



March 25, 2025  
Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)  
Full Board Meeting Summary  
DOE Meeting Center, Aiken, SC

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## Monday March 25 Attendance

### CAB Attendees

Marty Ball	Phyllis Britt	Michelle Bush
Patrick Kilroy	Scott McKay	Kim Ray
Kenneth Sajwan	Janie Scott	Hubert Van Tuyll

### Absent Board Members

Nathaniel Hartley		

### SRS Site Personnel

Edwin Deshong, DOE-SR Acting Manager	James Tanner, CAB DDFO, DOE-SR	Olin Gene Rhodes, SREL
Herbert Crapse, DOE-SR	Kristen Garlic, DOE-SR	John Clark, DOE-SR
Sonya Goines, DOE-SR	Philip DeFoggi, SKLS	Catelyn Folkert, SRNL
Karen Morrow, DOE-SR	Matt Baker, DOE-SR	Shante Adams, S&K
Emily Saleeby, SRMC	Steven Grant, DOE-SR	

### SRS CAB Support Staff (S&K Logistics)

Stephanie Kemmerlin, Program Analyst	Juanita Campbell, CAB Administrator	Chris Parker, Meeting Coordinator

### Agency Liaisons & Public

Susan Fulmer, SC DES	Gregory O'Quinn, SC DES	Tom Clements, SRS Watch
Heather Cathcart, SC DES	Brianne Martin, EPA	Jon Richards, EPA
Jana Dawson, EPA	Madeleine Kellett, SC DES	Skyler Andrews, The Augusta Press
Ashley Catterton, Augusta Planning and Development		



**Meeting Summary  
SRS CAB – Full Board Meeting  
DOE Meeting Center, Aiken, SC  
March 25, 2025**

Meeting began at 9:00 AM Eastern Standard Time

**Meeting Introduction: Juanita Campbell, CAB Facilitator**

Ms. Campbell opened the March Full Board meeting by welcoming everyone and reminded those seated in the U-shape to speak directly into the microphones.

**Chair Update: Phyllis Britt, CAB Chair**

Ms. Britt welcomed everyone to the March CAB Meeting and asked each person seated in the U-shape to introduce themselves.

**Environmental Management (EM) Manager Update**

Savannah River Site (SRS) EM Acting Manager, Mr. Edwin Deshong, provided an update on current SRS projects.

**EM Manager Update Q&A**

Ms. Britt noted that the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative (AMC) Lab Facility at the University of South Carolina Aiken is a beautiful facility.

**Agency Updates**

Mr. Jon Richards, with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), announced that Kevin McComber has been appointed as the Regional Administrator for Region 4. He also mentioned that he participated in the Five-Year Remedy Review visit on-site to observe drone footage related to groundwater remediation efforts.

Ms. Susan Fulmer, with South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (DES), provided an update on the central office activities. She reported that they toured the D-Area Groundwater Operable Unit to observe the groundwater investigation for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). She also mentioned that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently interviewed SC DES to provide their perspective on high-level waste management.

Mr. Gregory O'Quinn, with South Carolina DES, provided an update on the regional activities. He reported that two stream monitoring events were completed on February 4 and March 6, involving non-radiological sampling at one of the stream sites. Additionally, on March 3, compliance activities were conducted, including collecting drinking water samples from four on-site drinking water systems, all of which were rated as satisfactory. He stated on March 18, a wastewater inspection was conducted for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance evaluation at the land application site for the sanitary wastewater plant. Regarding air and land programs, he mentioned that two saltstone inspections were conducted on February 11 and March 11.



### **Agency Updates Q&A**

Mr. Van Tuyll inquired about the impact of recent drastic changes to the EPA's mission on Mr. Richards' office.

Mr. Richards stated that they are excited about Steve Cook's return to lead their office. He noted they are taking things day at a time while ensuring the work is accomplished.

Mr. Kilroy asked Mr. O'Quinn what non-radiological testing is.

Mr. O'Quinn explained that it is the process of evaluating the integrity and properties of materials and components without using radiation.

Mr. Kilroy then inquired about how much non-radiological testing has changed over the last five years.

Mr. O'Quinn responded that the testing processes have remained steady, but he will follow up with more detailed information.

### **Legacy Transuranic (TRU) Waste Update: Steven Grant, DOE-SR**

Mr. Grant presented on SRS Legacy TRU Waste, providing an overview of its history, operations, accomplishments, challenges, and inventory.

### **Legacy TRU Waste Update Q&A**

Ms. Britt noted an accident involving materials that did not come from SRS and inquired about how the process has changed since the accident.

Mr. Grant explained that, due to the incident, changes were made to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC), which reduced the number of certain materials accepted, while others were put on hold. As a result, all previously certified containers had to undergo a new certification process. SRS has been diligently updating the paperwork and verifying that containers comply with the revised WAC requirements. One recent success was testing and WIPP approval of Soda Ash up to a certain quantity as an absorbent, which allowed some of the containers that were on hold to be certified. In summary, the incident caused delays in the disposition of TRU waste due to rework, an increased level of documentation, and ongoing certification efforts for the TRU containers that were put on hold.

Ms. Britt asked about the role of Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) employees when they come on site to retrieve the containers.

Ms. Garlick with DOE-SR noted WIPP employees assist with loading and characterizing the containers.

Mr. Van Tuyll referenced slide three and inquired if only three thousand containers remain onsite.

Mr. Grant clarified that the numbers shown are from 1999 and much of the material has become legacy. He noted that there are approximately four hundred legacy containers currently on site.

Mr. Van Tuyll asked if the nine thousand buried drums had been retrieved.

Mr. Grant responded that TRU drums/containers are no longer stored below ground. He added that it is unclear if all previously stored underground drums have been shipped to WIPP. If any drums remain, they are stored on the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) approved TRU Pads.

Mr. Kilroy asked what overpack is.

Mr. Grant explained that when there is an issue with a drum, such as rust, the process of overpacking involves placing the drum into another container.



Mr. Kilroy asked what the drums are made of.  
Mr. Grant stated that the drums are standard waste boxes made of steel.

Mr. Kilroy asked about the risks associated with repackaging drums.  
Mr. Grant stated that the primary risk is exposure. He noted that they take safety precautions to mitigate all risks, such as building containment huts and wearing protective suits.

Ms. Britt asked for an explanation of the 2014 shutdown at Las Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).  
Mr. Craspe from DOE-SR explained that the TRU waste was not compliant and had to be repackaged. He detailed that they had to build a containment hut, remove the waste from the original container, and repackage it into multiple containers. He noted that an absorbent process was being conducted at LANL during that time.

Ms. Britt asked if SRS has ever used kitty litter or a similar material.  
Mr. Craspe from DOE-SR confirmed they have used something similar. He noted he was not aware of the specifics LANL used and how they used it.

Mr. Kilroy asked if anyone has ever thrown any shoes or old tools in the containers.  
Mr. Craspe from DOE-SR confirmed that old tools were thrown into the containers.

Mr. Kilroy asked if they crushed the old empty containers and put them into new containers.  
Mr. Craspe from DOE-SR stated they did not crush the drums; some drums are shipped empty.

Ms. Britt mentioned that a container was shipped back about a year ago, and no discrepancies were initially found. She inquired about the status of the container.  
Mr. Grant explained that after the container was shipped back, SRS reloaded it and placed it under a vacuum, where they discovered some things. He noted that the container is currently in a containment hut, and they are working through the process of dispositioning it.

### **Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL): Dr. Gene Rhodes, SREL**

Dr. Rhodes provided an overview of SREL FY24, highlighting SREL's mission, staffing, funding, and work scope, as well as opportunities and challenges for FY25.

### **Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) Q&A**

Mr. Kilroy mentioned that he lives in Goose Creek, north of Charleston, SC. He noted that the area has the highest concentration of PFAS in South Carolina. He asked if SREL is working on a method to remove PFAS.  
Dr. Rhodes noted that SREL is not currently involved in the removal of PFAS, but other groups are addressing this issue. He stated that SREL is currently focused on the characterization of PFAS.

Mr. Ball mentioned that one of the advantages of SREL used to be the undeveloped forest areas, and during a previous tour, he observed that a significant amount of the area now appears to be managed by forest services. He inquired to what extent the unmanaged areas are shrinking.  
Dr. Rhodes responded that there are still many undeveloped areas. However, it is unclear what the new administration's requirements for timber harvest will be. He also noted that timber is being cut in areas where it has not been harvested in the last 30 years.



Ms. Britt mentioned that last year or the year before, a recommendation was submitted to DOE-SR asking for additional funding for projects aimed at engaging kids who might not get involved without financial support. She inquired about a status update.

Dr. Rhodes stated that they have had conversations with DOE-SR and was working toward securing funding for FY25 and FY26. He explained that funding was not granted for FY25 but could potentially be allocated in FY26. He expressed hope that they will receive the funds to start the experiential learning program in FY26.

### **Liquid Waste Update: Preparing for Spring Outage: Mike Borders, SRMC**

Mr. Borders provided an update on the progress of the Liquid Waste Clean-Up and the planned spring outage for 2025.

### **Liquid Waste Update: Preparing for Spring Outage Q&A**

Mr. Kilroy mentioned that he has been hearing the term "salt" for a while and wanted to verify that they are increasing the amount of salt compared to the water put into the tank.

Mr. Borders confirmed this and explained that when they dissolve the salt cake, they can adjust its concentration by using less water.

Mr. Kilroy then asked what salt is.

Mr. Borders explained that there are various kinds of salt, specifically referencing sodium chloride. He clarified that in this context, it refers to the radioactive waste resulting from the dissolution process in the canyon.

Mr. Kilroy wanted to verify whether radionuclides accumulate around the rim inside the tanks.

Mr. Borders stated that radionuclides do not accumulate in that manner. He explained that what Mr. Kilroy may be referring to is corrosion at the water line right at the edge of the rim of some tanks. He noted that as part of their program, they manage the tank levels to ensure they do not remain at the same level for too long, and there are additional controls in place. He further explained that they monitor the chemistry in those tanks very closely, frequently sampling and making caustic and nitrite additions to prevent corrosion.

Mr. Kilroy then asked if the tanks are lap welded or butt welded.

Mr. Borders stated that he did not have the exact details but explained that the tanks underwent thorough welding processes. He noted that they had to stress-relieve the welds to ensure there would be no future cracking. Additionally, he mentioned that they use detailed chemistry to ensure nothing attacks the metals or welds and conduct detailed inspections to maintain tank integrity.

Ms. Britt asked what types of adjustments were necessary to process higher curies.

Mr. Borders stated that their process itself did not change. He mentioned that the primary challenge is managing the higher radiation levels of equipment coming out of the process. After the process is complete, they decontaminate (DECON) the equipment, and sometimes this requires extending the DECON time to reduce the radiation levels to a manageable range. He noted that there have been no changes to the overall process or flow sheet.



Ms. Britt asked if higher curies affect the speed of the process.

Mr. Borders stated that higher curies do not affect the speed of the process. He noted that they must send samples to the laboratory, but this does not impact the overall process.

Mr. Ball asked if the chemical composition of the higher curie material is the same as that of the lower curie material, and if different compositions could potentially slow down the process.

Mr. Borders confirmed that, chemically, the composition is the same. He explained that they operate within the WAC, which sets parameters that must be met when transferring material from one plant to another. For example, when the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) sends material to the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF), they must meet SWPF's WAC. He noted that higher curie batches must meet the same parameters as lower curie batches. All the key elements, such as the constituent components and their allowable ranges, are consistent across both high and low curie batches.

### **Board Business:**

(Conducted board business while waiting on the last presenter to arrive)

Ms. Campbell reviewed the Budget Priority Letter.

Mr. Tanner explained that the letter outlines the activities on-site, ranked in order of importance to the board. He noted that the letter communicates the board's priorities to DOE-SR and is included with DOE-SR's budget submission to headquarters as a form of community input.

Mr. Van Tuyll stated the rankings had already been determined in a previous meeting.

Ms. Campbell confirmed that the rankings were previously established, and it is time for the board to review them again.

Mr. Tanner stated that the Budget Priority Letter must be reviewed annually.

Ms. Campbell verified that the year on the letter should state FY 2027.

Ms. Britt asked about the amount of payment in lieu of taxes that the government provides.

Mr. Deshong noted the following amounts: Barnwell County received \$4,765,368, Aiken County received \$1,620,000, and Allendale County received \$89,500.

Ms. Britt then asked if there are any conditions attached to that money.

Mr. Deshong explained that the main requirement is that, instead of taxes, the government agrees on a payment amount per county.

Mr. Van Tuyll motioned to approve the Budget Priority Letter and Mr. Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Van Tuyll asked about the lease details on the DOE Meeting Center.

Mr. Deshong stated the lease will end in June at the DOE Meeting Center and the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative (AMC) is scheduled to open in June. He noted that there are several places to engage the public offsite including the multiuse facility and Savannah River Ecology Lab.





## **USDA Forest Service-Savannah River: 2024 Year in Review: DeVela Clark, USDA Forest Service-SR**

Mr. DeVela Clark, USDA Forest Service-SR, gave a presentation on the USDA Forest Service-Savannah River 2024 year in review.

### **USDA Forest Service-Savannah River: 2024 Year in Review Q&A**

Mr. Kilroy asked how many different types of trees are included in the half-million trees planted on site. Mr. Clark noted that there are mainly two types of pine trees: loblolly and longleaf. He also mentioned that there are some oak trees, but primarily pine trees.

Mr. Kilroy then asked if there are any walnut trees. Mr. Clark confirmed that there are no walnut trees.

Ms. Britt mentioned that one line in the presentation referred to invasive species. She asked about the extent of trouble they have with invasive species at SRS and what kinds are present. Mr. Clark stated that SRS has a number of invasive species. He noted that the main two are privet and kudzu.

Mr. Josef from the USDA Forest Service-SR noted that non-native species have become a problem following the hurricane due to the disturbed habitats. He stated that forest ecologists and botanists are working to identify the pond berry plants at SRS. Additionally, he noted that plant climbers go out to protect some of the smooth purple coneflower and pond berry plants.

Mr. Ball asked how much of the area is devoted to silviculture, as opposed to areas that are allowed to reach climax forest to maintain their natural state. Mr. Clark responded that most of the forest is dedicated to timber management and silvicultural practices.

Mr. Ball asked if the income from the forestry industry covers the costs on site. Mr. Clark stated that those funds do not go to the site; they go to the U.S. Treasury. He noted that they have a five-year interagency agreement with DOE-SR.

### **Public Comments**

Mr. Clements, Director of the SRS Watch, mentioned that he first came to SRS in the 1970s while he was a graduate student in Forestry at the University of Georgia. He expressed his concern about the survival of the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) and other site advisory boards around the country. He noted that he has been hearing about meetings being reduced and canceled at Hanford and other sites, with rumors that the meetings might be going virtual. He expressed his appreciation for the work CAB members do and encouraged them to fight for the board's existence. He remarked that the Freedom of Information Act has become less functional from one administration to the next.

Mr. Clements stated that he was pleased to hear about the high-level waste tanks and the target year of 2037 for tank closure. He mentioned that his organization, along with the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, Nuclear Watch New Mexico, and Tri-Valley CAREs by the Lawrence Livermore National Lab in California, were part of a federal lawsuit demanding a full environmental impact statement review on plutonium pit production at SRS and Los Alamos. They also want the disposal of TRU waste at WIPP to be included in that analysis. He noted that he believes pit production and the waste it generates is a crossover issue that affects not only the sites but also where the TRU waste is disposed of at SRS.





Mr. Clements reported that his organization won a federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) lawsuit, requiring DOE/NNSA to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on all the impacts of pit production. He emphasized the importance of public participation in making comments about the environmental impacts and nuclear weapons. He concluded by thanking everyone for their service and expressed his hope that DOE-SR would be fully funded in FY26.

### **Closing Remarks**

Ms. Campbell announced that the next Full Board meeting is scheduled for May 20 at the DOE Meeting Center. She also reminded the board about the upcoming subcommittee meeting on April 29 and noted that more information will be coming.

Ms. Britt expressed her anticipation for reviewing several recommendations at the next meeting. She assured Mr. Clements that his comments and concerns do not go unnoticed. She concluded by thanking everyone for their participation.

Meeting adjourned at 2:38pm EST.