



Savannah River Site Watch

**Savannah River Site Watch (SRS Watch)  
Media Advisory**

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For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Tom Clements, Director, SRS Watch, 803-240-7268, [www.srswatch.org](http://www.srswatch.org),  
[www.pitpeis.com](http://www.pitpeis.com), tomclements329[at]srswatch.org

**Public to Comment on Savannah River Site Plutonium “Pit” Bomb Core Plant Impacts;  
Meeting in N. Augusta, Tuesday, May 5, 5 p.m. on NNSA’s “Draft Programmatic  
Environmental Impact Statement” (PEIS) on Pit Production, as Stipulated in Court-  
Approved “Settlement Agreement” between DOE and Public-Interest Plaintiffs**

**WHAT:** First public meeting in U.S. on Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) on impacts of plutonium “pit” production - for new nuclear warheads - at the Savannah River Site and Los Alamos National Lab in New Mexico. The [draft PEIS was released by DOE on April 10](#). SRS is currently retrofitting the cancelled plutonium fuel (MOX) building and aims to convert it to pit production by 2035. The PEIS was won in a federal court case and was stipulated in a court-approved “[settlement agreement](#)” between DOE’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and public-interest plaintiffs of January 16, 2025.

**WHO:** After 30-minute poster session, the formal meeting will be conducted by DOE’s National Nuclear Security Administration, with comments from local members of the public. Public-interest participants will include Savannah River Site Watch, Nuclear Watch South, Union of Concerned Scientists, Nuclear Watch New Mexico.

The 3-volume Draft PEIS was released by NNSA on April 10, 2026 with a 90-day public comment and five meetings nationwide, including the May 5 public meeting in N. Augusta, SC:  
<https://www.energy.gov/nepa/articles/doeeis-0573-draft-environmental-impact-statement-april-2026>

To help inform the public, the Union of Concerned Scientists and Nuclear Watch New Mexico have kicked off a Pit PEIS website: <https://pitpeis.com/>

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 5, 5 p.m. open house, 5:30-8 p.m. formal meeting and public comments

**WHERE:** North Augusta Community Center, 495 Brookside Dr, North Augusta, SC 29841. NNSA will also provide a virtual meeting opportunity.

**WHY:** Plutonium “pits” are the core of all U.S. nuclear weapons. The Department of Energy’s semi-autonomous National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is seeking to expand production of 30 to 80 plutonium pits per year at the Los Alamos Lab in New Mexico and 50 to 125 pits per year at the Savannah River Site, near Aiken, SC, which has never produced pits. It appears this amount of

pits is not for “deterrence” but rather preparation to fight a nuclear war. NNSA pushed forward with the project without proper review, in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act. Plaintiffs - including Savannah River Site Watch, Nuclear Watch New Mexico, Tri-Valley CAREs (by Livermore National Lab in CA) - sued in federal court in Columbia, SC and won, requiring the NNSA to complete a nationwide Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). The court-approved “settlement agreement” also required an inspection of the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility by plaintiffs to ensure that no production begins before the completion of the final PEIS; that tour took place on April 21. (Clements “observations” about the tour [posted on SRS Watch website here.](#))

Pit production generates a host of radioactive waste streams, some of which would be disposed of in unlined trenches at SRS, and poses public safety concerns, such as plutonium criticality and plutonium fires. No future pit production is needed to maintain the safety and reliability of the existing stockpile. Instead it is for new-design nuclear weapons that could prompt a return to testing. The last large-scale pit production, at Rocky Flats in Colorado, resulted in plutonium fires and contamination of the site and downwind communities. The Rock Flats site was closed in 1989 and such a disaster is a warning for SRS pit production.

The SRS pit plant will be the most expensive buildings ever built in the U.S., with a current DOE estimate of around \$30 billion. The [recent DOE budget request for Fiscal Year 27](#) (page 17) reveals a huge jump in pit-plant funding. In the request, plutonium pit production at SRS is increased 87% from \$1.2 billion in FY 2026 to \$2.25 billion in FY 2027 (\$2.6 billion projected cost for FY 2031). No explanation is given for the rush to increase funding or the rush to build the facility. NNSA has failed to demonstrate that new pits, which can last more than 100 years ([according to a federal group of experts](#)), are needed and NNSA has failed to conduct needed plutonium pit aging research in a timely manner.

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