

Recommendation 376

Ensure CAB Input During and After the Transfer of Authority for SRS to NNSA

Background

The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management (DOE-EM) announced that it has begun the process of transferring primary authority for the Savannah River Site (SRS) to the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) from DOE-EM. The transfer is expected to be completed by 2025.¹

Regardless of which organization has primary authority for the site, there is still substantial environmental cleanup to be completed following decades of nuclear weapons materials production and research at the site. This work includes plans to complete the liquid waste program by 2040 as well as a number of regulatory milestones that extend well beyond 2025 such as starting: coal ash remediation in A-Area (2026), remedial actions for ancillary facilities in F-Area (2027), remedial actions for C-Area groundwater (2028), coal ash remediation in K-Area (2028), remedial action in D-Area groundwater (2029), and coal ash remediation in L-Area (2029).² Additionally, long-term management of the legacy of this work will be required. Environmental stewardship of SRS is a requirement and obligation in perpetuity that will not cease with the transfer of authority to NNSA in 2025.

Recommendation

The SRS CAB recommends that DOE-EM (1) seeks advice and recommendations from the SRS CAB regarding the transfer of authority to NNSA from DOE-EM and the impact of the transfer on issues within the CAB's scope of responsibility, and (2) ensures long-term and significant CAB input into activities related to environmental management at SRS including, but not limited to, clean-up standards and environmental restoration; waste management and disposition; stabilization and disposition of non-stockpile nuclear materials; excess facilities; future land use and long-term stewardship; risk assessment and management; and clean-up science and technology activities.

¹ Matthew Christian, M. (2022, November 3). National Nuclear Security Administration to become DOE primary for Savannah River Site. *Aiken Standard*, https://www.postandcourier.com/aikenstandard/news/savannah-river-site/national-nuclear-security-administration-to-become-doe-primary-for-savannah-river-site/article_c463c7d8-53ae-11ed-88b7-afbb9757ed98.html.

² US Department of Energy, Office of Environmental Management. *EM Strategic Vision: 2021-2031*.