



**Department of Energy**  
Savannah River Operations Office  
P.O. Box A  
Aiken, South Carolina 29802  
**OCT 25 2017**

Mrs. Nina Spinelli, Chairperson  
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board  
P.O. Box A  
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

Dear Mrs. Spinelli

SUBJECT: Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Recommendation #348 – H-Canyon and Savannah River Site (SRS) Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Program, (Your letter dated, 07/25/17)

Thank you for your recommendation regarding utilization of H-Canyon for processing materials at the SRS. The Department of Energy – Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) partially accepts your recommendation, and submits the following comments to each recommendation subpart.

CAB Recommendation:

- 1. Continue to recognize the value and uniqueness of H-Canyon and advocate for the fullest level of funding to ensure that the Canyon remains fully operational and can continue processing SNF.*

DOE-SR accepts this sub-part. DOE's Office of Environmental Management (EM) has recently conducted an evaluation of potential areas that would assist in improvements to the EM lifecycle. One of these areas included the utilization of H-Canyon to process the Department's aluminum-based SNF. Based on this, DOE maintains that this recommendation has been implemented and will continue to advocate for the use of H-Canyon as long as it remains feasible to do so.

CAB Recommendation:

- 2. Release a decision on SNF. While the community surrounding the site believes that the site can safely store fuel, the SRS CAB believes that H-Canyon is able to process fuel and use that output productively. Additionally, storage space is limited and the site is not intended to be a permanent repository. Processing the fuel allows more of the material to leave the site boundaries, and offers the opportunity for H-Canyon, the only canyon of its design in the country, to use its capabilities.*

DOE-SR partially accepts this subpart. DOE-SR agrees that a Departmental decision regarding the remaining aluminum-based SNF needs to be made. DOE-SR will work with DOE Office of Environmental Management Headquarters to develop the necessary information to allow a decision to be made regarding this SNF.

CAB Recommendation:

- 3. Continue to make funding and maintenance of H-Canyon a priority. Given the age of the Canyon, there has been discussion that if the Canyon's work is halted, it may not restart properly.*

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DOE-SR accepts this sub-part. As described in the response to recommendation subpart #1 above regarding the H-Canyon processing scenario, DOE will evaluate funding for H-Canyon operations and maintenance in the FY 2019 budget development process. Safety continues to be our number one priority at SRS. There is concern that if H-Canyon processing were halted, that it would be cost-prohibitive to resume processing activities within H-Canyon, not that it would not restart properly.

CAB Recommendation:

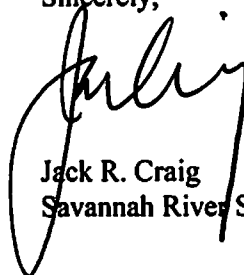
4. *Continue to work with agency partners to work on a final disposition plan, and corresponding schedules, for material processed through H-Canyon.*

DOE-SR accepts this sub-part. EM will continue to engage with the responsible parties for the federal repository for planning purposes and eventual scheduling of shipments.

The Department values the CAB's position on the SRS programs and, when possible, factors those opinions into Departmental decisions.

If you have any questions, please contact me or contact Tony Polk, of my staff, at (803) 208-3927.

Sincerely,



Jack R. Craig  
Savannah River Site Manager

NMPD-18-0002

cc:

Kristen Ellis, (EM-5.31)  
David Borak, (EM-4.32)  
Pam Marks, DDFO  
Michael Mikolanis, DDFO  
David Wilson, SCDHEC  
Gwen Keys, EPA  
Mark Williams, GADNR