



# Environmental Bulletin

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*from the Savannah River Site*

## Rocky Flats ROD issued

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced issuance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Certain Plutonium Residues and Scrub Alloy Stored at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (DOE/EIS-0277F) on August 28, 1998 (63 FR 46006). In the EIS, DOE considered the potential environmental impacts of a proposed action to prepare certain plutonium residues and scrub alloy currently stored at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (Rocky Flats) near Golden, Colorado, for disposal or other disposition. DOE has decided (Record of Decision 63 FR 66136 on December 1, 1998) to implement the Preferred Alternative specified in the Final EIS for the following categories of material: (1) Sand, slag and crucible residues, (2) Direct oxide reduction salt residues (low plutonium concentration), (3) Combustible residues, (4) Plutonium fluoride residues, (5) Ful Flo filter media residues, (6) Glass

residues, (7) Graphite residues, (8) Inorganic (metal and other) residues, and (9) Scrub alloy.

Some of the material considered will be shipped to the Savannah River Site between 1998 and 2002. Approximately 3,377 kg of sand, slag and crucible residues and plutonium fluoride residues (containing approximately 271 kg of plutonium), and approximately 700 kg of scrub alloy (containing approximately 200 kg of plutonium) will be packaged and shipped to SRS where these materials will be stabilized in the F-Canyon by chemically separating the plutonium from the remaining materials in the residues and scrub alloy. The separated plutonium will be placed in safe and secure storage, along with a larger quantity of plutonium already in storage at the Savannah River Site, until DOE has completed the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement (DOE/EIS-0283, under preparation, draft issued in July 1998).

## EA being prepared on repair of Pond B Dam

DOE has determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to analyze potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed Pond B dam repair project at the Savannah River Site (SRS), located near Aiken, South Carolina. The proposed action consists of repairs to the downstream slope and toe of the Pond B dam. Pond B is one of the former reactor cooling ponds located on SRS which contains low levels of radionuclide contamination within the lakebed sediments and waters of the impoundment. The dam is an earth embankment constructed in the early 1950's. Inspections by SRS engineers and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission have found seepage conditions and erosion which threaten the stability of

the dam. The purpose of the proposed action is to make repairs to increase the stability of the dam and reduce the risk of failure.

A notification of DOE's intent to prepare this EA was sent to the states of South Carolina and Georgia on December 8, 1998. If you wish to request a copy of the predecisional draft EA when it becomes available, please contact:

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## CAB recommendations include a health and safety priority list

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board met on November 15-17 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Columbia, S.C. The following were major outcomes of the meeting:

- \* Three candidates and an alternate for fifteen stakeholder positions for 1999 membership elections were selected. Phone interviews will be conducted in December.

- \* A recommendation was made in support of the focus group review of the selection of high level waste salt disposition alternatives supporting a dual track approach (Small Tank TPB Precipitation-DWPF vitrification and Crystalline Silicotitanate Ion Exchange-DWPF vitrification) until a preferred alternative is clear.

- \* The CAB requested DOE prepare a priority list based strictly on health and safety risks to workers, the public and the environment along with the traditional list prepared under the budget system and a justification for differences between the two lists.

- \* The SRS CAB recommended that DOE and the regulators provide dedicated representatives and technical support to a focus group to determine final closure of the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground.

- \* A recommendation was made on the disposal of low level waste and mixed low level waste addressed in the Waste Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

- \* The SRS CAB recommended that DOE give its most careful consideration to the findings in a National Academy of Sciences Report on alternate technologies for managing spent nuclear fuel. The Board also requested a detailed description of how DOE considered the report.

- \* The Board provided a letter in support of Nevada Test Site Citizens Advisory Board recommendations on intermodal transportation of low level radioactive wastes to the Test Site.

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