Georgia on

June 4, 1997.

If you wish to request a copy of the predecisional draft EA when it becomes available, please contact: Drew Grainger, Savannah River Site, NEPA Compliance Officer, U.S. Department of Energy, Savannah River Operations Office, Building 773-42A, Room 212, Aiken, S.C. 29802.

E-mail: nepa@srs.gov

Fax/Phone:

1 (800) 881-7292

NEPA/CERCLA Integration

The WSRC National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Group developed a document entitled "Savannah River Site NEPA/CERCLA, Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act, Integration Guidance."

The document provides guidance to satisfy DOE requirements for integrating the two processes through a decision-based flow path, which minimizes scheduling and funding conflicts and achieves efficiency and cost savings.

The document was developed by a task team comprised of staff and management from DOE and WSRC NEPA and CERCLA groups.

The team streamlined the integration process by developing a planning and scoping process, which occurs early in the project lifecycle.

The guidance specifies an integrated process that would be acceptable to regulatory reviewers while meeting compliance requirements of both laws. The new process would reduce costs significantly by eliminating the need to prepare an EA or an Environmental Impact Statement for major CERCLA actions by demonstrating that NEPA values have been addressed.

Implemented on June 10, 1997, the guidance has the approval of DOE and WSRC NEPA and CERCLA management and SRS legal counsel.

Current NEPA actions affecting SRS

Document

Status

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (DOE/EIS-0026-52)

Final Supplemental EIS is scheduled for August 1997 and the ROD is scheduled for September 1997.

Rocky Flats Plutonium Residues and Scrub Alloy (DOE/EIS-0277)

The draft EIS is expected in late July/August 1997 with the final issued October 1997.

Shutdown of River Water System at SRS (DOE/EIS-0268)

The final EIS was issued May 16, 1997. The Record of Decision is scheduled for July 1997.

Accelerator for Production of Tritium (DOE/EIS-0270)

Preparation of the draft EIS continues with a proposed issue date of December 1997.

Tritium Extraction Facility (DOE/EIS-0271)

Preparation of draft EIS to begin in July 1997. Publication of draft EIS is projected for February 1998. The Final EIS and ROD are scheduled for August 1998.

DOE Waste Management (DOE/EIS-0200)

The Final PEIS was issued in May 1997. Multiple RODs are expected.

SRS Spent Nuclear Fuel (DOE/EIS-0299)

Preparation of the draft EIS is progressing with a publication date in July/August 1997. Publication of Final EIS and ROD are scheduled for November and December respectively.

Surplus Plutonium Disposition (DOE/EIS-0283)

The public scoping meeting was held June 19, 1997, at the North Augusta Community Center. Over 275 stakeholders were in attendance.

Wetland Mitigation Bank Program (DOE/EA-1205)

Preparation of the draft EA is progressing with a proposed issue date of late July 1997.

Records of Decision on eight waste sites

The Department of Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) have selected remedial approaches for eight Savannah River Site (SRS) waste units. The remedial decisions for the eight units are documented in each unit's Record of Decision (ROD) document. These documents include a responsiveness summary, which addresses public comments. DOE has worked with SCDHEC and EPA to ensure the remedial approaches are consistent with all applicable environmental requirements.

The Grace Road Site (GRS), Gunsite 113 Access Road, Gunsite 720 Rubble Pit Unit and the Central Shops Burning Rubble Pit, 631-6G (CSBRP6G) are units in which the RCRA Facility Investigation/Remedial Investigation/Baseline Risk Assessments found no significant risk to human health and the environment. No remedial action is necessary for these units. There is no evidence that hazardous or radioactive waste was ever disposed of; there is no waste to treat, no institutional or engineering con-

trols required, and no costs involved for these units.

Limited action has been selected at Silverton Road Waste Unit (SRWU), D-Area Burning/Rubble Pits (DBRP) and the F Area Burning/Rubble Pits (FBRP).

The SRWU was used as an open dump by local communities prior to the construction of SRS. After purchase by the federal government, the SRWU was used as an open dump for construction debris and other materials until 1974. The use of institutional controls, with continued groundwater monitoring of the M Area (water table) Aquifer, is the selected alternative for the SRWU. Institutional controls will limit access to this land and may require usage of this land be limited to industrial use, if the land is transferred to a non-federal entity.

The DBRP and the FBRP units consist of unlined earthen pits covering a total area of about two acres. The DBRP and the FBRP source units were used from 1951-1973 for burning of hazardous and non-hazardous materials and disposal of construction debris. Based on the results of the investigations, institutional controls have been selected as the remedial approach

(see RODs, page 3)



Controls on bingham pump outage pit

The Department of Energy (DOE) will release a proposed plan for SRS's K-Area Bingham Pump Outage Pit (K BPOP) operable unit on July 8, 1997.

The public comment period is July 8-August 6, 1997. This plan was completed to meet the terms of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), an environmental law that governs the investigation and cleanup of waste sites.

DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) are recommending institutional controls for the K BPOP.

The K BPOP is one of four Bingham Pump Outage Pit areas at the SRS, which was used to bury miscellaneous construction debris generated by major repairs and modifications to the reactor cooling systems. There were no pumps buried and no liquid waste was disposed of in the K BPOP. In 1958 the K BPOP was backfilled with soil and is now an open grassy area.

The remedial investigation found minimal risk to human health and the environment. Therefore, the proposed alternative of institutional controls was chosen. Implementation of the institutional controls alternative will require near- and long-term actions.

For the near-term, signs posted at the waste unit will indicate the area was used for disposal of waste material and contains buried waste. Existing SRS access controls will also restrict area access. In the long-term, this land will be restricted to future industrial use and deed restrictions will prohibit residential use. This will be the final remedial action for the K BPOP.

Information gained from the remedial investigation of K BPOP will be utilized in the investigations of the three remaining Bingham Pump Outage Pits at SRS. This will reduce the time and information required to evaluate these remaining units.

Comments on the K BPOP Proposed Plan are requested by August 6, 1997. All comments received will be considered and addressed in a responsiveness summary that will be made available with the Record of Decision, and will be sent to each person who submits comments.

Copies of the Proposed Plan are available from the Information Repositories listed in the article to the right. Comments may be sent to Mary Flora at the address listed on the label.

... RODs (from page 2)

for both units. Institutional controls will limit access to this land and may require that the use of this land be limited to industrial use, if the land is transferred to a non-federal entity. Additional groundwater characterization at the FBRP indicates that the groundwater contamination may originate from an upgradient source and may not be attributable to the FBRP. The nature and extent of the groundwater contamination will be investigated separately.

A combination of remedial action and institutional controls have been selected for the Old F Area Seepage Basin (OFASB) Operable Unit. The OFASB served as an unlined seepage basin for reducing the radioactive substance concentrations of wastewaters. Between November 1954 and May 1955, nine to 14 million gallons of wastewater from F & H Area Separations operations were discharged to the basin.

Studies of the OFASB Operable Unit show that it poses significant risk to human health. The selected alternative for remediating the OFASB soils/vegetation is to remove and dispose of the contaminated vegetation and then grout the soils in place to a depth of 2 feet, backfill the area with clean soil and construct an engineered low permeability cap. The selected alternative for remediating the groundwater is establishment of a groundwater mixing zone, which will ensure existing contaminated groundwater meets regulatory standards at the compliance boundary. A confirmatory groundwater monitoring program will be implemented to ensure this is the appropriate remedial action.

The use of institutional controls is the selected remedial alternative for the OFASB pipeline and pipeline soils, basin soils and groundwater. Institutional controls will limit access to this land and may require that the use of the land be limited to industrial use, if the land is transferred to a non-federal entity. Additionally, these institutional controls will utilize administrative controls such as site use and site clearance permits and access controls such as filling or grouting of pipeline manholes.

These RODs will be available beginning July 17, 1997, at the locations below.

For copies of plans or RODs

• DOE Public Reading Room, Gregg-Graniteville Library, USC-Aiken, Aiken, S.C. • Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department, USC-Columbia, Columbia, S.C. • Reese Library, Augusta State University, Augusta, Ga. • Asa H. Gordon Library, Savannah State University, Savannah, Ga. • On Internet beginning July 17 in the SRS Home Page under "What's New," (<http://www.srs.gov>). For additional information, contact Mary Flora at the address listed on the label.

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