



Environmental Bulletin

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from the Savannah River Site

New ***DOE NEPA Compliance Guide*** Issued on Compact Disk or Available Online

In November 2005 *DOE NEPA Compliance Guide* was issued by the Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance. Almost all you need to know about NEPA at DOE is at your command: a compendium of laws, executive orders, regulations, policies, guidance, and other information relevant to NEPA compliance. Replacing the August 1998 edition, the new *DOE NEPA Compliance Guide* is intended to assist NEPA practitioners by providing a comprehensive reference collection of directives and guidance.

The *DOE NEPA Compliance Guide* is organized into three volumes.

- *Volume 1: General NEPA References* includes laws, environmental executive orders, Council on Environmental Quality regulations and guidance, and NEPA-related policies from other Federal agencies.
- *Volume 2: DOE NEPA Regulations and Guidance* includes the DOE's regulations, orders, and policy. DOE NEPA guidance is organized by topic: NEPA document preparation, site-wide NEPA reviews, public participation, and other aspects of the NEPA process.
- *Volume 3: Related Environmental Review Requirements* provides regulations for environmental review and consultation requirements – concerning air quality, biota, cultural resources, and land use and special land and water designations – that should, to the fullest extent possible, be conducted concurrently with and integrated with the NEPA process. This is a new volume not included in previous editions of the *Guide*.

The *DOE NEPA Compliance Guide* is linked from the main page of the DOE NEPA Web site at www.eh.doe.gov/nepa under *NEPA Compliance Guide*. Also posted with the *Guide* is a “*Companion to Compact Disk*,” which contains the preface and detailed contents of the three volumes. To request copies of the compact disk, call 1-800-881-7292 or e-mail: nepa@srs.gov.

Want more Information on any SRS NEPA Issues?

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Current NEPA Actions Affecting SRS

- Disposition of Scrap Metals Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) (DOE/EIS-0327)

DOE will evaluate alternatives for disposition of 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 draft PEIS has not been issued, and the schedule is uncertain.

- Supplemental PEIS on Stockpile Stewardship and Management for a Modern Pit Facility (DOE/EIS-0236-S2)

DOE 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 create the capability to manufacture plutonium pits for the stockpile of United States nuclear weapons. 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.mpeis.com. The final supplemental PEIS has been delayed due to Congressional concerns about timing and scope of project.

- EIS for the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership Technology Demonstration Program (DOE/EIS-xxxx)

DOE will evaluate technologies that would change the way spent nuclear fuel from commercial light-water power reactors is managed. The proposed action is to demonstrate U.S. capability to safely recycle spent nuclear fuel using proliferation-resistant separation processes and the conversion of transuranics into shorter-lived radioisotopes. The proposed action includes three key elements that would comprise a proliferation-resistant closed fuel cycle: (1) the demonstration of separation processes in which usable and waste materials that are found in spent nuclear fuel are separated; (2) the demonstration of the conversion of transuranics; and (3) the demonstration of an advanced fuel fabrication process. Information on the Advanced Notice of Intent (ANOI) can be found at 71 FR 14505, March 22, 2006. The ANOI is available on the Internet at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa> and <http://www.gnep.energy.gov>. DOE invites comments on the ANOI through May 8, 2006. To request further information, provide comments, suggestions, or relevant information about the proposed EIS or to be placed on the EIS distribution list, contact: Timothy A. Frazier, NEPA Document Manager, Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119, Telephone: 866-645-7803, Fax: 866-645-7807, E-mail: GNEPTechDemo@nuclear.energy.gov.

- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Compliance Alternatives (DOE/EA-1563)

DOE will analyze potential environmental consequences of the proposed NPDES Stormwater Compliance Alternatives at the Savannah River Site (SRS). The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) has renewed the NPDES general industrial stormwater permit that regulates certain SRS stormwater discharges. This permit authorizes the continued discharge of stormwater effluents from SRS operations through 39 industrial outfalls into State surface waters for the next four years. In order to meet the more restrictive conditions of the reissued permit, compliance schedules will be negotiated, as needed, for certain outfalls as designated by SCDHEC. (see related article in the Volume 17, Number 5 issue of the SRS Environmental Bulletin).

Current Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 228- President's Fiscal Year (FY) 07 SRS Budget Shortfall

Concerned that the President's budget for FY07 will be insufficient to meet the goals for accelerated clean up of the Savannah River Site (SRS), the SRS CAB recommended that DOE-SR present how the President's FY07 Budget will affect or impact accelerated cleanup goals; identify potential impacts to current workforce levels (operational, technical and management); and provide a list of EM programs impacted, especially those committed to in the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA). They further recommended that DOE-Headquarters (HQ) request appropriate Congressional actions to provide SRS FY07 funding levels to rectify any shortcomings identified. The Board also asked DOE-SR to present to the SRS CAB potential secondary funding sources to offset the FY 07 shortfall and they asked to be given the opportunity to once again be involved early in the budget process. They requested these actions be taken by May 22, 2006.

Recommendation 229- SRS Transuranic (TRU) Waste Update

In an effort to ensure that the SRS TRU program stays on track and the removal of all legacy TRU wastes from SRS occurs by 2013, the SRS CAB recommended that DOE-HQ commit the necessary funding for the large box characterization equipment to be operational by the end of FY 2007 and report the status of the funding and required operator training. They also asked DOE-SR to identify ways to increase the packing efficiencies of TRUPACT-II containers system wide.

The Board recommended that DOE-HQ continue to work on ways to increase the overall operational efficiencies (including effective utilization of space) of WIPP and that DOE-SR provide an update to the SRS CAB to make them aware of potential operational bottlenecks at WIPP which may impact SRS TRU waste shipments. They requested the above actions as well as for DOE-HQ to arrange for appropriate personnel to present the status of SRS equipment certification and SRS operator certification by October 1, 2006.

Recommendation 230- SWPF Decision – HLW Disposition Program Systems

As DOE is currently developing a revised approach for interim salt processing that will address tank space needs and work on closing the gap associated with the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF) delays necessitated by design changes, the SRS CAB asked DOE-SR to recommit to starting up the deliquification, dissolution, and adjustment (DDA) process by July 1, 2006, and recommit to closing tanks 18 and 19 by the end of FY07. They recommended that DOE-SR adopt quantitative risk and cost-benefit analysis procedures and documentation as part of the decision making in High Level Waste (HLW) management and that DOE adopt a systems approach in decision making in HLW management, performing risk and cost-benefit analyses on all affected systems influenced by that decision.

The SRS CAB also recommended that DOE-SR consider other possible options for increasing tank capacity during the period prior to operation of SWPF. Such options could include replacing Tank 50, the Saltstone feed tank, with an above ground storage tank and returning Tank 50 to high level waste service. Finally, the Board recommended that DOE commit to sufficient funding for satisfactory completion of the SWPF project and the key corollary HLW treatment operations.

Pre-Construction Fact Sheet Available for the SRS Chemicals, Metals and Pesticides Pits Operable Unit

The United States Department of Energy, United States Environmental Protection Agency, and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control announce the availability of a Pre-Construction Fact Sheet, which provides background information and describes the remedial options selected for the Chemicals, Metals, Pesticides (CMP) Pits Operable Unit (OU) located in the central portion of the Savannah River Site (SRS), approximately 5,200 ft north of L-Reactor.

The CMP Pits consist of seven unlined pits that occupy the top of a knoll at an elevation of 310 ft above mean sea level. The pits were constructed in 1971 to dispose of solvents, pesticides, and lighting ballast components. The pits received waste until 1979. In 1984, the contents were excavated, the pits were backfilled, and an infiltration cover was installed. When the drums were excavated, an area northwest of the pits, now referred to as the Ballast Area, was used for material staging.

The CMP Pits OU consists of five subunits:

1) CMP Pits and associated vadose zone (Field A), 2) Ballast Area soils, 3) Vadose zone Field B, 4) Groundwater, 5) Surface water

The selected remedial alternative for the CMP Pits and associated vadose zone (Field A) includes electrical resistance heating (ERH) with soil vapor extraction (SVE). This remedy will eliminate the source of the volatile organic compound (VOC) contamination in the vadose zone that contributes to the groundwater contamination.

An interim remedial action was conducted for the Ballast Area soils in 2004 and 2005. The interim action has been completed and PCB- and pesticide-contamination levels are below the remedial goals.

Monitored natural attenuation was selected for the groundwater remedy. VOC and pesticide contamination exists in the groundwater above maximum contaminant levels. Natural process will reduce the concentrations in the groundwater once the source in the vadose zone has been mitigated. Groundwater monitoring will be conducted to monitor the remedial process. An SVE system that was installed in Field B as part of an interim remedial action will remain in passive operation. There is no problem warranting action for the surface water.

The Pre-construction Fact Sheet for the Savannah River Site's (SRS) T Area Operable Unit is available at these locations: DOE Public Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina-Aiken campus in Aiken, SC; Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at USC in Columbia, SC; Reese Library at Augusta State University in Augusta, GA; and Asa H. Gordon Library at Savannah State University in Savannah, GA.

For additional information contact Jim Moore at 1-800-249-8155 or e-mail: jim02.moore@srs.gov

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