

Savannah River Site – Accomplishments and Challenges

A View from the SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Donald Bridges, Chairman
March 1, 2011





SRS Citizens Advisory Board

An Exercise in Citizen Participation

**Political or social involvement
in the community, government,
or organization
in order to improve
or maintain the status quo
or to have impact on policy formation
and decision making**



Introduction

Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board

- SRS Citizens Advisory Board is an Outreach Program by Environmental Management (EM) to provide information, advice, and recommendations to DOE on issues relating to cleanup.
 - Provides a forum for communications between DOE and the public
 - Instills public confidence in cleanup process
- SRS Citizens Advisory Board is one of eight site-specific advisory boards within the DOE Complex.



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

- SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) was established in 1994 under the authority of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.
- Consists of 25 citizens who represent a diversity of community interests
 - Minority representation
 - Labor organizations
 - Environmental groups
 - Geographical diversity
 - Civic groups
 - Business
 - Academia
 - Public at large
- CAB members are volunteers and are unpaid.



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

- Organized into four issue-based committees

Nuclear
Materials

Waste
Management

Strategic
and Legacy
Management

Facilities
Disposition
and Site
Remediation



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

- Full Board meets bi-monthly
- Committees typically meet between full Board meetings
- Majority of work is carried out at committee meetings
- Prime source of information for CAB
 - Briefings from DOE, federal and state regulators, and private contractors
 - Review of site reports, incidents and general activities
 - Training and Site tours



SRS Citizens Advisory Board Committee Activities

- Develop Annual Work Plans (topics) within guidelines/programs established by DOE
- Prioritize, schedule and review topics based on:
 - Critical milestones
 - Safety issues
 - Funding emphasis
 - Management interest, etc.
- Topics for 2011 include
 - Salt Waste Processing Activities
 - Plutonium Disposition
 - P and R Reactors Decommission
 - Tank Closure Program
 - H Canyon Process
 - SR Strategic Plan





Savannah River Site

- SRS has had a significant impact on the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) for six decades
 - Large work force of 11,000 employees
- SRS has had mostly positive community relationships within the CSRA due to:
 - Consistently safe operations over the long term
 - Relatively minor environmental off-site impacts
 - Proactive public outreach efforts of the Site
- However, SRS has a long operating history and is now involved in a complex cleanup activity that extends well into the 2030s.





Extent of Cleanup

- One of most daunting cleanup tasks ever undertaken anywhere
- \$60-70 billion effort
- 37 million gallons of liquid waste
- largest environmental risk in SC
- “First Ever - State of the Art” Facilities
 - Defense Waste Processing Facility
 - Mixed Oxide Fuel Facility
 - Salt Waste Processing Facility
- First ever in-place decommissioning of a major Reactor (P Reactor)
- Major activity: soil/groundwater remediation





Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)

- The vast scope of the cleanup effort validates the wisdom of having stakeholder involvement considering:
 - Very complex Site activities
 - Massive cleanup costs
 - Extended time period for cleanup
- The CAB has served as an effective medium for public involvement.





SRS Citizens Advisory Board Record of Accomplishment

- Since establishment in 1994, the Citizens Advisory Board has a notable record of accomplishments.
 - Adopted approximately 275 recommendations
 - Recommendations have been very specific and raised many issues of concern that have resulted in improvements



Record of Accomplishment Typical Examples

- Pushed development of system wide plan for disposition of high level liquid waste.
- Encouraged DOE to move faster to close 51 waste tanks
- Urged increased emphasis on legacy TRU waste removal
- Instrumental in developing SRS cleanup metrics
- Recommended extension of Job Training Initiative for underserved individuals
- Now addressing federal repository for high level waste





SRS Citizens Advisory Board Indicators of Success

- Many individuals willing to serve
- Number of recommendations
- Quality of recommendations
- Close working relationships with other agencies, such as NRC, EPA, SC DHEC, GA DNR, and DNFSB
- Distinct impact on SRS program priorities and progress
- Positive feedback from DOE





A Citizen's Perspective: Cleanup the SRS Public Wants:

- SRS cleaned up in a timely manner to regulatory standards
- SRS to continue defense-related missions
 - Tritium Recycle
 - MOX Facility
- SRS postured to accept new missions that builds on Site capabilities and provides jobs
- SRS maintained as a national asset as a National Environmental Research Park for appropriate use which serves the national interest



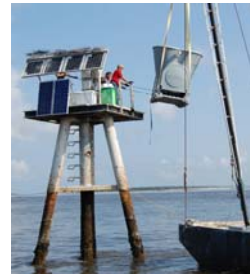
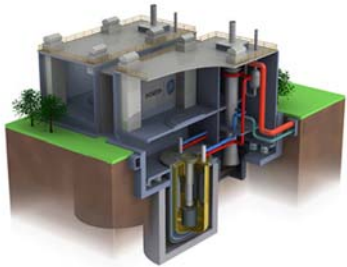
A Citizen's Perspective SRS Cleanup

- There is general consensus among the local public that SRS is being cleaned up properly and in a timely manner.
- There are numerous opportunities for public involvement and input.
- However, the nature and manner of involvement can be very complex.
- Challenge: make the process more understandable



A Citizen's Perspective: New Missions the SRS Public would like:

- **SRS postured to accept new missions such as:**
 - Nuclear Initiatives (particularly appealing) consistent with Site's historic capabilities and expertise such as:
 - Training and test reactors
 - Nuclear power reactors such as Small Modular Reactor
 - Research and development on Nuclear Fuel Cycle
 - Nuclear Security and nonproliferation activities / initiatives
 - Other energy initiatives
 - Energy park concepts
 - Wind and solar energy research and application
 - Other energy R&D
 - Environmental studies of all types especially to maintain and expand the in-depth body of ecological research





A Citizen's Perspective: Environment the SRS Public would like:

- SRS maintained as a National Asset as natural habitat for environmental research and appropriate citizen and federal government use
 - It is increasingly rare that natural forest and wetlands are maintained in such pristine condition.
 - It is not inconsistent to continue mission work and protect the unique ecosystems at the Site, often referred to as the “emerald island.”





Major Challenges for SRS

- Delivering on cleanup commitments
- Dealing with cleanup with the almost-certain budget cuts soon to be realized
- Transitioning the Site into the future with new missions critical to our national interests.
- Involving the public in an understandable manner

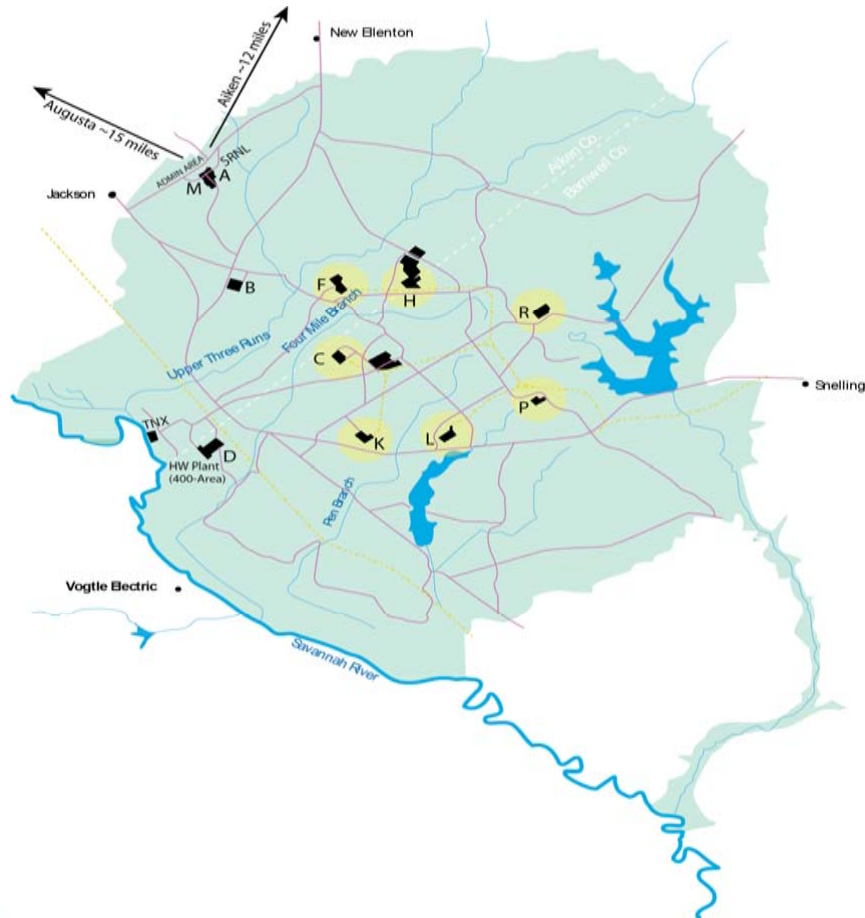


Summary

- SRS continuing its massive and daunting cleanup task
 - Progress significant but much of work remains to be done
- Citizens Advisory Board as a stakeholder for the public interest has been significant contributor for citizen input during its 16-year history.
 - Carried out its mission diligently and with enthusiasm
 - Involvement has led to many recommendations that resulted in improvements
- By any measure, CAB has been a noteworthy success.



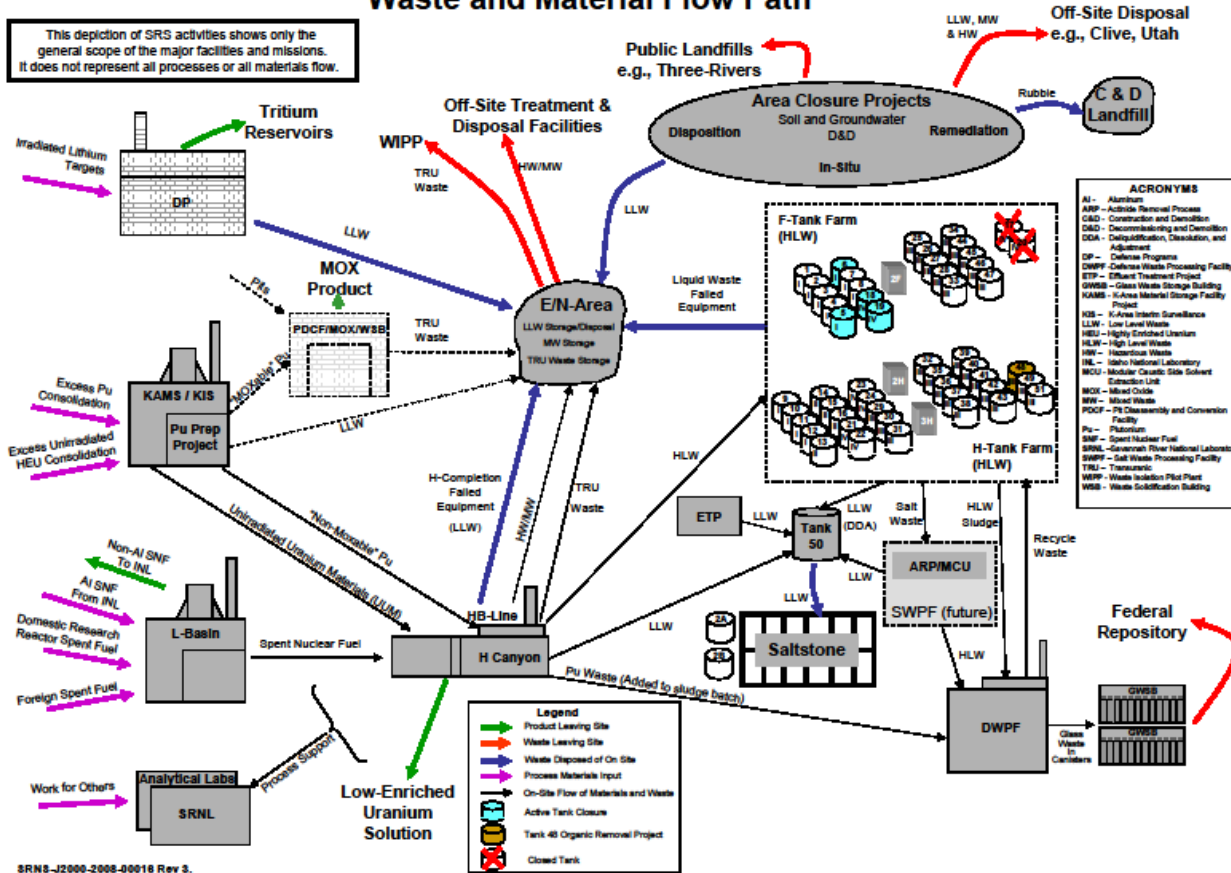
Backup Slides





Backup Slides

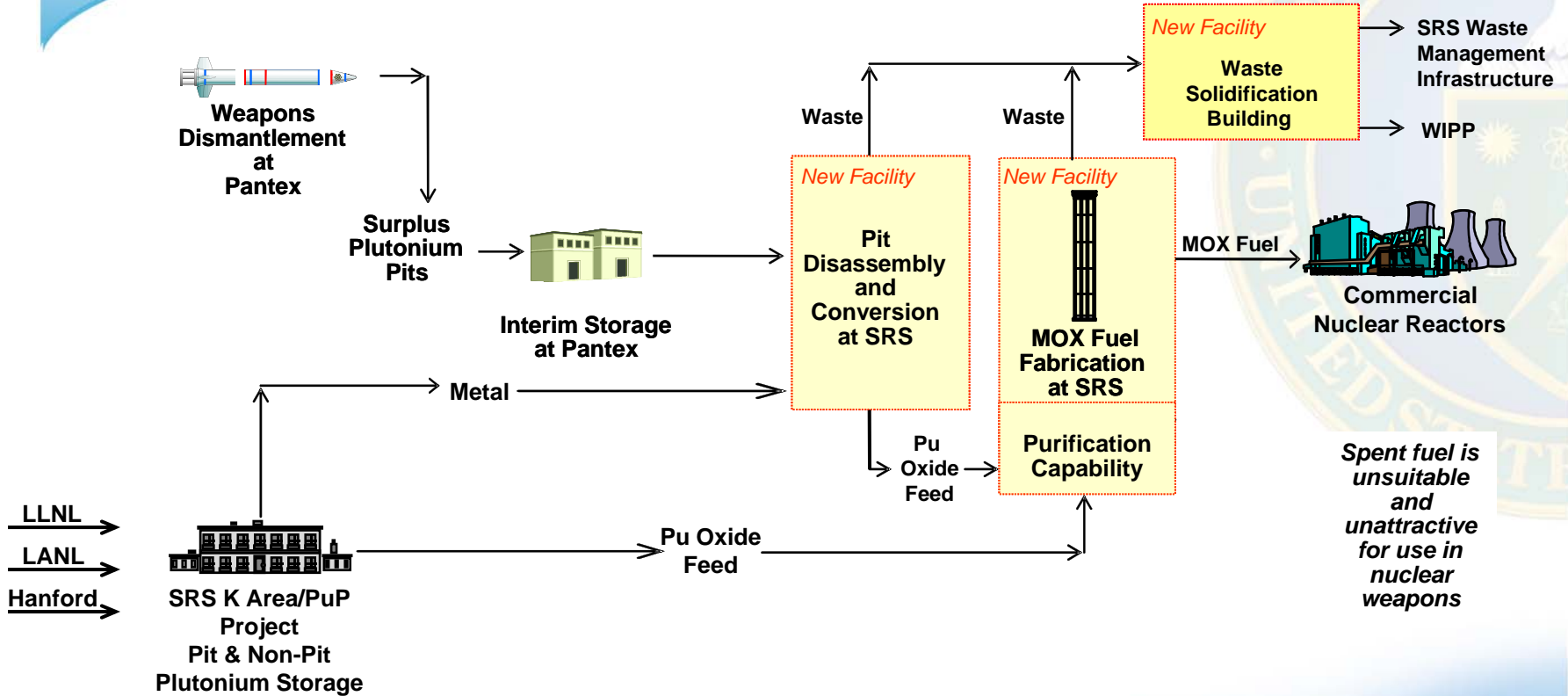
Savannah River Site Waste and Material Flow Path





Backup Slides

Plutonium Disposition Path





Backup Slides

Liquid Waste Overview

