



Energy Communities Alliance

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ECA Update: October 3, 2016

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Russia Withdraws From Plutonium Disposal Treaty

The New York Times

October 3, 2016

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DOE-EM Site Specific
Advisory Board
Meeting in
Piketon, OH

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Energy, Technology
and Environmental
Business
Association's Business
Opportunities



MOSCOW — Saying relations with the United States have deteriorated in a “radically changed environment,” President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia withdrew Monday from a landmark nuclear security agreement, in a troubling sign that the countries’ cooperation in a range of nuclear areas could be threatened.

The treaty, on the disposal of plutonium, the material used in some nuclear weapons, was concluded in 2000 as one of the framework disarmament deals of the early post-Cold War period.

It required Russia and the United States to destroy military stockpiles of plutonium, a deal that represented another encouraging step away from nuclear doomsday and an insurance policy against the materials falling into the hands of terrorists or rogue states.

[...]

Russia had viewed the agreement as rendering disarmament irreversible by destroying the fissile materials accumulated during the Cold War. In this light, the Russians had interpreted the treaty as requiring that the plutonium be irreversibly

Conference in
Knoxville, TN

www.eteba.org

October 2016

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DOE-EM Business
Opportunity
Forum in Knoxville,
TN

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DOE-EM Site Specific
Advisory Board
Meeting in
Paducah, KY

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transformed into nonexplosive materials by using it in civilian nuclear power plants as a type of fuel, called mixed oxide fuel, or mox. Russia is pressing ahead with that.

But glitches and cost overruns in the mox plant at Savannah River, S.C., delayed the American program. This year, Mr. Obama proposed canceling the program in the 2017 budget and instead sending the plutonium for long-term storage at a nuclear waste site in Carlsbad, N.M.

The State Department has said the move complies with the treaty, but the Russians have said it does not, as Mr. Putin reaffirmed on Monday.

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DOE-EM publishes recap of 2016 National Cleanup Workshop highlights

DOE-EM

September 30, 2016



DOE Office of Environmental Management has published a write-up of some of the panels and presentations from the 2016 National Cleanup Workshop, September 14-15, 2016.

Articles include:

- 'Focus on the Field' is Key to Continued Cleanup Progress, EM Leaders Say
- EM Builds on Recent Success With Vision for Future Work
- EM Works to Involve Local Communities More in Acquisition Processes
- EM Partnerships Put Science of Safety to Work
- DOE and Contractor Officials Discuss Safety Culture at National Cleanup Workshop

DOE-EM Site Specific Advisory Board Meeting in Paducah, KY

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DOE-LM 10th Anniversary of Fernald Cleanup: "Weapons to Wetlands: A Decade of Difference" in Hamilton, OH

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November 2016

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INVITATION ONLY
2016
Intergovernmental Meeting with DOE in New Orleans, LA

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Savannah River Site begins down-blend plutonium operation in K Area

The Augusta Chronicle

September 30, 2016



Savannah River Site has begun efforts to process and permanently dispose of six metric tons of surplus non-pit plutonium.

The down-blending process in the SRS K Area Complex blends plutonium oxide with an inert material, producing a mixture that is more secure and not usable for weapons. The startup of this work Thursday resumes a process that SRS successfully carried out in the HB Line Facility in 2012 to down-blend plutonium, according to a Department of Energy news release. After material is diluted it will be stored at the SRS Solid Waste Management facility and will be placed in the appropriate queue of material that will ultimately be disposed of at Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

The Energy Department's decision to down-blend this material and ship it to WIPP was announced in March.

This project does not involve plutonium originally intended for disposition through the MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility, according to the release. However, the same down-blending process is the same one that NNSA has proposed as an alternative to the MOX approach.



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“With today’s startup, we are taking an important step in fulfilling the Energy Department’s commitment to move plutonium out of South Carolina and into permanent disposal,” said Jack Craig, SRS manager.

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Piketon funded again

The Daily Times

September 29, 2016



If it seems like de ja vu, it’s because it has happened over and over again – funding for the cleanup of the Piketon, Ohio plant that is. On Wednesday, the Senate passed the short-term Continuing Resolution (CR) and that means the Decontamination and Decommissioning (D&D) will

be funded for the time being, staving off the possibility of layoffs.

Now, Portsmouth Site Project Director Dennis Carr has sent a letter to employees praising them for their efforts which were part and parcel to the success of the acquisition of the funds to keep the project going.

“I would like to start by thanking each of you for helping to tighten our belts on expenditures over the last four months to balance against our available funding for this fiscal year (FY). As a result of our joint efforts I am pleased to announce that we will in fact balance against our allocated contract funding for the FY 16,” Carr said. “I recognize there have been impacts to our progress and in some cases to our site caused by the needed slowdown in expenditures.”

Carr said the company anticipates receiving only about 30 percent of their contract funding from the current barter arrangement due to the forecasted continued softening of the uranium spot market price. He said the remaining 70 percent must come through the federal appropriation process.

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MOX financial, completion figures shift shapes

The Aiken Standard

October 1, 2016



MOX will cost between \$10 billion and \$17 billion to build, depending upon which report you read.

Meanwhile, figures for completion percentage also vary between reports, from less than 30 percent complete to nearly 70 percent complete.

A recent report released by the DOE outlined another series of figures for construction costs at the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility, or MOX, saying the

facility will cost more than \$17 billion to build. Recent figures from contractor CB&I Areva MOX Services said construction costs will be nearly \$10 billion and were included in the report.

According to officials, the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, or NNSA, uses a cost analysis to determine its completion percentage figures while MOX contractor CB&I Areva MOX Services uses construction industry standards.

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Ground fall at WIPP

Carlsbad Current-Argus

October 1, 2016



CARLSBAD — Worker safety at WIPP is at front and center after a collapsed portion of the ceiling was discovered earlier this week.

According to a letter sent to WIPP employees from Nuclear Waste Partnership president Phil Breidenbach on Friday, the ground fall occurred at the entrance to Panel 4, which has been sealed since 2010.

A U.S. Department of Energy spokesman said the ground fall was discovered on Sept. 27 during an inspection, but it is unknown when the collapse actually occurred.

The letter, provided by the Department of Energy, said the entrance to the area had been "prohibited" two weeks before the collapse due to concerns. The notice goes on to specify that a prohibited area has significant safety concerns and no personnel are allowed to enter.

Before being designated a prohibited area, it was considered "restricted" due to ground control and air quality concerns. Restricted areas may only be entered with management approval, Breidenbach said.

Breidenbach said in the letter they believe no workers have been in the area for the last six months.

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