



Savannah River Site Watch

Major Savannah River Site (SRS) Public Interest Victories – For a Cleaner, Safer Site & for National Security

Stopped operation of the Allied General Nuclear Services (AGNS) reprocessing plant, adjacent to SRS and commonly known as “Barnwell,” resulting in no shipment of commercial spent fuel to the facility and no associated nuclear waste streams from reprocessing - separation of weapon-usable plutonium; late 1970s.

Opposed restart and operation of the L-Reactor for production of nuclear weapons materials; aging reactor restarted 1985; shut permanently in 1988. Lake for cooling water needlessly constructed.

Opposed restart and operation of the K-Reactor for nuclear weapons materials - primarily tritium; aging reactor briefly operated in 1992 and then shut permanently; DOE Secretary Watkins said “we are up to our eyeballs in tritium” and ordered the termination of the project. Opposed construction of costly new, unneeded cooling tower for the K-Reactor; demolished in 2010.

Defeated efforts for the “New Production Reactor” (NPR) - known as the “New Pork-Barrel Reactor,” for production of totally unneeded nuclear weapons materials at SRS; 1988 to 1992.

Stopped the “Modern Pit Facility” (MPF) for unneeded production of the plutonium “pits” (cores) for nuclear weapons for large-scale nuclear war; program pushed in ~2003-2004 but terminated by DOE.

Stopped the effort under the “Global Nuclear Energy Partnership” (GNEP) for “fast” reactors and reprocessing of commercial spent fuel at SRS or any DOE site; ~2006-2009; program abandoned.

Opposed policies to bring spent commercial fuel to SRS for “consolidated interim storage” (and reprocessing); 2013 - 2015. **Defeated “Enterprise SRS”** - which pushed “SRS Energy Park,” with spent fuel reprocessing and plutonium fuel use in “small modular reactors.” SRS site manager Dave Moody exposed for illegally diverting clean-up funds to far-fetched SMR project, not a SRS mission.

Plutonium fuel (MOX) program terminated in 2017; actively opposed since inception in mid-1990s, with support for immobilization of plutonium in high-level nuclear waste; mismanaged Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility terminated due to cost overruns, delays; court ruling killed MOX, Oct. 2018.

DOE scheme to import German commercial spent fuel terminated. Efforts to export highly radioactive graphite spent fuel from the AVR and THTR reactors in Germany to SRS faced strong opposition and would have been illegal under German law. After 10 years of opposition, Germany canceled the deal. January 2023.

Federal court rules DOE violated the National Environmental Policy Act by not reviewing all impacts of plutonium “pit” production (for new nuclear warheads) at multiple DOE sites – victory for plaintiffs SRS Watch, Nuclear Watch New Mexico (Santa Fe), Tri-Valley CAREs (Livermore, CA). September 30, 2024

Conclusion: Costly, misguided DOE and contractor efforts at SRS for large, complex projects that add to the SRS nuclear waste burden, strain the DOE budget and pose proliferation and nuclear war risks will face stiff public opposition. Efforts to turn MOX building into the SRS Plutonium Bomb Plant faces ongoing challenges.