



**Savannah River Site Watch**

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**For Immediate Release**

**February 12, 2018**

**SRS Watch Congratulates Trump Administration for Sticking with Sound Policy  
to Terminate Plutonium MOX Boondoggle at Savannah River Site**

Columbia, SC – The Trump Administration is sticking with its assessment that the dead-end plutonium fuel (MOX) project at the Savannah River Site should be terminated. Savannah River Site Watch applauds the position of the administration that MOX is not viable and that the waste of money on it must be terminated.

The U.S. Department of Energy budget request for Fiscal Year 2019 was released today and, to no surprise, supports termination of funds for the bungled construction of the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MFFF). The request states: "Nonproliferation Construction - The budget proposes to terminate the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication project and transition to the dilute and dispose strategy to fulfill the United States' commitment to dispose of 34 metric tons of surplus U.S. weapon-grade plutonium." (page 374)

See DOE request, posted by the White House:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/doe-fy2019.pdf>

An amount of \$279 million is requested to terminate the mismanaged MOX (see page 373). This is well below the current \$340 million that the project is receiving, an amount that keeps the project on a congressional mandated shut-down track.

In a budget overview entitled "An American Budget," the Trump administration stated that "the Budget would avoid \$10 to \$12 billion in waste by terminating construction of the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility in favor of a plutonium disposition alternative." (see page 46 –

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/budget-fy2019.pdf>)

"Given that the MOX project is not financially viable and that construction problems persist, the only thing that makes sense is to terminate the mismanaged project as soon as possible," said Tom Clements, director of Savannah River Site Watch. "The Trump administration has analyzed the situation with plutonium disposition and again concluded that the MOX project is a waste of tax payer money and will never be finished or operate and I congratulate the administration for sticking by the MOX-termination position."

SRS Watch continues to receive reports that the MOX construction faces overwhelming management and construction problems and that “work packages” are not able to be closed and that “rework” (work done incorrectly) remains overwhelming, especially with the HVAC system. Even with a company called McDermott taking over CB&I (of CB&I AREVA MOX Services), the problems persist and can never be fully corrected, according to sources.

On February 8, a top DOE nominee stated at her hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee that "I am aware that the Administration proposes to terminate the MOX project. I believe the dilute and dispose approach is a proven, less costly, alternative to the MOX facility."

**Notes:**

**1. MOX, SRS photos, January 31, 2018**, publicized by SRS Watch and ©High Flyer:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1SZ9lqOqb-50HOuJJ9IHVwa\\_t8DYvfP13](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1SZ9lqOqb-50HOuJJ9IHVwa_t8DYvfP13)

**2. See "Advance Policy Questions for Lisa Gordon-Hagerty - Nominee for Under Secretary for Nuclear Security, Department of Energy" - February 8, Senate Armed Services**

[https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Gordon-Hagerty%20APQ%20Responses\\_02-08-18.pdf](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Gordon-Hagerty%20APQ%20Responses_02-08-18.pdf)

**Hearing link - archived webcast & testimony:**

[https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/hearings/18-02-08-nominations\\_--ney---fahey---ayres---gordon-hagerty](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/hearings/18-02-08-nominations_--ney---fahey---ayres---gordon-hagerty)

**3. MOX Prime Parent CB&I to Be Acquired By McDermott** - Exchange Monitor, Dec. 19, 2017:

<https://www.exchangemonitor.com/mox-prime-parent-cbi-acquired-mcdermott/>

other articles on McDermott takeover:

<https://globenewswire.com/news-release/2017/12/18/1263669/0/en/McDermott-and-CB-I-to-Combine-in-Transaction-Valued-at-6-Billion.html>

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/mcdermott-cbi-to-merge-into-oil--gas-epc-giant-with-139-billion-in-active-projects-an-industrial-info-news-alert-300573621.html>

[http://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/business/article\\_53a8ddae-e43b-11e7-92b5-bbc8588515bb.html](http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/business/article_53a8ddae-e43b-11e7-92b5-bbc8588515bb.html)

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