



Savannah River Site Watch

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For Release On

October 12, 2017

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South Carolina Nuclear Advisory Council (NAC) to Meet, Unprecedented Focus on Mismanaged Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Project at SRS - *The Other Nuclear Debacle in the State* - October 12, 1 p.m., 209 Gressette Building, in Columbia, SC – Prelude to Termination or Just Making it More Efficient?

[NAC Agenda Linked Here](#)

Unprecedented Presentations on MOX by Key Officials a First, Could Signal Trouble for Future of the MOX Boondoggle at DOE's Savannah River Site (SRS) as Layoffs Proceed

Columbia, SC – In an unprecedented meeting, the South Carolina Nuclear Advisory Council is set to meet to discuss the mismanaged \$17 billion plutonium fuel (MOX) construction project at DOE's Savannah River Site. The MOX project is "the other nuclear boondoggle" in South Carolina, which has garnered less attention given the attention on the failure of the V.C. Summer construction project.

The [Nuclear Advisory Council will meet at 1 p.m. on Thursday, October 12](#), in Columbia and the focus of the meeting will be the status of the troubled MOX project and the management of 12 metric tons of plutonium now stored at SRS with no exit path. A key DOE project management official from Washington and the president of CB&I AREVA MOX Services, the private company that has bungled the design and design and construction of the MOX plant, will make unprecedented presentations.

"The mismanaged MOX project at SRS is in serious trouble due to design problems, massive cost overruns and significant schedule delays, making it a twin to the failed V.C. Summer nuclear reactor construction project," said Tom Clements, director of the public interest organization Savannah River Site Watch. "Time may have run out for the chronically troubled MOX project and formal termination should be at hand, something we have long called for given that it has been clear that MOX had become nothing more than a massive money pit," said Clements, who will make a public comment at the NAC meeting and be available for interviews.

The problem-plagued construction project, which began on August 1, 2007, is slated for termination by the Trump Administration and is currently facing layoffs, according to information provided to Savannah River Site Watch. The MOX presentations on October 12 could give insight into what DOE and Congress are planning to do with MOX, the construction of which would not be finished until 2048, according to DOE.

SRS Watch has learned that about 200 craft workers have been laid off in the last two weeks - in the start of the new fiscal year on October 1 - and that special inspections are underway by DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to determine if selected areas of the project have been constructed to required standards. SRS Watch has heard for years that shoddy construction and improper inspections have been the norm at the failing project and could possibly result in failed inspections of "work packages" or "final attributes" inspections.

It is unknown if the layoffs and special inspections are a precursor to project termination or are a final attempt by MOX Services to show DOE and Congress that the project can be run more efficiently and possibly salvaged to survive in the short term.

The Senate Appropriations Committee has, for the first time, recommended termination of MOX but an agreement with the House has yet to be revealed. Congress is currently funding MOX (and other programs) through a Continuing Resolution until December 8 at a shut-down level of \$340 million/year. Trump has requested \$270 million to terminate the project in Fiscal Year 2018. Senator Lindsey Graham has tried to protect CB&I MOX Services from termination but he has stood alone in his effort and not been able to convince the Senate to fund the project to the \$800 million it needs annually.

MOX presentations of significance to the NAC or any other public SRS meeting by MOX officials are unprecedented and have not taken place since 2007 in any meeting related to SRS, according to SRS Watch.

Notes:

SRS Watch news release, October 10, 2017 – new aerial photos of MOX plant released:

http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/news_mox_photos_released_by_srs_watch_oct_9_2017.pdf

Agenda for NAC meeting on October 12 – posted on SC Department of Administration website on October 11:

<http://www.admin.sc.gov/files/nac/Agenda%20for%20Oct%2012,%202017%20Meeting.pdf>

SOUTH CAROLINA NUCLEAR ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Gressette Building, Room #209

October 12, 2017

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Call to Order – Approval of Minutes Rick Lee, Chair (10 minutes)

SCDHEC Update Shelly Wilson, DHEC, SRS Federal Facilities Liaison (15 minutes)

SRS Update Terry Spears, Savannah River Operations Office, (SR) Deputy Manager (15 minutes)

Liquid Waste Update Jim Folk, SR Assistant Manager for Waste, Waste Management and Tom Foster, President and Project Manager, Savannah River Remediation (20 minutes)

H Canyon Down Blending Tony Polk, SR Director, Nuclear Materials Program (20 minutes)

MOX Update Robert Raines, NNSA, Associate Administrator for Acquisition and Project Management (30 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

MOX Update – Project Status David Del Vecchio, President and Project Manager, CB&I AREVA MOX Services (30 minutes)

Disposition of German HEU Gary DeLeon, Director, Government Services, Edlow International Company (30 minutes)

MOX Site Visit Update Rick Lee, Chair (10 minutes)

Public Comments

Closing Remarks Rick Lee, Chair (5 minutes)