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STORAGE & DISPOSITION

Trump Administration Abandoning Deep Borehole Field Test Project

Associated Press
May 24, 2017

SIOUX FALLS | The U.S. Department of Energy is abandoning a test meant to determine whether nuclear waste can be buried far underground — including at a proposed site in South Dakota — because of changes in budget priorities, the agency said Tuesday.
Last year, the department proposed a "deep borehole field test," which would have attempted to drill a straight 8-inch borehole 3.2 miles into solid granite. The Rapid City firm of RESPEC was a finalist to do the job if the project moved forward.

A spokeswoman said in a statement that the agency doesn't intend to continue supporting the project, which was meant to assess whether nuclear waste could be stored in the holes. Officials had emphasized it wouldn't involve the use of actual nuclear waste. **>>Continue reading**

**DOE LEADERSHIP**

Rick Perry tours ORNL & Y-12, promises to be 'strong advocate'

*Knoxville News Sentinel*

*May 23, 2017*

OAK RIDGE - Newly appointed Secretary of Energy Rick Perry toured several labs at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex Monday, a day before President Donald Trump's detailed budget was to be released.

After riding a 3D-printed excavator and driving around a 3D-printed vehicle, Perry's message to Department of Energy officials and employees was: I know how to run a budget, and will be a "strong advocate" for the Department of Energy. **>>Continue reading**

**Nominee for DOE No. 2 backs Yucca Mountain during hearing**

*ECA Staff*

*May 25, 2017*

President Trump's nominee for Deputy Energy Secretary, Dan Brouillette, stated during his nomination hearing this morning that he was "in favor of following the law" when it comes to storing high-level waste at the Nevada Site, reports *Politico's* Darius Dixon.

"Obviously, if the science is so definitive as to show that the site is unsafe, I don't think it's in the interest of anyone to dispose of nuclear waste and endanger the lives of Americans anywhere," he said. "But if the science were to show that it is safe, we will be obligated to follow the law."

Under the President's recently released budget request, Yucca Mountain would receive funding to restart its licensing project.
When asked, Brouillette did not commit to supporting the consent-based siting effort developed by DOE under the previous Administration.

During the hearing, Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) stated she expected to vote on Brouillette and other FERC and DOI nominees after the Memorial Day recess.

To view archived video or opening statements from the hearing, visit HERE.

White House announces nomination of David Jonas as General Counsel of DOE

_The White House_
May 23, 2017

President Donald J. Trump has announced his intent to nominate the following individuals to key positions in his Administration:

**David S. Jonas of Pennsylvania to be General Counsel at the Department of Energy.** David S. Jonas is a partner at Fluet, Huber & Hoang. He served as General Counsel of both the National Nuclear Security Administration and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. Prior to that, he served over 20 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He is an adjunct professor at Georgetown and George Washington University Law Schools. [>>Continue reading](#)

DOE-EM's Senior Advisor to the Secretary Named

_ECA Staff_
May 25, 2017

ECA has learned that Roger Jarrell, a former member of the President’s Administration transition team, has officially joined the Office of Environmental Management (EM) as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary. In this position, he will serve as EM’s key interface with Secretary Perry’s office and other senior Administration leadership.

Roger began work at DOE in January 2017, supporting the Administration’s transition team, focusing on EM issues. He has served as a legislative aide for U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA); a political consultant; and an elected Republican Party official in his hometown of Lexington, VA. Roger graduated from the Virginia Military Institute with a bachelor’s degree in international
studies. After receiving his Juris Doctor Degree from Washington and Lee University in 2004, Roger worked as a civil litigator in energy law and commercial and corporate litigation.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP

Energy Department clears confusion over hot-spot ‘pig’ in nuclear shipment

*The Augusta Chronicle*

*May 23, 2017*

The Citizen Advisory Board dedicated a large portion of its Tuesday meeting discussing the so-called hotspot on a container during a nuclear material shipment to Savannah River Site last month.

Department of Energy spokesman Tony Polk said the presentation at the two-day bi-monthly meeting was important to clear up what he called “assertions in the press.”

Polk sought to clarify misconceptions about the “pig” and the process of shipment and receipt, which he said has led to inaccurate claims of leaks or contamination. [>>Continue reading](#)

Lab fire highlights ongoing LANL waste problems

*Santa Fe New Mexican*

*May 20, 2017*

On an otherwise uneventful morning in mid-April, three workers at Los Alamos National Laboratory set about cleaning an area on the ground floor of the lab’s plutonium building, PF-4, as part of a “facilitywide housekeeping day.” As they emptied unlabeled containers of legacy waste into a plastic bag — including radioactive and chemically contaminated materials from Cold War-era weapons activities — a fire ignited.

The incident occurred at one of the lab’s most sensitive sites, where the work of producing the grapefruit-sized plutonium cores of nuclear weapons is done. And despite assurances from the lab and the New Mexico Environment Department that the fire was quickly extinguished with only minor injuries, the incident highlighted, once again, a pattern of consistent mismanagement in the maintenance and cleanup of some of the most dangerous materials on Earth. [>>Continue reading](#)

Investigation shows no tank leak in Double-Shell Tank AZ-101

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5-7
Radwaste Summit 2017
Summerlin, NV
[More info here](#)

September 2017
12-14
2017 National Cleanup Workshop
Alexandria, VA
[More info here](#)

September 2017
13
House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus Event
Washington, DC

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RICHLAND, Wash. — Contamination recently found on a piece of equipment used to inspect a Hanford double-shell tank is not the result of a primary tank leak, an investigation has found.

The Department of Energy’s Office of River Protection (ORP) and Hanford tank farms contractor Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS) have completed the initial phase of an investigation and the analysis of the contamination found on a robotic crawler deployed in the annulus (the space between the primary and secondary tank walls) of double-shell tank AZ-101. The results of the analysis rule out the possibility that the contamination came from a primary tank leak. >>Continue reading

COMMERCIAL NUCLEAR
Exelon announces Three Mile Island nuclear plant at risk of early retirement

Exelon

CHICAGO, IL — Exelon Corporation today announced that its Three Mile Island (TMI) and Quad Cities nuclear plants did not clear in the latest PJM capacity auction, highlighting the challenge nuclear energy continues to face without compensation for its ability to produce electricity without harmful carbon and air pollution and to contribute to grid resilience.

TMI did not clear in the past three PJM base residual auctions. TMI remains economically challenged as a result of continued low wholesale power prices and the lack of federal or Pennsylvania energy policies that value zero-emissions nuclear energy. Exelon has been working with stakeholders on options for the continued operation of TMI, which has not been profitable in five years. >>Continue reading

Southern Co. CEO: More time needed for new Vogtle plan

Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Despite headlines about cost overruns and delays at its Georgia nuclear project and a new Mississippi plant, Southern Company “continues to perform beautifully” overall, CEO Tom Fanning told shareholders Wednesday.
But Fanning also said it will take more time than expected for the Atlanta-based parent of Georgia Power and other utilities to decide whether to continue the nuclear expansion at Plant Vogtle near Augusta.

A bankruptcy filing by Westinghouse, the chief contractor on the project, has thrown into question the future of one of the first new-from-scratch nuclear power plants to be built in the U.S. in three decades. The project is already years behind schedule, with Georgia Power customers at risk of ultimately paying billions of dollars more than they would have if the project had been completed on time, according to a state consultant. >>Continue reading

Toshiba may seek buyers for Westinghouse starting this fall

Live Mint
May 24, 2017

Washington/Tokyo: Toshiba Corp. could begin the process to sell a majority stake in Westinghouse Electric Co. this fall as the US company makes its way through a bankruptcy proceeding, according to Mark Marano, Westinghouse’s chief operating officer (CEO).

Tokyo-based Toshiba has “signaled pretty clearly to the market” that it wants to divest a majority stake in Westinghouse, Marano said in an interview at the Nuclear Energy Assembly in Scottsdale, Arizona, on Tuesday. Toshiba put Westinghouse into bankruptcy in the US on 29 March and has since warned it may not be able to continue as a going concern because of the losses from the business. >>Continue reading