



### **Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board**

### **Recommendation 178 SRS Visitor Center and Museum**

#### **Background**

In 1991, a handful of citizens and a few companies in the Central Savannah River Area of South Carolina and Georgia banded together to form a nonprofit, grassroots organization to provide factual information about the benefits and risks of nuclear technologies and the Savannah River Site (SRS). This organization is called the Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA). CNTA provides factual information to the public, politicians and the press and provides long-term support for SRS missions and programs. CNTA currently has over 2,400 members.

One recent initiative of CNTA is an effort to establish a Visitor Center and Museum at SRS. A committee composed of retired SRS technical experts and museum professionals has been formed to spearhead the initial stages of the project. CNTA led a similar effort in 1994-1996 with very limited success. However, with the recent discussions and actions concerning SRS compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, CNTA believes this is an appropriate time to re-visit the need for a Visitor Center and Museum at SRS (Ref. 1). In addition, with the acceleration of the Decontamination and Decommissioning (D&D) Program at SRS, historic buildings that may have significant contribution to such a museum are slated for removal (e.g. Pile Physics Laboratory, building and 777-10A, scheduled for D&D early in 2004) and there is concern about survival of valuable artifacts.

CNTA considers this to be the last opportunity to formalize plans for a museum at SRS and is developing a strategic plan and scope of work for a SRS Visitor Center and Museum (Ref. 2). Most other DOE sites have or are planning Visitor Centers or Museums. In addition, there is a national effort to preserve the history of the Manhattan Project and the Atomic Age.

#### **Comment**

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) believes the public, especially former SRS workers, is an invaluable resource in identifying important artifacts and historic information as they relate to historic preservation at SRS (Ref. 3). The SRS CAB's intent in requesting additional workshops and/or educational information meetings in its prior Recommendation #166 was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to identify artifacts and facilities that are of historic value.

#### **Recommendation**

The SRS CAB endorses the concept of an SRS Visitor Center and Museum at SRS and makes the following recommendations:

1. DOE should identify a contact person immediately and provide timely support to CNTA's development of a strategic plan and scope of work for an SRS Visitor Center and Museum at SRS or another appropriate site at SRS.
2. DOE work with CNTA to facilitate CAB, SRS and general public review of the strategic plan.
3. DOE schedule a site visit for CNTA representatives of the Pile Physics Laboratory (777-10A) before December 8, 2003 to review the historical value of the building and its artifacts (as referenced in the Cultural Resources Management Plan, Section 3.4.6.1, page 3-93, Rev. 3) and the possible need to extend the D&D timeline for the Pile Physics Laboratory (777-10A).
4. DOE should grant "consulting party" status to CNTA, as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act, with regard to historic preservation at SRS with an

understanding that CNTA's involvement and response be timely and not impede the progress of the actions covered under the Programmatic Agreement.

## **References**

1. National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 as amended.
2. Planning for a Savannah River Site Visitor Center/Museum, presentation to the S&L Committee by Walt Joseph/Todd Crawford of CNTA, October 1, 2003.
3. Citizens Advisory Board Recommendation No. 166 (adopted July 22, 2003), "Historic Preservation at SRS."

## **Agency Responses**

[Department of Energy-SR](#)