

Recommendation 368
DOE Support for SREL

Background

At the January 2019 Citizens' Advisory Board (CAB) meeting, Dr. Gene Rhodes gave the annual Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) update presentation.¹ The presentation highlighted the many successes of the SREL and what SREL leaders and personnel hoped to achieve in FY19. The Savannah River Site is one of the most continuously studied environments in the country due in large part of the efforts of SREL. The scientific and educational opportunities available through SREL make the site a unique national asset. However, the laboratory continues to rely heavily on external funding from non-DOE sources to maintain critical scientific expertise and to maintain the stability of the laboratory and its mission on the SRS. Further, recent developments, including the uncertainty of MOX-related funding, have reduced SREL's capabilities and effectiveness.

Recommendation

The Citizens' Advisory Board recommends that DOE-SR provide the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory with additional base funding to increase the stability of the laboratory and allow it to:

1. Continue to fully implement its missions, including tasks involving:
 - a. Radioecology and Low Dose Radiation Effects
 - b. Metal and Radionuclide Ecotoxicology
 - c. Radionuclide Fate and Transport Studies
 - d. Radionuclide Outreach and Education Programs
2. Invest in facilities, equipment, and staff (safety, administrative, and research support) in support of its missions,
3. Continue to grow the SREL's scholarly productivity,
4. Maintain and grow graduate student enrollment and other academic opportunities,
5. Maintain and expand the SREL Outreach Program, which is dedicated to outreach to the public and scientific community.

¹ The presentation slides are available at: https://cab.srs.gov/library/meetings/2019/fdsr/SREL_Update.pdf. In particular, see slides 17 ("Opportunities for FY19") and 23 ("Challenges for FY19").