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FRIDAY MAILING

1/2/98

INCLUDED IN THIS MAILING ARE:

- Savannah River Site 1997 Annual Report
- Newsclippings

CAB MEETINGS:

- WASTE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE:** A meeting of the Waste Transportation Committee of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board will be held on Monday, January 5, 1998, at 6:30 p.m. in the Jamtek Building, 10845 Hamilton-Cleves Highway.
- ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING COMMITTEE:** The Environmental Monitoring Committee of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board is tentatively scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 7, 1998, in the Jamtek Building.
- EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE MEETING:** The next meeting of the Efficiency Committee of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board will be rescheduled at a later date.
- FERNALD CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING:** The next meeting of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board will be held on January 17, 1998, at 8:30 a.m. in the Alpha Building.

OTHER MEETINGS:

- COMMUNITY REUSE ORGANIZATION:** The monthly CRO meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 6, 1998, at 6:30 p.m. in the Ross High School Media Center, 3425 Hamilton-Cleves Highway.
- FERNALD CLEANUP PROGRESS BRIEFING:** The January Fernald Monthly Cleanup Progress Briefing will be held on Tuesday, January 13, 1998, at 6:30 p.m. in the Alpha Building, 10967 Hamilton-Cleves Highway.
- FRESH MEETING:** The next FRESH meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22, 1998, at 7:30 p.m. at the Venice Presbyterian Church on Layhigh Road in Ross.

QUESTIONS:

Please call John at [REDACTED] or Doug at [REDACTED] with questions or concerns. You may also fax or e-mail us at:

John Fax: 281-3331 E-Mail: john.applegate@law.uc.edu
Doug Fax: 648-3629 E-Mail: [REDACTED]

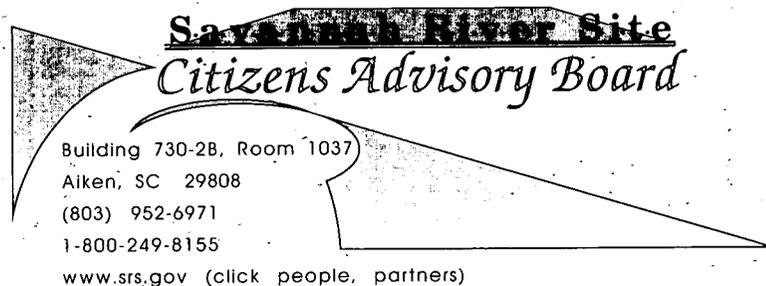
Annual Report
1996 - 1997

Savannah River Site
Citizens Advisory Board

1996 - 1997 Annual Report

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Message from the Chair:

The past two years have been very busy for the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. Not only have we been very active in the many decisions being made at SRS, but we have also made extensive efforts to improve public outreach and have hosted several educational opportunities for the SRS communities in 1996-97.

With declining budgets, accelerated cleanup schedules, and the need to safely and responsibly manage a host of nuclear legacy materials, the challenges faced by the Department of Energy, its regulators and the general public are enormous. We have been and will continue monitoring and reviewing the various plans and documents that guide the decision-making process to ensure that these decisions are the most protective of the health and safety of the public, workers and the environment.

We take our job very seriously as evidenced by the dedication of our Board members — 25 in all. We come from many different communities and walks of life in the two state area surrounding SRS, and recognizing that time is extremely valuable and limited, we feel it is our job to ensure that we represent your best interest as an SRS stakeholder. Hopefully, we have captured the many different perspectives of individuals living near SRS, which was the goal of a 16-member citizens group who originally determined the diverse makeup of our Board.

In this report, we summarize the 1996-97 work of the Board's subcommittees, the mainstay of our organization. Since the Board's inception in early 1994, the Board has provided over 45 recommendations to the agencies. There are many successes and a few disappointments in agency responses and implementation. Overall, the Board believes it has had a major impact on decision-making at SRS and we look forward to and welcome the challenges that 1998 will surely bring.



Ann Loadholt
Chair

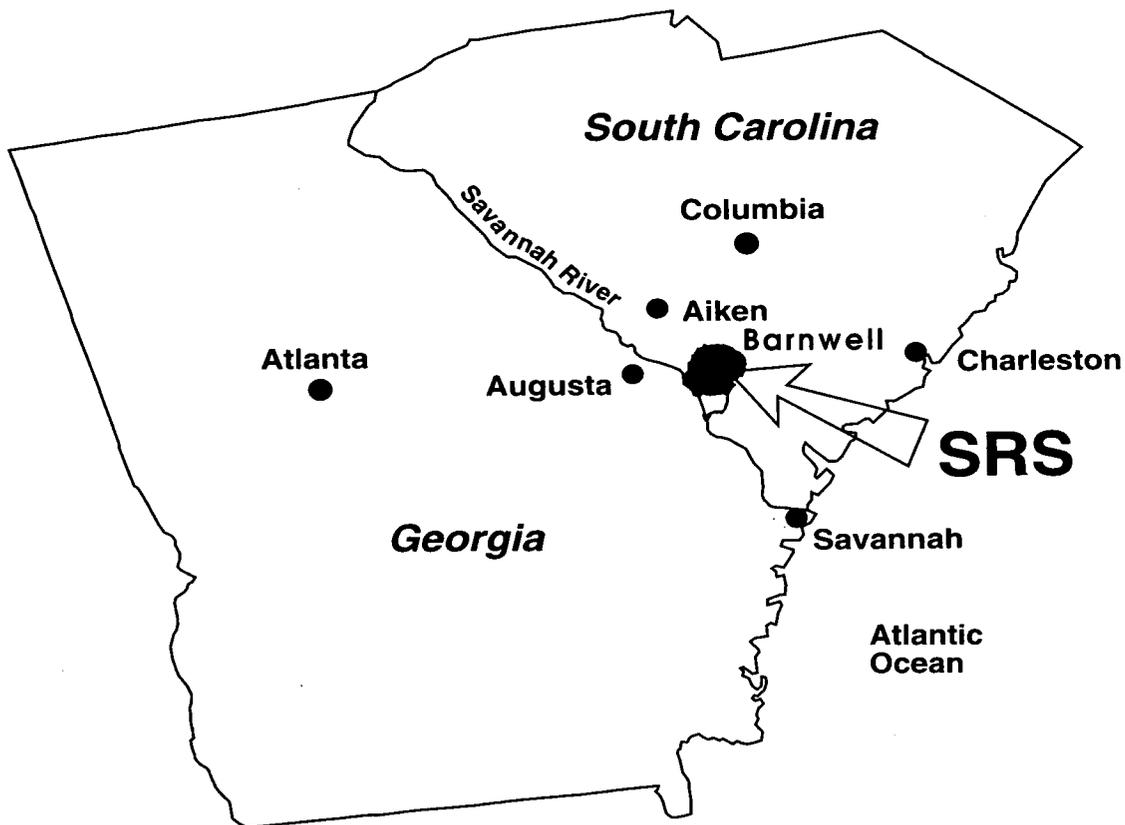


Ann Loadholt, Chair

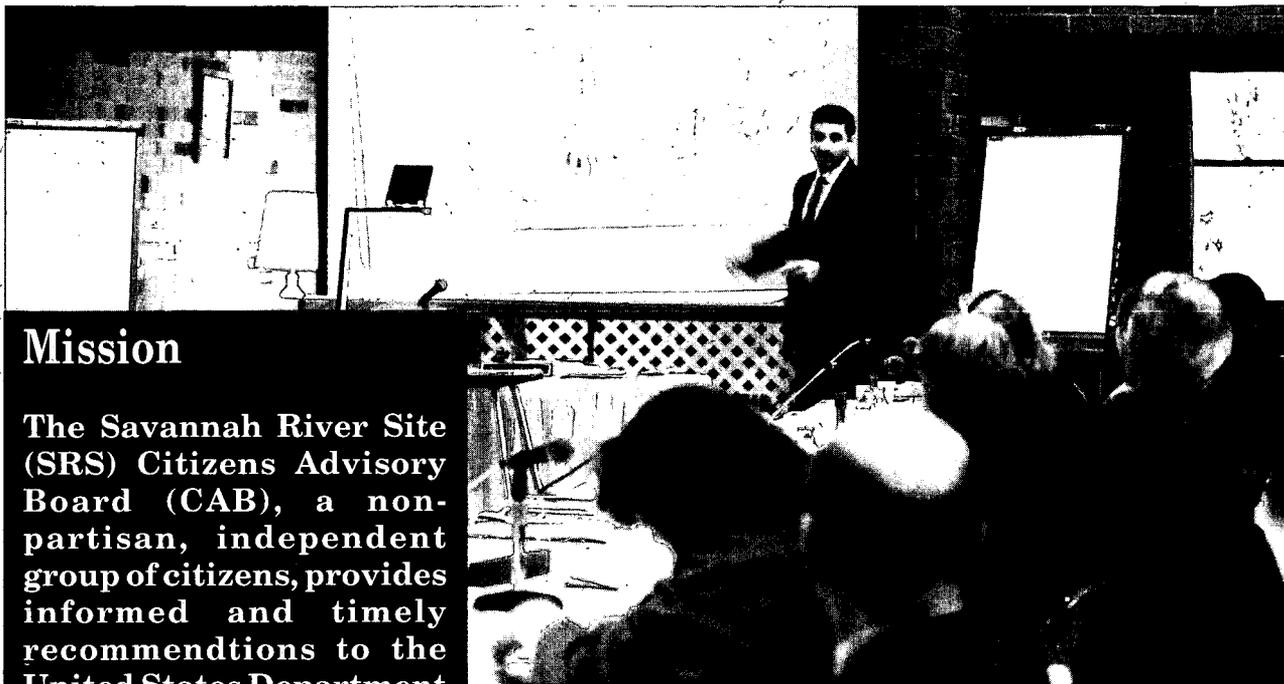
What is SRS?

The Savannah River Site is a 198,344 acre facility bordering the Savannah River and encompassing parts of Aiken, Barnwell and Allendale counties in South Carolina. Located approximately 15 miles from Aiken, South Carolina and 20 miles from Augusta, Georgia, this Department of Energy-owned facility focuses on national security work; economic development and technology transfer initiatives; and environmental remediation and waste management.

The former mission of SRS was to produce the basic materials used in the fabrication of nuclear weapons, primarily tritium and plutonium-239. The current mission of SRS is to manage and protect left-over waste materials and to cleanup any environmental damage. The day-to-day operations of SRS are managed by Westinghouse Savannah River Company, which includes partners from Bechtel Savannah River Company, British Nuclear Fuel Limited and Babcock & Wilcox.



The area surrounding the Savannah River Site extends from South Carolina to Georgia and includes the Savannah River which separates the two states. Neighboring counties include Aiken, Barnwell, and Allendale in South Carolina, and Columbia, Richmond, and Burke counties in Georgia.



Mission

The Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB), a non-partisan, independent group of citizens, provides informed and timely recommendations to the United States Department of Energy (DOE), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) concerning decisions to be made for SRS in the areas of environmental restoration, waste management, and related activities at SRS. An important goal of the SRS CAB is to improve two-way communication with SRS impacted communities and ensure stakeholders are given an opportunity to become involved in the decisions made at SRS.

Board Members receive briefings on waste management issues.

History:

The Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board was developed in response to comments from stakeholders on the proposed SRS Federal Facility Agreement and Public Participation Plan. Shortly thereafter, the Federal Facilities Environmental Restoration Dialogue Committee (or Keystone Committee) issued an interim report which supported site-specific advisory boards as an effective mechanism for bringing stakeholders into the Department of Energy decision-making process.

Following several public meetings in December 1992 - January 1993, a public working group of 16 citizens was formed to develop a charter and membership selection process for an SRS site-specific advisory board. A year-long effort, including eleven public meetings, produced a working charter and a seven-member panel of individuals from the general public who selected the initial 25 members of the SRS Citizens Advisory Board.

The seven-member panel consisted of four members of the working group and three additional members of the general public. The Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control each selected one of these three members. The 25-member Board was selected from approximately 250 applicants and is comprised of representatives from many walks of life, including academia, business, labor groups, public officials, environmental organizations, minority groups and the general public.

Thirteen members of the 25 member Board served two-year terms, while the remainder served for three years, initially. The staggered terms of the initial Board provided continuity while allowing other interested stakeholders

the opportunity to participate on the Board as well. Board members now serve two-year terms and may serve up to three consecutive terms.

The first meeting of the SRS Citizens Advisory Board was held in February 1994 in Augusta, Ga. The Board met monthly during its first year of operation and put administrative procedures in place while undergoing extensive education.

By late 1994, the Board had finalized bylaws, institutionalized operating guidelines, reviewed a dozen SRS programs and developed three issues-based subcommittees to research topics and focus the Board's work.

The first Board recommendation was submitted in October 1994. More than 45 recommendations have been provided by the end of 1997.



Board members from two states meet bi-monthly to consider SRS issues.

Membership:

Board Members (As of September 1997)

William Adams
 Arthur Belge
 Thomas Costikyan
 Bill Donaldson
 Mary Elfner
 Ken Goad
 Brendolyn Jenkins (*Vice Chair*)
 Thelonious Jones
 William Lawless
 Ann Loadholt (*Chair*)
 Jimmy Mackey
 Suzanne Matthews
 Kathryn May
 JoAnn Nestor
 Lane Parker
 Karen Patterson
 Deborah Simone
 Perjetta Smith
 Ed Tant
 Beaurine Wilkins
 Rebecca Gaston-Witter



Other Board Members (1996-1997)

Anne Brown
 Aundria Cheever
 Jon Hollingsworth
 Mildred McClain
 Larry McKinney
 Kamalakar Raut
 Kevin Reed
 Bob Slay (1996 Chair)
 Vernon Zimmerman

Staff

Administrative Support

E. Dawn Haygood
 Monica Finney

Facilitator

J. Walter Joseph

Ex-Officio Members

Department of Energy

Tom Heenan
 Lee Watkins

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Jeff Crane
 Camilla Warren

South Carolina Dept. of Health & Environmental Control (SCDHEC)

Ann Ragan
 Myra Reece

SCDHEC Alternates

Keith Collinsworth
 Jim Brownlow

Committees & Issues:

Nuclear Materials Management (NMM) Subcommittee

The subcommittee on Nuclear Materials Management, chaired by Tom Costikyan, was established to study issues that involve nuclear materials (generally uranium and plutonium) and have an impact on present or future SRS activities.

In 1996, the subcommittee chose the then very current issue of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Storage and Disposition of weapons-usable fissile materials, which addressed the need to manage DOE's surplus plutonium resulting largely from the dismantling of nuclear weapons.

On May 14, the SRS CAB adopted the subcommittees recommendations on this EIS which emphasized the following:

- safe and secure interim storage of surplus plutonium
- location should be chosen on basis of security and cost effectiveness
- safety of shipments
- deep boreholes should not be pursued as an alternative
- Mixed Oxide (MOX) option should consider using commercial reactors
- questioned the Spent Fuel Standard as a desired end result for several options
- supported a decision that concluded SRS is a preferred site for a plutonium storage and disposition program

The January 1997 Record of Decision was a combined approach of immobilization and MOX with SRS to receive the Rocky Flats portion of the surplus plutonium.

In 1997, the NMM Subcommittee drafted recommendations on two current EIS's - the SRS Spent Nuclear Fuel EIS and the EIS on



Subcommitte Members: Ed Tant & Jimmy Mackey

management of certain plutonium residues and scrub alloy stored at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site. Commenting on the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS on aluminum-clad Spent Nuclear Fuel at SRS, the Board continued to strongly recommend that DOE fully evaluate chemical processing as a viable alternative for spent fuel management. The Board contends that this is one course of action that is most likely to lead to the removal of wastes from South Carolina.

Recognizing that SRS may well be a part of the preferred option in the EIS on Rocky Flats plutonium residues and scrub alloy, the SRS CAB requested that any decision not adversely impact the current stabilization of SRS materials; that the EIS identify facilities, equipment and staffing necessary to assure safe receipt, handling, treatment and storage of these materials; and that the commitment for necessary fiscal support is essential and must be provided. Records of Decisions on both documents are forthcoming.



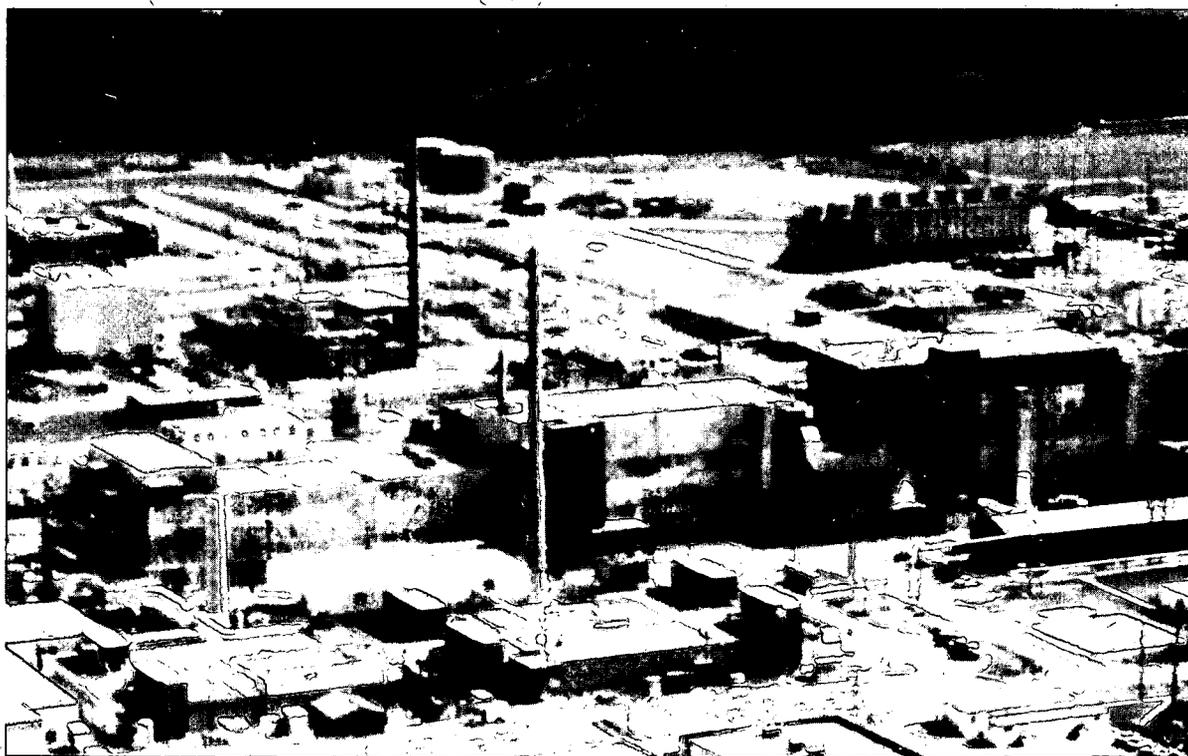
Risk Management & Future Use (RM&FU) Subcommittee

Under the leadership of Vernon Zinnerman in 1996 and Suzanne Matthews in 1997, the RM&FU Subcommittee tackled the daunting task of ensuring extensive public involvement in the 1998 and 1999 budget prioritization process and the Accelerating Cleanup: Focus 2006 plans formerly called the Ten Year Plan.

On March 26, 1996, the Board commended DOE-SR for prioritizing the budget into risk categories and proposing a budget that exceeds the budget target. Recognizing that the FY 1998 budget did not allow funding for all SRS activities, the Board recommended that those budget items that are protective of the health and safety of the workers, the public, and the environment be given the highest budget priority. This focus continued in the Board's September 1996 comments on the first draft of the SRS Ten Year Plan, requesting

that the plan call for aggressive treatment of high-activity transuranic waste and also endorsing equitable intersite cooperation and system consolidations as a means of reducing costs and accelerating risk reduction. Additionally, the Board requested that DOE incorporate chemical processing as an option in the Ten Year Plan, that DOE optimize canister loading at the Defense Waste Processing Facility and that DOE pursue permanent storage of various waste with as much vigor as it has pursued bringing these wastes to SRS for temporary, interim and long-term storage.

DOE responded to the March recommendation stating that they will continue to carefully assess and prioritize mission requirements to ensure that the limited resources are applied to those activities with the highest priority.



Currently, two canyon processing facilities stabilize nuclear materials at SRS

Regarding comments on the Ten Year Plan, DOE agreed transuranic waste deserves attention in the ten year window and agreed to be sensitive to stakeholder concerns regarding intersite cooperation. DOE also responded it is phasing out its chemical processing however reprocessing capability will be available beyond 2002. DOE agreed with the CAB's position to optimize canister loading at DWPF and assured the CAB that ultimate disposition of wastes in interim storage or new waste that may be shipped to SRS, is a clear priority.

In late 1996, the Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee hosted a series of five public meetings in Savannah, Ga and Hilton Head Island, Williston and North Augusta, SC. These meetings resulted in the following, ranked order of the nine criteria used in the budget prioritization process for FY 1999:

1. Public Health and Safety
2. Worker Health and Safety
3. Safeguards and Security
4. Environmental Protection
5. Current Mission Impact
6. Mission Viability
7. Regulatory Compliance
8. Social/Cultural/Economic Impacts
9. Cost Effectiveness/Mortgage Reduction

The full Board provided this list to DOE in a March 1997 recommendation and offered an additional list that recognized regulatory compliance as an implied consideration in items 1-4 and therefore removed it as item 7 in the second list. DOE agreed to revise the "Consequence Value Matrix" and develop new weighting factors based on the new rankings recommended by the CAB.

In June 1997, the SRS CAB again provided a recommendation on guidelines for budget priorities. The Board recommended that DOE:

- re-evaluate resources being allocated to low risk items and reallocate these dollars to higher risk items
- funds should be spent to reduce risks to protect the health and safety of the public, workers and the environment
- nuclear material stabilization should be at a higher priority than spent fuel shipments, receipts and storage
- defer funding for SNF alternative technologies until higher risk activities are completed
- ensure new missions are financed by mission sponsors

DOE essentially agreed with the entire recommendation. However, instead of agreeing to defer funding of spent fuel alternates, the DOE response stated that this has been given a lower priority on the priority list until higher risk activities have been completed.

The Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee also initiated SRS CAB comments on the Draft Accelerating Cleanup: Focus 2006 National and SRS plans. These comments on both documents were provided in 13 subsets emphasizing the following:

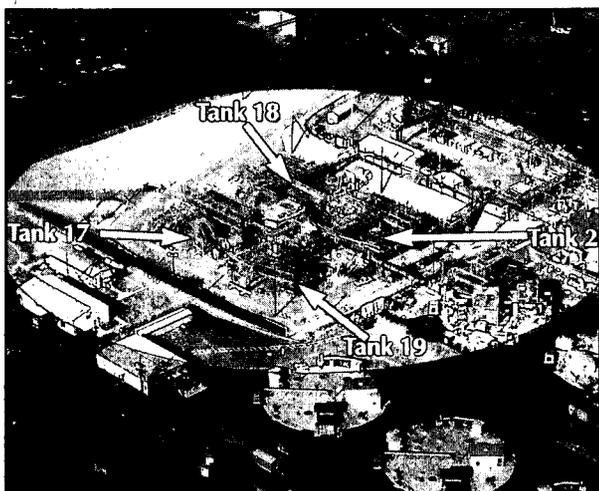
- more realistic expectations and more thought to contingency plans
- more "user friendly" documents that sell their goals
- address final end states
- approach privatization initiatives with caution
- recognize the probability of Nuclear Regulatory Commission oversight
- provide for national review and input in complex-wide issues.

These comments will be addressed in the next iteration of the plan scheduled for release in late 1997.

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Environmental Remediation & Waste Management (ER&WM) Subcommittee

The Environmental Remediation and Waste Management (ER&WM) Subcommittee is co-chaired by Bill Lawless and Kathryn May. With the goal of reducing the highest risks to the public, workers, and the environment, the ER&WM Subcommittee has initiated over 30 recommendations to DOE-SR, SCDHEC, and EPA on environmental restoration and waste management programs at SRS.



Four-Pack High Level Waste Tank Closure

In 1996-97, the subcommittee provided over 21 recommendations and made extensive efforts to expand the Board's website (www.srs.gov). In January 1996, the SRS CAB adopted an ER&WM recommendation to establish criteria for closure of high-level-waste tanks by September 30. A year later, closure plans for Tank 20 were well underway. This tank was closed in July 1997 and closure of Tank 17 had already begun. In July 1997, the ER&WM Subcommittee recommended that DOE accelerate closures of the remaining two high-level waste tanks in the 4-pack and include the closure of the 1F and 1H Evaporators as well.

The ER&WM Subcommittee also reviewed and endorsed several DOE preferred remediation options including an interim remedial action at the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground, cleanup of the old F-Area Seepage Basin, design of a more effective saltstone disposal facility, startup of the Consolidated Incineration Facility by January 1997 and cleanup of the L-Area Oil and Chemical Basin.

A major focus of the ER&WM Subcommittee, transuranic waste issues were the subject of a November 1996 recommendation that supported a strategic plan to ship PU-238 wastes to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). If transportation regulations will not allow such shipments, the Board recommended that funding for construction of a facility to treat this waste at SRS be immediately requested. DOE-SR responded they will work with WIPP and DOE-HQ to engage the NRC regarding transportation regulations and will pursue the most viable option for disposal of transuranic wastes.

Recognizing the large number of cleanup projects scheduled at SRS, the ER&WM Subcommittee recommended that DOE, EPA and SCDHEC work closely to expedite actual field work and develop early-action frameworks for high risk units. The March 1997 recommendation also requested the agencies develop screening criteria to identify the lowest risk waste sites and significantly shorten the process for remedial actions at these sites.

In May 1997, the subcommittee recommended DOE initiate an early action cleanup process for the SRL Seepage Basins and include a focus group and progress reports to the CAB. CAB members participated in the July focus group meeting and continue to be involved in the decision-making process.

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Public Outreach Subcommittee

By the middle of the Board's second year, it became obvious that although the Board was providing many significant recommendations on SRS activities, word of these activities was not reaching the general public. In response to this dilemma, the Board formed an adhoc emergent issues-based subcommittee to aid in getting the word out.

Since its first meeting in March 1996, the subcommittee has:

1. Developed a standard Board presentation and provided several speakers to functions in various communities
2. Developed a display and participated in over a dozen business expos, festivals and other SRS public meetings in South Carolina and Georgia
3. Increased the number of editorials by Board members in local newspapers
4. Participated in local cable talk shows
5. Utilized more effective "down-home" advertising techniques
6. Conducted middle school essay contests in conjunction with Spent Fuel Forum

Future plans call for a Board newsletter, an increased number of speaking engagements and continued participation in community activities.



Lane Parker, Chair of the Outreach Subcommittee at the Aiken Business Expo

Plutonium Disposition Educational Forum

April 25, 1996
North Augusta, S.C.

GOAL

Provide an educational forum for the public to receive information on and openly discuss the various policy choices to prepare excess plutonium from dismantled U.S. nuclear weapons and other sources for final disposal.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase public awareness of plutonium disposition issues facing the nation.
- Provide expert opinion—in an objective format—on various disposition options being considered in DOE's Storage and Disposition of Weapons Usable Fissile Material Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (also called Plutonium PEIS).



Plutonium Disposition Educational Forum

Spent Nuclear Fuel Educational Forum

June 12, 1997
Augusta, Ga.

GOAL

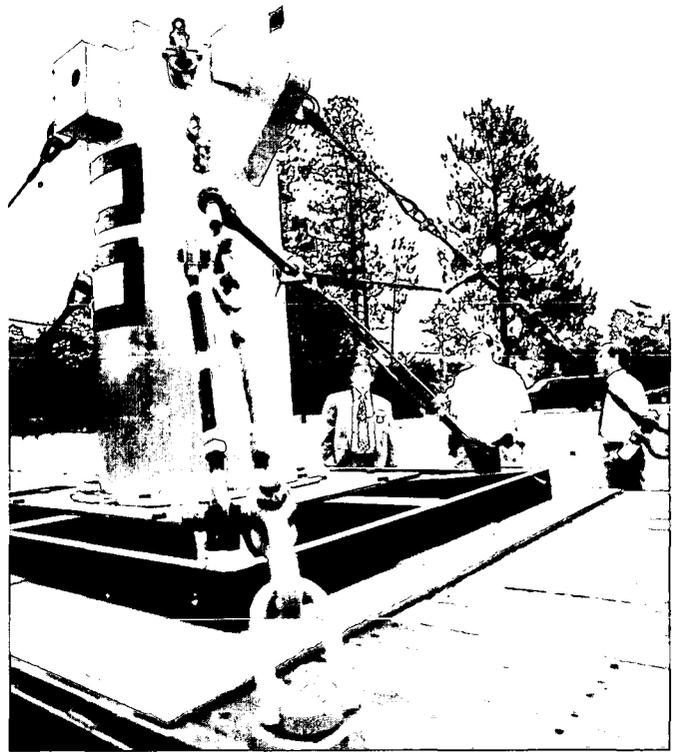
Provide balanced and timely information to Georgia and South Carolina citizens regarding the transportation to SRS, temporary storage, treatment, and disposition of Department of Energy (DOE) owned aluminum-clad spent nuclear fuel originating from domestic and foreign research reactors.



Subject Matter Experts at the Spent Nuclear Fuel Forum

OBJECTIVES

- Educate the public on spent nuclear fuel and the differences between DOE-owned aluminum-clad non-commercial spent nuclear fuel and commercial spent nuclear fuel
- Provide factual information and safety specifics on shipping containers, shipping/overland transportation and loading/unloading procedures of DOE-owned aluminum-clad spent nuclear fuel.
- Discuss the most viable options being considered for receipt, treatment and temporary storage of DOE-owned, non-commercial aluminum-clad spent nuclear fuel at SRS
- Discuss final disposition issues including:
 1. DOE plans for treating aluminum-clad non-commercial spent nuclear fuel to meet waste acceptance criteria established by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for disposal in a licensed federal repository.
 2. DOE plans for transporting non-commercial spent nuclear fuel to a licensed federal repository.
 3. Status of a federal geologic repository for DOE-owned non-commercial spent nuclear fuel.



Participants study spent nuclear fuel cask

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON BOTH EDUCATIONAL FORUMS.**

www.srs.gov (click, people & partners)

Board Recommendations:

(as of July 1997)

1. Independent Scientific Peer Review (ISPR) of Significant SRS Environmental Documents.
2. Industrial/Residential Land Use Guidelines for CERCLA Near Term Decision-making
3. ISPR of Groundwater Remediation Technologies in A/M, F and H Area
4. Transuranic Waste Treatment Plan of WMEIS Comments and ISPR of TRU Waste Retrieval Project
5. Performance and Screening Criteria for the Proposed Policy for Acceptance of FRR SNF EIS
6. Draft EIS on a Proposed Nuclear Weapons Nonproliferation Policy Concerning FRR SNF
7. Tritium Health Effects Study
8. Future Uses of the SRS
9. Implementation of the F&H Groundwater Remediation.
10. Develop and Implement a Long-Term Comprehensive Strategic Plan to Remediate SRS
11. Implementation of TRU-Waste Retrieval Project - Follow-up to Recommendation No. 4 ISPR Results
12. Meet Commitment to Vitrify High-Level Waste by 2028 / ISPR of DWPF Operations
13. Design of an Additional Glass Waste Storage Building for High-Level-Waste
14. Ultimate Disposition of High-Level-Waste
15. Tank Farm Closure Criteria
16. Waste Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Comments
17. Fiscal Year 1998 Budget Priorities
18. TRU Waste Treatment Options Recommendation Following Blue Ribbon Panel Results
19. Endorsement of Interim Remedial Action at the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground
20. Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials
21. Old F-Area Seepage Basin Cleanup
22. Use of Retired HLW Tanks for Contaminated Soils Disposal and ER Program Evaluations
23. Ten Year Plan
24. Design Alternative Disposal Method at Saltstone Facility.



TRU Waste - Before



TRU Waste - After

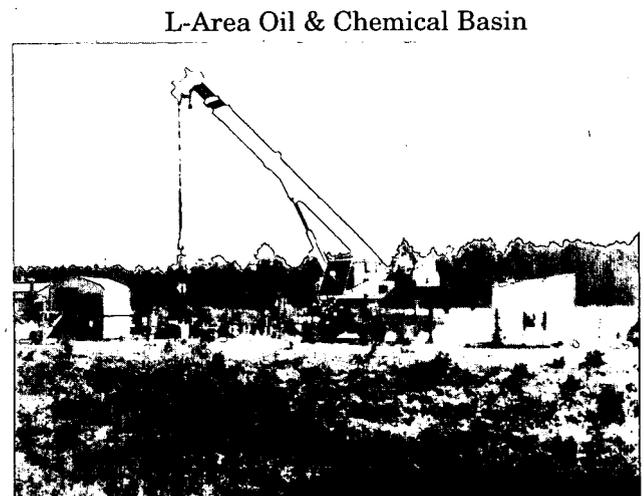
25. Begin Operations of Consolidated Incineration Facility by January 1997
26. Chemical processing alternative for spent nuclear fuel
27. TRU Waste Issues
28. Management Action Plan
29. Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS on Aluminum-clad Spent Nuclear Fuel at SRS
30. Recommendation on the Rocky Flats Plutonium EIS Scope
31. Shutdown of the River Water System
31. Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Disposal Phase Draft SEIS-II
33. Fiscal Year 1999 Budget Prioritization
34. Soils/Debris Consolidation Facility
35. SRS Waste Site Cleanup Actions
36. Technology Deployment Initiative
37. L-Area Oil & Chemical Basin and L-Area Acid/Caustic Basin
38. SRL Seepage Basins
39. Savannah River Integrator Operable Unit Study
40. Fiscal Year 1999 Budget
41. Comments on the "Accelerating Cleanup: Focus 2006" National and SRS Plans
42. Nonproliferation Study of Research Reactor Spent Fuel Management Alternatives
43. HLW Tanks and 1F/1H Evaporator Closure
44. Decommissioning of the Heavy Water Components Test Reactor
45. Environmental Management Integration



SRL Seepage Basins



Areal view of the L-Area Oil & Chemical Basin



L-Area Oil & Chemical Basin

1998 Work Plan:

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board will continue to provide guidance to the Department of Energy, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV during the coming year.

Planned activities for FY 1998 include:

- increased "grass-roots" outreach efforts
- Environmental Management Integration
- resolution of transuranic waste issues
- closure issues associated with decontamination and dismantlement program
- early closure action at SRL Seepage Basins
- strategic planning - Accelerating Cleanup: Focus 2006 plans
- direct disposal of plutonium versus conversion to mixed oxide fuel for reactors
- privatization-related issues
- potential plutonium and tritium missions
- Draft study on nonproliferation-implications of spent fuel management alternatives
- SRS Spent Nuclear Fuel EIS
- Draft Rocky Flats EIS on plutonium residues and scrub alloy



SRS Citizens Advisory Board provides recommendations to DOE, EPA and SCDHEC

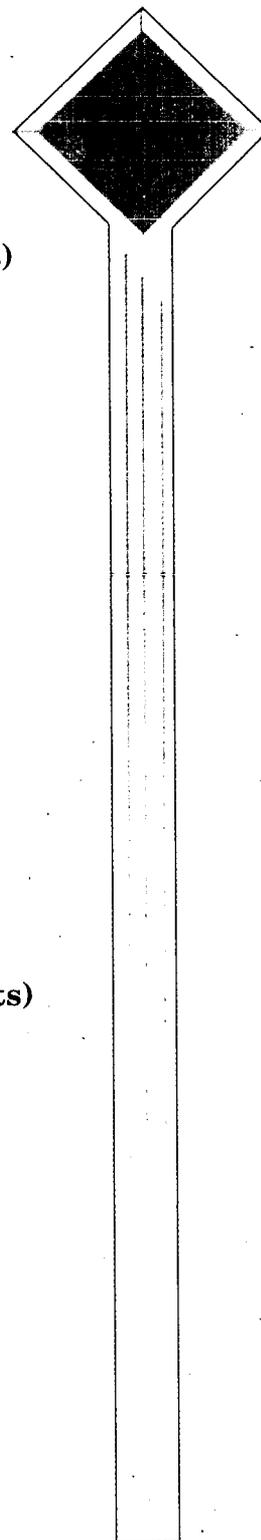
Financial Statement:

Fiscal Year 1996

	(Actual Costs)
Board Member Travel / Board Meetings	\$ 17801.00
Members Travel / Subcommittee	6,048.00
Miscellaneous Travel	15,482.00
CAB Retreat / Misc.	5,506.00
Board Meetings Rental / AV	10,629.00
Subcommittee Rental / AV	3,817.00
Facilitation / Clerical	45,238.00
Advertising	74,750.00
Administrative	40,000.00
Technical Assistance	-0-
Membership Drive	33,307.00
Grand Total	\$ <u>252,578.00</u>

Fiscal Year 1997

	(Estimated Costs)
Board Member Travel / Board Meetings	\$ 16,842.00
Members Travel / Subcommittee	5,641.00
Miscellaneous Travel	13,077.00
Outreach / Misc.	40,850.00
Board Meetings Rental / AV	13,356.00
Subcommittee Rental / AV	3,879.00
Facilitation / Clerical	48,586.00
Advertising	100,680.00
Administrative	60,000.00
Technical Assistance	67,821.00
Membership Drive	17,033.00
Grand Total	\$ <u>387,765.00</u>



Savannah River Site
Citizens Advisory Board

Building 730-2B, Room 1037

Aiken, SC 29808

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www.srs.gov (click people, partners)

December 22, 1997
 The Energy Daily
 Front Page + Page 2
 "NRC Ruling Represents Partial Victory for LES"
 By Pamela Newman-Barnett

Monday, December 22, 1997

NRC Ruling Represents Partial Victory For LES

BY PAMELA NEWMAN-BARNETT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has partially overturned a decision by an NRC-appointed panel denying an application by Louisiana Energy Services to build a uranium enrichment plant in Clairborne Parish, La.

The commission voted unanimously last week to reverse the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board's finding earlier this year that LES lacks the financial qualifications under NRC regulations to build the proposed uranium enrichment facility.

And while LES officials say the decision is a victory for LES, and its parent companies, which include subsidiaries or affiliates of

A Partial Victory...

(Continued from page one)

Urenco, Fluor Daniel, Duke Power, Northern States Power and Louisiana Power & Light, opponents of the facility say the ruling puts the company back at square one on the issue of financial requirements.

For instance, while the commission has determined that the company is financially qualified to build the facility, the agency also has imposed several conditions that require LES to fulfill financial commitments before it can begin construction.

In that respect, says Diane Curran Harmon, an attorney with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, an intervener in the case before the ASLB, the commission appears to have struck a compromise that appeases both LES and the environmental community.

"We lost in technical sense, but we feel this [decision] is a victory for us," Harmon said in an interview. "What we've been concerned about all along is that this project will go along without enough finances to make sure it is done safely."

In May, the ASLB denied the LES license application on a number of grounds, one of those being that LES failed to provide concrete funding commitments in its application for the construction and operation of the proposed facility "similar or identical" to those typically required for commercial power reactors under commission rules.

Specifically, the board noted that none of the corporate affiliates of LES's limited or general partners provided such commitments, nor had LES identified any lending banks that will provide funding.

The commission disagreed.

In its Dec. 18 decision, the commission said that "LES' financial plan, combined with financial commitments LES has made to the NRC in this proceeding, the nature of LES' proposed facility and our regulatory oversight program, give us a reasonable degree of confidence that if LES is able to move forward at all on the facility, it will have sufficient resources for safe construction and operation."

At the same time, however, the commission said that if the license is approved, LES cannot begin construction on the proposed facility before funding "is fully committed."

Of this full funding, the commission says, LES must have in place before construction "a minimum of equity contributions of 30 percent of project costs from the parents and affiliates of the LES partners, in escrow, on deposit," as well as firm commitments ensuring funding for the remaining project costs.

The next step for the commission is to consider whether to overturn the board's significantly more controversial finding, that environmental racism played a part in LES' decision to site the facility in a predominantly black community. The commission also must consider the board's ruling that NRC staff did not adequately explore the no-action alternative required under the National Environmental Policy Act.

If approved, the LES facility would be the first privately owned enrichment facility licensed in the United States.

December 22, 1997

Weapons Complex Monitor

Page 7 & 8

"FERNALD LLRW SHIPMENT LEAKS EN ROUTE TO NEVADA TEST SITE***Nevada's Leaders Call for Halt in LLRW Shipments to NTS"*****FERNALD LLRW SHIPMENT LEAKS
EN ROUTE TO NEVADA TEST SITE***Nevada's Leaders Call for Halt
in LLRW Shipments to NTS*

Wastewater laced with uranium was discovered leaking from a metal container in a truck ready to park in Kingman, Ariz., en route from the Fernald Environmental Management Project in Ohio to the Nevada Test Site (NTS) Dec. 16. A Department of Energy Fernald team determined the leak was the result of a 2"x1/8" crack in the base of a metal box nearest to the rear door of the trailer. The crack was located at the base of the box under the middle I-beam runner which elevates the base of the box off the floor.

The advent of the leak prompted Nevada Governor Bob Miller and Sen. Richard Bryan (D-Nev.) to ask Secretary Federico Peña to stop all low-level radioactive waste shipments destined for the Nevada Test Site until a full investigation is conducted. "DOE has once again shown its inability to safely conduct and manage the transportation of radioactive waste," Bryan remarked. Governor Miller added, "We can no longer trust the purported safety record of the DOE with the health of the citizens of this state who live along these transportation routes." At press time, Peña had not yet responded to Bryan and Miller's request.

One of Two Gallons Leaker From Traller

The driver of the truck noticed fluid leaking from the trailer as he was preparing for a routine stop in Kingman. The local fire department determined that one to two gallons of clear fluid had leaked. The Fernald Emergency Operations Center was activated to support the situation, and the Kingman sheriff isolated the truck in a 100-foot exclusion zone. The Albuquerque Radiological Assistance program team dispatched representatives to Kingman, but they found no contamination on the exterior of the truck.

No Risk to Public Health

"At no time was the public health or safety endangered," said Nevada Operations Office spokesman Darwin Morgan. The truck was transporting seven white metal boxes containing depleted slightly enriched uranium residues. There were three different types of material on the truck: sand used to filter wastewater prior to discharge to the Great Miami River; filter cake from wastewater treatment operations, which is 50-60% absorbed moisture in dicalite; and construction rubble from Plant 9 which may have included furnace brick, mortar, and concrete.

Fernald Will Investigate

Fernald, the busiest shipper to the NTS this fiscal year (*WC Monitor*, Vol. 8 Nos. 48 & 49) indicated that all shipments packed in the metal boxes will cease until an incident investigation is complete and corrective actions have been completed. DOE Officials indicated to *WC Monitor* that they will be looking at the structural integrity of the boxes, and check the limits of moisture content in the boxes. The leaked fluid in the trailer will be cleaned up and residual material will be overpacked and transported to the NTS for disposal.

This incident comes at a time when the NTS is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the creation a LLRW intermodal facility in rural Lincoln County, Nevada. The intermodal facility would limit the number of LLW shipments that would travel through the congested Las Vegas Valley (*WC Monitor*, Vol. 8 Nos. 45 & 46). The EA should be completed sometime this spring. ◀

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Journal News

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"Efforts to protect water honored"

By Karen Holcomb-Journal-News

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Efforts to protect water honored

By Karen Holcomb
Journal-News

HAMILTON

Hamilton, Fairfield and other members of a local groundwater-protection consortium have been honored for their efforts to safeguard the area's drinking water.

They have been named Groundwater Guardian Communities for 1997.

"It's a great honor," said Lara Whitely-Binder, well-field protection coordinator for the Hamilton to New Baltimore Groundwater Consortium. Only 143 communities in 36 states, Canada and Mexico received the national designation this year. It is awarded by the Groundwater Foundation in Lincoln, Neb.

"I liken it to the Tree City USA program," Whitely-Binder said. "I think it's a real good indication that the community cares about its drinking water and is actively involved in protecting its drinking water. To say that you're a Groundwater Guardian Community is a short way of saying a lot of things."

Members of the Hamilton to New Baltimore Goundwater Consortium were awarded the designation. They are Fairfield, Hamilton, Cincinnati, the South-

west Regional Water District, Southwestern Ohio Water Company, Champion International and Fluor-Daniel Fernald.

The consortium was formed to educate the public about groundwater and develop a wellhead-protection program.

Whitely-Binder will ask the Butler County commissioners and the city councils in Hamilton and Fairfield to adopt the wellhead-protection program next year. The program has been in development for seven years.

Along with making presentations at schools, distributing information at festivals and producing an educational video, the consortium developed a 28-page World Wide Web site that went online Monday. The address is www.gwconsortium.org.

Whitely-Binder also is planning a Butler County Groundwater Festival for March 1999 at Miami University's Hamilton campus. The event, for fifth- and sixth-graders, will include presentations and interactive activities designed to educate children about groundwater.

"The big emphasis is to make it fun and hands-on," Whitely-Binder said. "We have some really fun expectations out of this. It's such a positive thing."