

# ECA Update: August 12, 2014



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## **Energy secretary to visit troubled nuke dump**

The Washington Post

August 11, 2014

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CARLSBAD, N.M. -- Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz traveled to southeastern New Mexico on Monday to visit the government's troubled nuclear waste dump and talk with residents about the mysterious radiation leak and truck fire that have shuttered the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant indefinitely.

About a dozen community leaders and residents were at the Carlsbad airport to welcome Moniz and show their continued support for the plant, which is the federal government's only permanent repository for waste from decades of nuclear bomb building and employs about 650 people.

Moniz was scheduled to attend a town hall meeting Monday evening and visit the surface areas of the half-mile deep mine on Tuesday morning. The Department of Energy and the contractor that operates the site have been holding regular meetings with the community since the back-to-back accidents closed the plant in February.

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Officials have yet to pinpoint what caused a barrel of waste from Los Alamos National Laboratory to leak in one of the mine's rooms on Feb. 14, contaminating 22 above-ground workers with low levels of radiation. One theory has focused on a chemical reaction in highly acidic waste containing a lead-based glove that was packed with organic cat litter to absorb moisture.

Nine days before the release, a truck hauling salt in the mine caught fire. But officials have said the fire was far from the waste-handling area and that the events were likely unrelated.

Initial investigations into both accidents have blamed a slow erosion of the safety culture at the 15-year-old, multibillion-dollar site. Officials are also investigating how Los Alamos handled the waste it sent to the plant, and whether a switch from inorganic to organic cat litter played in a role in fueling a heat reaction.

During a meeting on renewable energy in Santa Fe earlier Monday, Moniz said the department is committed to getting the plant re-opened as soon as possible.

"It's very important to talk to the community and certainly reaffirm our absolute commitment to trying to get operations established as soon as we can, safely," he said. "We think we're making real progress toward understanding the situation, and I can assure you we share, we have a complete self-interest at the Department of Energy to get operations re-established just as the community and the state do."

The indefinite closing of the repository has delayed cleanup of legacy waste like contaminated gloves, tools and clothing across the federal government's nuclear complex.

Los Alamos, for example, was under orders from the state to remove thousands of barrels of toxic waste from outdoor storage on a mesa before wildfire season peaked this summer. The presence of that waste, and its potential dangers, came to light three summers ago as a massive wildfire lapped at the edge of lab property.

"Obviously, we want to finish the job that we were so close to finishing (at Los Alamos)," Moniz said. "But we also have Idaho, we have Savannah River so this is a very, very high priority and I want to get down there, see it and talk to people."

Moniz estimated it will be a year to 18 months before the plant can be reopened.

### **DOE chief emphasizes WIPP's 'high priority'**

Albuquerque Journal

August 12, 2014

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- LAS CRUCES - New Mexico's deep geologic nuclear waste repository is a "high priority" for the country that must return to operations after being closed by a fire and radiation leak, Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz said during a Monday town hall in Carlsbad.

"Let me make no bones about it: WIPP has to come all the way back," he said. "This is really an absolutely core facility for the country."

In his first visit to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant as Cabinet secretary, Moniz heard from a range of stakeholders during meetings in both Santa Fe and Carlsbad, including Gov. Susana Martinez, senior managers of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, the state Environment Department and Carlsbad residents, among others.

He is scheduled to tour WIPP today.

The Martinez administration had been asking for months for Moniz to pay WIPP a visit after two incidents in February - a mine fire and a radiation leak - closed the nation's only deep underground repository for certain types of defense nuclear waste.

An investigation has revealed that a waste container from LANL overheated, cracking the lid.

Moniz told a crowd of about 150 that "a plausible picture" is emerging to explain what happened to cause the radiation leak, although the investigation continues. A recovery plan for the facility is expected late next month, he said.

He said "safety has to be the driver" of that recovery.

Two reports by an accident investigation board criticized the Department of Energy headquarters for not holding its Carlsbad Field Office accountable for correcting repeated, long-running problems related to nuclear safety, maintenance and emergency management, and for not providing adequate oversight of the field office or WIPP contractor.

Moniz, who took the lead of the DOE as secretary in May 2013, said, "We will continue to advocate for the resources needed. This is a very high priority."

"There absolutely needs to be strong leadership right from headquarters down to the site," said New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn in a telephone interview Monday.

The Carlsbad Current-Argus reported about a dozen Carlsbad residents gathered at the airport Monday to greet Moniz and show their support for WIPP, a significant employer in the area well before the current oil and gas boom heated up the local economy. WIPP employs about 1,000 people and is responsible for nearly 3,000 indirect jobs, according to the DOE.

In a meeting scheduled for late Monday with Moniz, Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said he planned to share residents' desire "to make sure the site is reopened as safely and expeditiously as possible."

The WIPP repository is carved from salt beds 2,150 feet below the surface, with sprawling underground panels to permanently dispose of radioactive remnants of the country's nuclear defense program. The plant has been closed to shipments since a salt haul truck caught fire underground on Feb. 5. Nine days later, a drum of LANL nuclear waste overheated, cracking open the lid, and radiation leaked into the environment.

A team of DOE scientists is investigating what caused the leak, specifically how and why a hot reaction occurred in at least one drum. The team has been unable to replicate the reaction, either in computer models or in the laboratory.

### **Madelyn Creedon sworn in as Principal Deputy Administrator for NNSA**

NNSA Blog

August 7, 2014

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Madelyn Creedon was sworn in today by Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz as the Department of Energy's (DOE) Principal Deputy Administrator for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).

As NNSA's Principal Deputy Administrator, Ms. Creedon will support NNSA Administrator Frank Klotz in the management and operation of the NNSA, as well as policy matters across the DOE and NNSA enterprise in support of President Obama's nuclear security agenda.

Ms. Creedon most recently served as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs at the Department of Defense (DoD), overseeing policy development and execution in the areas of countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, U.S. nuclear forces and missile defense, and DoD cybersecurity and space issues. She was confirmed to serve in this position by the Senate in August 2011.

### **Texas county sees high-level nuke waste as opportunity**

Sante Fe New Mexican

August 8, 2014

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MENTONE, Texas -- Loving County is big, dry and stretches for miles, and is the perfect place, local officials say, to store high-level radioactive waste.

Officials here hope to entice the federal government -- with \$28 billion to spend on the disposal of high-level radioactive waste -- into considering the possibility.

"With the money that this would generate for the county, we might even be able to pay the taxpayers back," said the county judge, Skeet Jones. "We could build some roads. We could bring in some more water. We could have a town that's incorporated, have a city council, maybe even start a school." Loving County had a school, but it has been boarded up for years, and students are bused to neighboring Winkler County.

"Maybe even have a Wal-Mart," Jones mused.

About midway between El Paso and Midland-Odessa, Loving County, population 95, is spread across 650 square miles, about twice the size of New York City. The population could grow 40 times larger and still meet the government definition of "highly rural." Mentone, the county seat, has a courthouse, a single gas station, a food truck and not much else.

"There are no lawyers, no bank, no hospital, no real estate agency, nothing," said Mozelle Carr, the county clerk. Carr is Jones' sister. There are not even enough people for a fully independent local government.

The family, which makes up about a quarter of the voters in the county, is not unanimous in its support of a storage site. Their father, Elgin R. Jones, who goes by Punk and was sheriff from 1965 to 1992, said he foresaw trouble in anything radioactive. But he admits to being in the minority; even his wife, Mary Belle Jones, the mother of Carr and Skeet Jones, is wavering. While any decision is in the hands of the County Commission, with so few residents, the opinion of the public -- and the family -- is crucial.

The cancellation of the federal government's plan to bury high-level radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain in Nevada means that the waste will remain at about 70 reactor sites around the country until there is some other plan. Loving County has visions of storing spent fuel from closed reactors in above-ground casks, and later, building a processing plant that would recover unused uranium and plutonium for reuse, making the rest easier to bury. County officials are working with a company that is hoping to negotiate a deal with the state and federal governments. Two counties just across the state line in New Mexico also are seeking to become storage sites.

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, N.M., the nation's primary below-ground storage site for waste generated during decades of nuclear weapons production, stopped accepting waste indefinitely after a radiation leak was detected there in February. The cause of the leak remains under investigation, and when the repository will resume receiving shipments of waste is uncertain. Soon after the radiation leak was detected at WIPP, some waste shipments were diverted to Waste Control Specialists site in Andrews, Texas, not far from the New Mexico border.

Any plan for a new repository would probably require federal legislation, because the nuclear waste fund is supposed to be used for disposal, not storage. But Congress has an incentive; the Treasury is facing billions of dollars in damage claims because of the Energy Department's delay.

Storing spent fuel in a central location, in preparation for burial or for reprocessing, looks more attractive as defunct reactors from Maine to California are torn down, and as reactor owners sue the Energy Department, which was supposed to begin accepting the waste for burial in 1998, to recover their costs. The department now says it might be ready to bury waste by 2048, 50 years late, but experts have little confidence in that. And the volume of "orphaned" waste has grown by about 50 percent recently.

"Interim" storage, though, would mean adding a cumbersome job: shipping the fuel a second time, for burial. Or maybe not. "If we let this waste into Texas, it's likely never to be shipped anywhere else, because nobody really wants it," said Tom Smith, an energy advocate at Public Citizen in Austin.

Renting out a patch of desert for a storage site has been considered elsewhere. A storage site consists of a thick concrete pad covered with steel and concrete casks, and surrounded by bright lights and razor wire, looking a little like a basketball court at a maximum-security prison. Some Midwestern utilities struck

a deal with the Skull Valley band of the Goshute Indian tribe at their reservation 70 miles west of Salt Lake City, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensed the spot, but the state of Utah blocked waste from being shipped there. The Mescalero Apache tribe in New Mexico also negotiated for a deal, but then backed away.

In Loving's case, two lawyers in Austin, Monty G. Humble and Bill Jones, raised the idea with Gov. Rick Perry, who Humble said was "not opposed," and then went shopping for a county that would be interested. They argued that two counties in New Mexico, Eddy and Lea, were another possibility, and that if the waste were taken there that the New Mexico counties would get all the benefit but Loving would get some of the risk.

The lawyers told the commissioners and other county officials, "If it isn't here, it will be in New Mexico," said Domino Banwart, the county treasurer. The lawyers told the group, "Either way, y'all are getting it," she said.

Humble, who specializes in energy topics, and Bill Jones, who was Perry's first general counsel, formed a company, Advanced Fuel Cycle Initiatives, and have been negotiating with a landowner in the county. The county has designated the two as its agents in Austin, and the two are seeking the same designation from the state of Texas in order to negotiate with the Department of Energy over terms of a lease, including research grants to Texas universities, new roads and emergency equipment for towns in the area.

Perry has ordered a state study of the storage idea. "I believe it is time for Texas to act," he wrote in a letter in March, partly because New Mexico was considering a site within 50 miles of the Texas border. The speaker of the Texas House had also ordered a committee to study the matter.

A preliminary plan under discussion in Austin would give the state and the locality a slice of the revenues that would come to a storage site or a reprocessing plant.

Across the border in New Mexico, Gov. Susana Martinez has taken a wait-and-see approach to plans by Eddy and Lea counties to serve as hosts for the waste.

Humble said he believed he had solved the problem of assuring that the waste in Loving County was moved into permanent storage in 20 or 30 years. Rent would be raised sharply after a certain date, he said, and if the federal government still did not remove the waste, Texas would reserve the right to bury it within the state. His choice would be Deaf Smith County, southwest of Amarillo, which the Department of Energy was considering until Congress picked Yucca Mountain. A storage site would need about 400 acres -- about half the size of Central Park -- plus a buffer zone. Reprocessing, if it ever came, would require about 3,000 acres, or 5 square miles. That would fit easily between the county's few paved roads.

No one knows how long the storage casks will last. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is performing a "waste confidence" study seeking an answer. But waste is usually transferred from sealed cask to sealed cask only deep under water, to shield humans from any radiation. And over time, more waste will be stored in places where there is no longer a pool to do that work. If the waste had to be repackaged before burial, storage experts said that building a pool in one

spot would be easier.

While some Texas officials oppose the idea of a high-level storage site, some also see it as inevitable. "It's going to be Texas," said Lon Burnam, a state representative from the Dallas area. "Everyone else is too smart to take it." Burnam fought hard against the low-level waste burial site, which is in Andrews, but was unsuccessful.

In Loving, Raymond Wildman, the cashier at Hopper Station, a gas station and convenience store that is also the county's only retail outlet, offered another reason that could make a West Texas site attractive. Given the low population, he said, "We wouldn't be missed if something happened."

### **8 buildings removed from Hanford plutonium plant in past month**

Tri-City Herald

August 11, 2014

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Eight more buildings at the Plutonium Finishing Plant are gone as Hanford workers make way for the eventual teardown of the production portion of the plant.

"As we prepare to demolish the facility, we're ensuring that there is enough space around the main buildings to bring in heavy equipment and stage demolition debris," said Mike Swartz, CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Co. vice president for the Plutonium Finishing Plant.

The eight buildings torn down over the past month bring the total to 61 buildings demolished or removed at the plant since 2008.

DOE has called the Plutonium Finishing Plant the most complex and hazardous facility at Hanford. It operated for 40 years starting in 1949, taking plutonium that had been chemically separated from Hanford's irradiated fuel rods and producing metal buttons the size of hockey pucks.

About two-thirds of the plutonium for the nation's nuclear weapons program passed through the plant during the Cold War.

The look of the plant started to change after the last plutonium was sent to Savannah River, S.C., in 2009 as part of a project to consolidate the nation's weapons-grade materials at one site.

The portion of the plant where plutonium was stored in vaults was torn down, along with security features like a double row of Jersey barriers and five inspection stations that were manned by patrol officers.

Other work over the last eight years has included tearing down the water tower, the facility where waste was held before being sent to Hanford's underground waste tanks, and an incinerator that burned materials to reclaim any plutonium on them.

The work done over the past month included tearing down the long, 13,302-square-foot administration building built in the 1990s. An old security building that was original to the plant also was torn down. It covered 3,924 square feet and was sided with shingles containing asbestos that had to be removed before the building was demolished, Swartz said.

"Taking down and removing these office buildings and support structures provides a change in the skyline at the plant that brings us closer to completing this important cleanup project," said Bryan Foley, deputy project director for the Department of Energy.

The recent work has included removing six temporary offices. Remaining workers have been moved to other temporary office space outside the fence that was built around the plant for security it when it was operating.

The cleared space is expected to be used in 2016 for waste container loading and handling and to create space around areas with radiological contamination that will be demolished. DOE has a legally binding deadline to have the plant demolished to slab on grade in 2016.

Work is being done in the meantime to prepare the main plant for demolition.

At least 213 of 238 glove boxes in the production portion of the plant have been cleaned out and removed or are so large that they will not be removed until part of the building near them is torn down. The boxes are enclosed containers into which workers would reach using gloves to handle radioactive materials.

Swartz expects to have most glove boxes disconnected from the plant's ventilation system before January. That does not include some special cases -- the glove boxes in the McCluskey Room, the site of a 1976 chemical explosion, and the glove boxes in the Plutonium Reclamation Facility.

"After the gloveboxes are done, a pretty big step is left," Foley said.

Contaminated ducts attached to glove boxes have to be cleaned up, along with ancillary piping and then the housing for ventilation filters.

"We just keep working steady state -- safe and compliant," Swartz said. "Workers are doing a fantastic job."

### **Nuclear lessons: Hanford tours go to heart of Cold War facility**

The Spokesman-Review

August 10, 2014

[LINK](#)

RICHLAND - At Hanford's B Reactor, thousands of graphite blocks towered over Ernie Doyle's head.

On a recent public tour, the 57-year-old truck driver from Hillsboro, Oregon, seized the chance to take a close look at the world's first large-scale nuclear reactor.

Uranium isotopes were loaded into aluminum tubes inside the graphite structure, setting off a chain reaction that produced plutonium.

The reactor was in full swing when Doyle's dad worked at Hanford as a ferry operator in the late 1950s. But during the U.S.-Soviet arms race, making plutonium for the nation's nuclear weapons arsenal was still a hush-hush affair.

"He knew something was going on" but no details, Doyle said of his father. "It's amazing what they did here."

Thousands of people visit Hanford each year on free tours conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy, taking advantage of the opportunity to see southeast Washington's once off-limits nuclear site.

The tours are packed with information about Hanford's role in the race to build an atomic bomb during World War II and its contribution to the Cold War's nuclear stockpile. The tours also discuss environmental cleanup at the 586-square-mile site.

For Doyle, stopping at the B Reactor was a highlight of the bus tour. Plutonium from the reactor was used in the world's first atomic blast, the 1945 Trinity test, and in the bomb dropped a few weeks later on Nagasaki, Japan.

In addition to the reactor's core, Doyle was fascinated by the pre-computer technology in the control room.

Dee Gardner, a tour participant from Snoqualmie, Washington, was more interested in Hanford's legacy of radioactive and chemical pollution. With \$42 billion spent on cleanup, and another \$115 billion in work remaining, the site ranks among the nation's costliest cleanup efforts.

"I'm a taxpayer and I'm paying for this cleanup, so I have some ownership in it," Gardner said.

Tours fill up quickly

The Department of Energy spends about \$111,000 annually on the tours, which are part of public education and outreach efforts. Visitors can sign up for a four-hour bus tour of the site or a visit to the B Reactor. The tours fill up shortly after online registration opens in early March.

"Hanford was secret for so long that a lot of people want to see it," said Rich Buel, the Department of Energy's tour manager.

At half the size of Rhode Island, with 70 years of history and an annual budget of \$2.2 billion, there's a lot to take in at the sprawling Hanford complex, Buel said.

- The site is home to nine nuclear reactors, which produced plutonium from the 1940s to the 1980s.

The B Reactor has been preserved as a National Historic Landmark. Six of the other reactors have been "cocooned," which means they've been demolished down to the shield walls around the reactors' cores. Officials are mulling the use

of remote robotics to tear down the reactors, or waiting up to 75 years for the radioactivity to decay so they could be safely torn down through conventional means.

- In one of Hanford's most challenging environmental problems, 56 million gallons of radioactive and chemical waste are stored in 177 giant, underground tanks. Nearly 40 percent of the tanks are believed to have leaked.

Construction has begun on a treatment plant that will blend the waste with glass-forming materials and heat it to 2,100 degrees. In the inert glass form, the waste's radioactivity will dissipate over hundreds to thousands of years.

"This is proven technology that can work at Hanford," said Dieter Bohrmann, a spokesman for the Washington Department of Ecology's nuclear waste program.

But the Department of Energy says it can't meet the 2019 deadline for starting up the treatment plant, which was part of a legal settlement involving the state, the Energy Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. State and federal officials are in dispute resolution talks to set a new deadline.

"Time is not on our side," said Bohrmann, noting that most of the tanks are decades past their intended life span.

- A plume of polluted groundwater covers 60 square miles at Hanford, the legacy of 450 billion gallons of contaminated liquids and wastewater that was poured directly into the soil. The plume is being treated to slow its movement toward the Columbia River.

- Hanford had more than 1,000 waste sites, some of them old dumps where laboratory waste was disposed without records. Cleanup of a single site can require months of research. The Department of Energy touts the cleanup of nearly 900 waste sites as a remediation milestone.

"You can read about Hanford. You can hear about it in 90-second TV spots," Buel said. "But when you actually come and see the places with your own eyes, you get a better sense of the challenges and the progress."

Sagebrush and security gates

From the windows of the tour bus, Hanford unfolds as a parched landscape of sagebrush and security gates. On a 100-degree afternoon, the bus's air-conditioning system is no match for the Columbia Basin's heat.

Scraggly clusters of locust trees and a few collapsing buildings mark the former town sites of Hanford and White Bluffs. About 1,500 people once lived in the small communities along the Columbia River.

In 1943, they were given a month's notice to leave. The United States and its allies were in a race to develop the atomic bomb before the Germans, and the government had selected the Hanford area for plutonium production.

Grand Coulee Dam supplied electricity for the project. The Columbia River

provided cooling water for the nuclear reactors.

During Hanford's construction, more than 50,000 people worked at the site, building the first nuclear reactors and processing facilities. But only a handful of top officials knew the site's mission, Buel said.

FBI agents made up about 15 percent of Hanford's workforce. Workers who asked too many questions, or expressed curiosity about what they were building in the desert, were fired.

"They found themselves on the next day's train," Buel said.

After World War II ended, Hanford became part of the Cold War effort. About two-thirds of the plutonium in the nation's nuclear stockpile was made at the site.

Each half-pound of plutonium produced required about a ton of raw materials, generating enormous amounts of radioactive and chemical waste.

By the late 1980s, Hanford's last nuclear reactor had shut down. But 20 tons of plutonium - molded into the shape of hockey pucks and stored in a vault - remained at Hanford until five years ago, when it was shipped to a Department of Energy facility in South Carolina.

Seattle resident Lee Pyne-Mercer made the 3 1/2-hour drive to Richland for the tour. He left with a better understanding of Hanford's place in history, and the magnitude of the work ahead.

"I was a child of the Cold War," said Pyne-Mercer, 42. "I'm sort of a news junkie, and this is a big, expensive project."

One of the tour stops is a high-tech landfill, where 16 million tons of low-level radioactive waste have been disposed of over the past two decades.

But it will take another 56 years to finish Hanford's cleanup, according to a recent status report prepared under the 1989 Tri-Party agreement, the pact among the state of Washington, the EPA and the Energy Department that governs the site's remediation.

In reality, "it's hard to say what Hanford's end date will be," said the Department of Ecology's Bohrmann.

**Savannah River Site is a national treasure, and we must use it wisely**

The Augusta Chronicle

August 10, 2014

[LINK](#)

It generally is recognized in the CSRA and the nuclear community at large that Savannah River Site represents a unique asset - a true national treasure. For about 65 years the site has supported national interests and has provided essential services to the United States, ranging from special nuclear materials production in the early years to spent fuel receipts from foreign nuclear reactors; and

environmental cleanup in more recent years while providing an ongoing tritium production and recycling role.

The site has been a good employer, offering high-paying, high-technology jobs, with employment levels typically ranging from 10,000 to 14,000 people in a very safe environment. The site population is important because economic studies show that each site job provides an additional 1.5 jobs in the community. A site work force of 12,000 workers generates an additional 18,000 jobs in the CSRA. Further, the site mission has been carried out in a large, green, forested area of about 300 square miles, allowing unparalleled pristine, environmental settings with attendant environmental research.

Now things are beginning to change. After 20 years of cleanup, the site cleanup program, under the aegis of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management, is about 50 percent complete. Cleanup at the site is an approximately 40-year program, and work could be completed well into the late 2030s. This completion will result in the loss of several thousand site jobs. To maintain the character of the site, it is important to immediately seek appropriate additional missions for SRS consistent with the site's historical capabilities.

One viable additional SRS mission would be to assist other locations with their cleanups. The site has unique processing capabilities at its H-Canyon, and excellent supporting technical expertise, particularly the Savannah River National Laboratory. In each such case, the site would support national security by making nuclear materials more secure and invulnerable to improper use.

As new mission opportunities are considered, it is important that this community embrace the direction in which the site is moving. It's a national treasure that should serve us all. Here are a few criteria that I feel are appropriate for any new SRS missions:

- Any nuclear material receipt should be done with the implicit approval of the state of South Carolina, and an acknowledgement of the national security interest being served.
- Any proposed new missions should offer significant benefit to the site in terms of additional jobs and economic impact.
- In all circumstances, SRS should be maintained in a pristine environmental condition for wildlife, environmental research and public involvement.
- Such missions can be carried out safely and have minimal environmental impact.
- Any missions would have minimal impact on agreed-to schedules for the processing of existing high-level nuclear waste and general site cleanup.

Any missions that meet the above-stated guidelines would be in the best interests of this general area. The site could continue to do what it has done in the past 60 years: providing attractive jobs while making the country at large safer and more secure.

The Department of Energy now is considering an additional mission for SRS, and

is preparing an environmental assessment related to the acceptance and disposition of used nuclear fuel containing U.S.-originated, highly enriched uranium from Germany. While some of the detailed impacts have yet to be established, it appears that receipt of this fuel will be an ideal match for SRS capabilities. SRS will be able to disposition this fuel by processing it much as they have processed other nuclear fuels for years.

In addition, highly enriched uranium will be taken out of harm's way and placed in a safe, secure setting, making the United States and the world a safer place. This particular nuclear fuel is somewhat different in how it will be processed, and will require further research and development. The German government will be paying for the research and development and for the processing, which is anticipated to cost about \$1 billion over five or six years. This provides the SRNL the added benefit of expanding its technical capabilities.

Overall, this looks like a good starting point for SRS to develop new missions. I ask the public to support SRS in developing new missions that maintain the character of the site. SRS will, in turn, continue to be the asset that we've always known.

