



Final Transcript

NNSA Surplus Plutonium Disposition EIS Scoping Virtual Public Meeting

**Held on
Monday, January 25, 2021**



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FINAL
NNSA SURPLUS PLUTONIUM
DISPOSITION EIS SCOPING
VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING
HELD ON
MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2021

MR. GOODMAN: -- will be your moderator for this evening's meeting. I work at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, which is under contract to the National Nuclear Security Administration to support this program.

We have a number of NNSA employees on the call that you'll be hearing from, including Jeff Galan, the NEPA document manager, which means he's the project manager for this EIS; and Virginia Kay, an office director in the Office of Material Management and Minimization and manager over the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Program.

It looks like right now we have 57 participants on the webinar outside of the -- the panelists. And we are very appreciative of the time that you've taken this evening to join us.

So first off, we certainly hope that everybody is saying -- staying safe and healthy

1 during the ongoing pandemic. Obviously, we are
2 holding this meeting online, as in-person meetings
3 are not feasible at this time. And so we appreciate
4 your interest in the project and your efforts to
5 join us for this virtual and phone scoping meeting.
6 Please bear with us as we attempt to use this
7 technology and run this virtual meeting as
8 seamlessly as possible.

9 Since it's not as obvious as getting in
10 line in an in-person scoping meeting, we will do our
11 best throughout the meeting to make it as clear as
12 possible how to provide a comment. Currently, all
13 attendees except for the presenters are currently
14 muted. Our WebEx producer, Catherine, will unmute
15 both people on the webinar and those calling in over
16 the phone when it is your turn to provide a comment.

17 If you are interested in making a comment
18 and you are logged into the webinar, somewhere on
19 the bottom right of your screen, you will see a hand
20 icon. If you press that button to raise your hand,
21 we will add you to the comment queue in the order in
22 which you raised your hand.

23 If you have called in over the phone, as
24 opposed to being logged into the webinar, please
25 press Star 3 to be added to the telephone queue and

1 Star 3 to lower your hand again after you've had the
2 opportunity to comment.

3 When we start the comment portion of the
4 meeting, we'd like to start with Tribal, Federal,
5 State, and local elected officials and
6 representatives. If you're in that category, please
7 raise your hand and note for our WebEx producer,
8 Catherine, that you are an elected official by
9 sending her a message in the chat box at the bottom
10 right of your screen.

11 Please note that the -- the chat box is
12 not for comments to be submitted. It's reserved for
13 you to identify yourself as a government official or
14 if you're having any technical issues with the
15 WebEx. And we will get into how you can provide
16 your comments in writing later in the presentation.

17 So first off, a little project background.
18 NNSA is developing the Surplus Plutonium Disposition
19 Program Environmental Impact Statement as required
20 by the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA.
21 The NEPA process is intended to ensure that public
22 officials consider the environmental effects of
23 proposed actions and alternatives in order to foster
24 better decision-making and to provide opportunity
25 for public involvement, including early

1 participation during the scoping process. Public
2 scoping is an important aspect of the NEPA process,
3 and we appreciate you being here.

4 Tonight, NNSA will be providing an
5 overview of its mission as it relates to this EIS.
6 In addition, there will be a brief description of
7 the NEPA process and NNSA's environmental review
8 process as well as a short explanation of the
9 history of plutonium disposition and relevant past
10 analyses.

11 Finally, NNSA will provide a description
12 of the purpose and need for this action, an
13 explanation of the Proposed Action, and a
14 description of the alternatives that will be
15 included in the EIS. However, the alternatives have
16 not yet been finalized. Your input is important and
17 valued as NNSA proceeds into developing the EIS and
18 refining its analysis.

19 The input received during scoping will be
20 summarized and incorporated into the EIS, and NNSA
21 will consider all relevant input as the Draft EIS is
22 developed. After the Draft EIS is published,
23 additional meetings will be held to allow you to
24 provide input on that document.

25 So tonight's meeting will proceed as

1 follows: After I'm done with the background and
2 logistics, we'll proceed into a presentation, giving
3 some context and background for the project, and
4 we'll describe the NNSA mission, the description of
5 the NEPA process, and the environmental review
6 process, a description of the history of plutonium
7 disposition and relevant past analyses, and a
8 description of the purpose and need for action,
9 preliminary alternatives and options, environmental
10 issues of potential concern, and the process and
11 timeline for the project. After the presentation,
12 which we expect will take maybe an hour or so, we'll
13 proceed into the open public comment period.

14 The meeting is scheduled tonight for four
15 hours, or until 9:00 p.m. Eastern, 7:00 p.m.
16 Mountain. We will keep the webinar and phone lines
17 open until the four hours have elapsed. We will do
18 our best to make sure that everybody has an
19 opportunity to make a comment, if interested. All
20 comments received orally here tonight will be
21 transcribed by a court reporter and will be
22 considered as part of the development of the Draft
23 EIS.

24 Please note that if you do not provide a
25 comment here orally in this meeting or, if time runs

1 short and we can't get to everybody, you have a
2 number of other options to provide your scoping
3 comment. First off, we're having an identical
4 meeting tomorrow night starting at 7:00 p.m.
5 Eastern, 5:00 p.m. Mountain. You may provide a
6 verbal comment at that meeting. Or you can make --
7 provide your comment by phone, mail, or email. And
8 we'll show those opportunities later in the
9 presentation.

10 If you've already submitted a comment, you
11 do not have to provide an oral comment tonight, but
12 you're welcome to do so. All comments received,
13 regardless of the mechanism or forum for doing so,
14 will be considered equally.

15 So again, we recognize that some folks are
16 logged onto the WebEx webinar tonight, and you can
17 see the slides. Some people have just called in on
18 the phone and cannot see the slides. For those that
19 have internet access right now, if you search NNSA
20 NEPA Reading Room on the internet, the very first
21 link will take you to a webpage that has a link to
22 the PowerPoint presentation that we'll be giving at
23 this meeting, a fact sheet, and a question-and-
24 answer document. And there's also a document
25 regarding some ground rules and tips for this

1 webinar and how to provide a comment in this forum.
2 And you can provide -- you can find at that website
3 the phone number, address, and/or email address for
4 you to provide your comment.

5 The link to that NNSA Reading Room was
6 also in the newspaper and other announcements for
7 this meeting. And again, we'll be providing that
8 information in a slide later in the presentation.
9 For now, please note that the scoping period ends on
10 February 1st.

11 I will now turn to Catherine, our WebEx
12 producer, who will provide additional information
13 for how to get into the queue for those that would
14 like to make an oral comment at tonight's meeting.

15 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Thank you, Dave.

16 Hello, everyone. My name is Catherine. I
17 will be the WebEx producer for your -- for this
18 event tonight. Down on the bottom-right side of
19 your screen, you will see two -- it says Chat, and
20 then there's a Participants bubble. If you click on
21 the Participants bubble, that will open the
22 Participants panel, and you will be able to see the
23 panelists' names listed there.

24 If you scroll down on the bottom of that
25 panel, there will be a little hand. If you click on

1 that, that will put you in the queue to be able to
2 ask a question or to pose a comment.

3 If you have any technical issues using the
4 WebEx, you can click on the Chat and type in your
5 question or your issue. And I will help you walk
6 through getting those resolved for you.

7 **MR. GOODMAN:** Great. Thanks, Catherine.

8 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Thank you.

9 **MR. GOODMAN:** So we also have a Spanish
10 translator, Alvaro (phonetic), available for those
11 that would like to make a comment in Spanish. And
12 we've posted Spanish language copies of the
13 PowerPoint presentation, fact sheet, and Q&A on the
14 project website.

15 Alvaro, can you please introduce yourself,
16 explain where those documents can be found and
17 provide directions on how folks can get into the
18 queue?

19 **THE INTERPRETER:** (Speaking in Spanish).

20 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you, Alvaro.

21 So with that, I will turn the presentation
22 over to Jeff Galan, the NEPA document manager, and
23 Virginia Kay, the manager of the SPDP project, who
24 work in the NNSA Office of Material Management and
25 Minimization and who will be walking us through the

1 PowerPoint presentation, providing information on
2 the project and this EIS.

3 **MR. GALAN:** Good evening. My name is Jeff
4 Galan, as I was just introduced. And I'm the NEPA
5 document manager for the Surplus Plutonium
6 Disposition Program EIS.

7 First, let me provide you with a brief
8 explanation of what the National Nuclear Security
9 Administration is and then what the Office of
10 Material Management and Minimization does.

11 Just so you know, I am an NNSA employee
12 and a member of the Office of Material Management
13 and Minimization. As a NEPA document manager for
14 this EIS, my primary role is as the project manager
15 for this effort. I'm also the primary contact for
16 any questions or comments you might have regarding
17 this EIS. My contact information is at the end of
18 this presentation and was included in the newspaper
19 and other announcements that were made for this
20 meeting.

21 All right. We need to be on the next
22 slide, please, slide 4. One more.

23 **MR. GOODMAN:** Sorry, Jeff. I'm having
24 some issues with the slides. It keeps --

25 **MR. GALAN:** It's all right.

1 **MR. GOODMAN:** -- moving, and I'm not
2 touching it. So all right. You're trying to be on
3 this slide, yes?

4 **MR. GALAN:** Previous one.

5 **MR. GOODMAN:** Ah.

6 **MR. GALAN:** Oh, no. You had it. Got to
7 love technology.

8 All right. So first of all, you know, I
9 wanted to -- you know, what is the National Nuclear
10 Security Administration? We also refer to it as
11 NNSA. NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the
12 United States Department of Energy, or DOE. It
13 maintains and enhances the safety, security, and
14 effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile.
15 But one of our other primary responsibilities is
16 preventing nuclear weapons proliferation and
17 reducing the threat of nuclear and radiological
18 terrorism around the world.

19 You may also wonder what the Office of
20 Material Management and Minimization is. What -- we
21 also refer to it as M-cubed. The Office of Material
22 Management and Minimization is an NNSA office
23 responsible for minimizing the use of and, where
24 possible, eliminating weapons-usable uranium and
25 plutonium around the world. This is the office that

1 has been charged with dispositioning 34 metric tons
2 of plutonium that's been declared excess to national
3 defense needs.

4 All right. Next slide.

5 All right. So why are we taking this
6 action? What is our purpose and need? What does
7 NNSA -- why does NNSA want to disposition 34 metric
8 tons of surplus plutonium? Well, the action that
9 we're discussing fits in with NNSA's mission to
10 reduce the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation
11 worldwide by dispositioning surplus plutonium in the
12 United States in a safe and secure manner, ensuring
13 that it can never again be readily used in nuclear
14 weapons. To that end, NNSA will disposition 34
15 metric tons of surplus plutonium in a safe manner
16 and in a reasonable time frame at a cost consistent
17 with fiscal reality -- fiscal realities.

18 All right. So now let's talk a little bit
19 about the National Environmental Policy Act, or
20 NEPA, its purposes and processes. NEPA requires a
21 process for any major Federal action that may
22 significantly affect the quality of the human
23 environment. The purpose of the -- the purpose of
24 the NEPA process is to ensure that public officials
25 consider the environmental effects of the proposed

1 actions and alternatives in order to foster better
2 decision-making and to provide opportunity for
3 public involvement, including early participation
4 during the scoping process, like this, like tonight.

5 All right. Next slide.

6 All right. What is the planned timeline
7 for this NEPA review? Now, first of all, I want to
8 make it clear. These are estimates associated with
9 -- with what we, you know -- kind of how -- how
10 we're going to proceed. But it gives you a basic
11 idea of our timeline. Now, the public scoping
12 period for this EIS is 45 days. And it opened
13 December 16th in 2020 when the Notice of Intent was
14 published in the Federal Register and will continue
15 through February 1st of 2021. Tonight's scoping
16 meeting is part of this public process.

17 And you can see there -- there are
18 preliminary estimates for other key dates in this
19 NEPA effort. Once public scoping ends, NNSA will
20 begin drafting the -- well, preparing the Draft EIS.
21 Our goal is to have the Draft EIS finished and
22 published by late December 2021. So there's some
23 dates you see here. Again, those are just
24 placeholders, but that's what our goal is.

25 The Draft EIS will include a summary of

1 all the scoping input received from the public as
2 well as from Tribal, Federal, State, and local
3 governments.

4 Well, once the Draft EIS is published,
5 there's another 45-day public comment period. And
6 in our current schedule, we'd like to issue a Final
7 EIS by mid-November of 2022 with a Record of
8 Decision published in mid-December 2022. But again,
9 these dates are subject to change.

10 All right. Next slide.

11 All right. All right. Next, let's
12 briefly discuss the background and history. I'm not
13 going to discuss every item listed on this slide,
14 but just highlight a few. A more detailed history
15 of the various NEPA actions was provided in the
16 Notice of Intent published for this EIS. There is a
17 link on the NNSA NEPA website. In addition, the
18 relevant history is included in each of the
19 documents referenced on this timeline.

20 First, the process for disposing of
21 surplus plutonium began about 25 years ago when DOE
22 completed the Storage and Disposition of Weapons-
23 Usable Fissile Materials Programmatic Environmental
24 Impact Statement. And that was done in 1996. In
25 this PEIS, DOE evaluated deep borehole,

1 immobilization, and reactor alternatives, each with
2 sub-alternatives, for dispositioning surplus
3 plutonium.

4 In 1997, there was a Record of Decision
5 where NNSA documented its decisions to immobilize
6 some or all surplus plutonium for disposal in a
7 geologic repository, possibly fabricate some surplus
8 plutonium in mixed oxide, MOX, fuel for irradiation
9 in commercial reactors, and to consolidate storage
10 of pit plutonium at Pantex, and to consolidate
11 storage of non-pit plutonium at SRS.

12 In 1999, DOE completed the Surplus
13 Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact
14 Statement, the SPD EIS. In the SPD EIS, DOE
15 evaluated immobilization alternatives and MOX fuel
16 fabrication alternatives, as well as siting
17 alternatives for the Mixed-Oxide Fuel Fabrication
18 Facility, a pit disassembly and conversion facility,
19 and an immobilization facility. Since then,
20 proposals on how to permanently disposition of
21 surplus plutonium changed several times, and at --
22 and each step has been supported by an assessment of
23 the impacts to the environment, as NEPA requires.

24 In 2015, NNSA completed the Surplus
25 Plutonium Disposition Supplemental Environmental

1 Impact Statement, the SPD Supplemental EIS. In the
2 SPD Supplemental EIS, NNSA evaluated the MOX Fuel
3 Alternative; the WIPP Alternative, which is also
4 referred to as plutonium downblending or dilute and
5 dispose; and two variations on immobilization for
6 disposition of 6 metric tons of non-pit plutonium
7 and 7.1 metric tons of pit plutonium. This 13.1
8 metric tons of surplus plutonium, for which a
9 disposition path had not previously been assigned,
10 was in addition to the 34 metric tons NNSA decided
11 to disposition using the MOX approach.

12 In 2016, NNSA issued a ROD, a Record of
13 Decision, to dispose of the six metric tons of non-
14 pit plutonium using the WIPP Alternative, dilute and
15 dispose. Using that approach, NNSA is currently
16 diluting the six metric tons of non-pit plutonium
17 with an adulterant using modified or existing
18 facilities, packaging that material as contact-
19 handled TRU waste, and shipping it to WIPP for
20 emplacement.

21 In addition, in 2020, NNSA prepared a
22 Supplement Analysis, an SA, based on the analysis
23 presented in the 2015 SPD SEIS to evaluate using the
24 dilute and dispose approach for disposition of 7.1
25 metric tons of non-pit plutonium. And then NNSA

1 subsequently issued an Amended ROD, an AROD, to use
2 dilute and dispose to disposition the 7.1 metric
3 tons of the 34-metric-ton mission. This was done to
4 support efforts to disposition material that was
5 consolidated in South Carolina.

6 I know this was complicated. This is a
7 complicated slide. So I encourage you to read a
8 more detailed history of the various NEPA actions
9 provided in the Notice of Intent that we published
10 for this EIS. And like I mentioned, there's a link
11 to the NOI on the NNSA NEPA website.

12 Now I'm going to turn over the
13 presentation of the next few slides to Virginia Kay.

14 Virginia?

15 **MS. KAY:** My name is Virginia Kay. And
16 I'm the director of the Office of Materials
17 Disposition, the office that's responsible for the
18 management and permanent disposition of inventories
19 of weapons-usable nuclear materials that are in
20 excess of national security requirement.

21 A large part of this portfolio in this
22 office is the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Program.
23 I very much appreciate your interest in our program
24 and most certainly appreciate your attendance at
25 tonight's scoping meeting as we begin the

1 preparation of a comprehensive Environmental Impact
2 Statement for the Surplus Plutonium Disposition
3 Program.

4 In terms of the Proposed Action, the
5 Proposed Action in this Environmental Impact
6 Statement is the reconsideration of the disposition
7 pathway for 34 metric tons of plutonium that is in
8 excess of defense needs of the United States. The
9 34 metric tons of material under consideration in
10 this EIS is comprised of both pit and non-pit
11 plutonium. Pit plutonium comes from the central
12 core of a nuclear weapon, and it's in metal form,
13 while non-pit plutonium may be in either a metal or
14 oxide form. But it's still considered weapons-
15 usable material.

16 Over the last two and a half decades, DOE
17 has studied many alternatives and locations for the
18 Surplus Plutonium Disposition Program. DOE had
19 previously decided to disposition the 34 metric tons
20 of plutonium by fabricating oxidized plutonium into
21 Mixed Oxide, or MOX, fuel for irradiation and
22 domestic commercial nuclear power reactors to
23 produce electricity. However, the MOX fuel
24 disposition path is no longer a viable alternative,
25 as the MOX project was terminated in 2018 and the

1 former Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility is
2 currently being repurposed for another NNSA mission.

3 NNSA needs to complete the analysis in
4 this EIS to determine a disposition process and
5 strategy that can be safely executed in a reasonable
6 time frame at a cost consistent with our current
7 fiscal realities. To maximize efficiency, NNSA has
8 proposed to implement proven technologies that are
9 based on processes that require a minimal research
10 and development and, therefore, minimizes deployment
11 time.

12 NNSA's preferred alternative for
13 disposition of the 34 metric tons of surplus
14 plutonium, pit plutonium and non-pit plutonium, is
15 the dilute and dispose approach, also known as
16 plutonium downblending. Plutonium downblending is a
17 proven technology previously being used and
18 currently being used within the DOE complex.

19 In summary, the dilute and dispose
20 approach requires disassembly of pits, conversion of
21 pit and non-pit metals to an oxide form. The
22 plutonium oxide is then blended with an adulterant
23 mixture in a dry process. This produces a diluted
24 product that is not readily usable for weapons and
25 can be safely disposed of as transuranic waste at

1 the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

2 The dilute and dispose approach would
3 require new, modified or existing capabilities
4 within the DOE complex. And sites under
5 consideration for this program are the Savannah
6 River Site, Los Alamos National Laboratory, the
7 Pantex Plant, and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

8 As Jeff pointed out earlier, today, the
9 dilute and dispose approach is currently being used
10 to disposition six metric tons of non-pit plutonium
11 that is not considered part of the 34 metric tons.
12 Additionally, most recently, in August 2020, DOE
13 decided to disposition an additional 7.1 metric tons
14 of surplus non-pit plutonium using the dilute and
15 dispose approach in order to support efforts to
16 disposition material that was consolidated in South
17 Carolina. That 7.1 metric tons of plutonium is part
18 of the 34 metric tons that was originally designated
19 for fabrication into MOX fuel.

20 Slide 11 presents a high-level system
21 overview depicting the major steps in the surplus
22 plutonium disposition process using the dilute and
23 dispose approach. The intent of this diagram is to
24 highlight the major steps in the process and -- and,
25 in no way, shape, or form intended to address every

1 detailed step that -- that has to occur to ensure
2 safe and successful execution of the dilute and
3 dispose process.

4 Starting at the top-left corner and moving
5 clockwise around the diagram, nuclear weapon pits
6 are first disassembled using a lathe, which is shown
7 in the first picture. The plutonium metal is then
8 heated using a high-temperature furnace to form an
9 oxide. Non-pit plutonium, if not already in an
10 oxide form, is also converted into an oxide using a
11 high-temperature furnace.

12 A disassembly lathe, furnaces, and
13 associated equipment needed to convert plutonium
14 metal to an oxide are located in a series of
15 gloveboxes that separate workers from the hazardous
16 material. The oxide is packaged into specialized
17 containers, commonly called a DOE-3013 container, or
18 an alternate configuration, such as a SAVY or can-
19 bag-can, all of which are nested can configurations
20 with multiple layers. These configurations are
21 compliant with DOE standards for safe storage and
22 transfer of plutonium.

23 Plutonium oxide-bearing containers and
24 Blend Can Kits prefilled with an adulterant mixture
25 are introduced into a glovebox used for dilution

1 processing. The second picture shows an existing
2 glovebox at Savannah River Site, which is currently
3 being used for plutonium downblending.

4 Continuing clockwise, the 3013 or
5 alternate container is opened, and a specified
6 amount of plutonium oxide is added to a blend can
7 containing the adulterant mixture. The plutonium
8 oxide and adulterant are blended using a mixture
9 shown in the fourth photograph. The blend can is
10 subsequently placed inside a robust outer container
11 in order to reduce radiological exposure to workers.
12 This downblending process results in a mixture that
13 is not readily usable for weapons and can be safely
14 disposed of as transuranic waste at WIPP. Once
15 again, as a point of emphasis, the disassembly,
16 oxidation, and downblending activities all occur
17 within gloveboxes located within secure facilities.

18 After the downblend process is completed,
19 the robust outer containers of diluted surplus
20 plutonium are bagged out of the glovebox and
21 packaged into Criticality Controlled Overpack
22 containers, commonly called CCOs. These CCOs are
23 metal drums that are approved for offsite shipment
24 and disposal of downblended plutonium. The CCOs are
25 characterized to ensure compliance with the WIPP

1 waste acceptance criteria; they're loaded into
2 shipping containers, known as TRUPACT IIs; and then
3 shipped to WIPP where the resulting transuranic
4 waste is placed -- and placed over 2,000 feet
5 underground.

6 Slide 12 shows the sites within the DOE
7 complex where dilute and dispose activities would be
8 performed. The majority of the 34 metric tons of
9 surplus plutonium pit -- is in pit form, which is
10 staged at the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas.
11 Surplus pits are packaged and shipped in approved
12 shipping packages by secure transport to the Los
13 Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, which main
14 -- currently maintains the only capability within
15 the complex to disassemble pits and convert pit
16 metal to oxide.

17 The Savannah River Site in South Carolina
18 has existing capability in the K -- the K Area
19 Interim Surveillance glovebox within K Area at SRS
20 to dilute plutonium oxide using the process as
21 described on the previous diagram. And it's
22 currently executing a capital project at Savannah
23 River Site to install additional gloveboxes and
24 support systems that would expand dilution
25 capability and capacity at SRS.

1 Lastly, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in
2 New Mexico is the final site and the pathway for
3 underground disposal of diluted surplus plutonium as
4 transuranic waste.

5 Okay. So moving on to slide 13, as we've
6 previously stated, the dilute and dispose approach
7 is the preferred alternative and is the only
8 technological alternative currently proposed for the
9 scope of the -- this EIS. The Department has
10 extensively evaluated other technological
11 alternatives in previous NEPA analyses and studies
12 and does not believe that other technological
13 approaches could be implemented in a cost-effective
14 manner or within a reasonable timeline. However,
15 NNSA will consider input from stakeholders on other
16 possible alternatives as part of the scoping
17 process.

18 The dilute and dispose approach would
19 require new, modified, or existing capabilities at
20 Pantex, Los Alamos, Savannah River, and WIPP. The
21 options presented over the next several slides are
22 variants, essentially, of the dilute and dispose
23 approach, which range from a combination of
24 facilities at several sites to multiple facilities
25 at a single site. However, all the options as

1 presented result in a permanent disposition of the
2 diluted surplus plutonium as transuranic waste at
3 WIPP.

4 Slide 13 depicts those -- the preferred
5 alternative as -- as has been proposed in the Notice
6 of Intent. The preferred alternative -- under the
7 preferred alternative, pits would be transferred
8 from Pantex to Los Alamos for pit -- pit
9 disassembly. Both pit and non-pit plutonium, if not
10 already in an oxide form, would be oxidized at Los
11 Alamos and packaged in a 3013 or alternate container
12 for shipment to Savannah River Site. At Savannah
13 River Site, the plutonium oxide would be diluted,
14 packaged to CCOs, characterized to ensure compliance
15 with waste acceptance criteria, and shipped to the
16 repository for final disposition.

17 Next slide. Oh, already there.

18 Moving on to slide 14, which shows Option
19 1, as shown in this slide, Option 1 would provide
20 capability for dilution of plutonium oxide and
21 subsequent packaging, characterization, and shipment
22 to WIPP from Los Alamos National Laboratory. In
23 Option 1, LANL would have the full suite of
24 processes required to disassemble pits, oxidize
25 plutonium, dilute plutonium, and package the surplus

1 plutonium and ship the resulting transuranic waste
2 to WIPP.

3 Also, under Option 1, Savannah River Site
4 would maintain the capability for dilution,
5 characterization, and packaging. So essentially,
6 the backend processes supporting downblending -- the
7 downblending portion of the dilute and dispose
8 approach could be either performed at Los Alamos or
9 Savannah River Site.

10 Moving on to slide 15, this shows Option
11 2. In Option 2, Los Alamos would process the
12 nuclear weapons pits and send the pit plutonium
13 oxide to Savannah River Site. However, a
14 supplemental capability for oxidation of non-pit
15 plutonium metal would be installed at Savannah River
16 Site, allowing a portion of the oxidation processes
17 to either be -- to either occur at Los Alamos or
18 Savannah River Site. Both pit and non-pit oxide
19 would then be diluted, characterized, packaged, and
20 shipped to the repository from Savannah River Site.

21 Slide 16 shows Option 3. Option 3 entails
22 new, existing, or modified facilities at Pantex, Los
23 Alamos, and/or Savannah River Site. These
24 facilities would provide the full suite of processes
25 required to execute the dilute and dispose approach

1 from production of plutonium oxide through shipment
2 of the diluted surplus plutonium to WIPP and would
3 supplement or possibly replace existing or planned
4 processes at Los Alamos or Savannah River Site.

5 Finally, this EIS will include a no -- an
6 analysis of a no action alternative, which is shown
7 in this slide. The no action alternative would
8 consist of continued safe storage of surplus pit
9 plutonium at Pantex and disposition of 7.1 metric
10 tons of non-pit plutonium using the dilute and
11 dispose approach, as previously described in the
12 August 2020 Amended Record of Decision and as
13 published in the Federal Register.

14 That's all I have in terms of describing
15 the alternatives. Thank you very much for your time
16 this evening. I look forward to your input and your
17 comments.

18 And turning it back over to you, Jeff.

19 **MR. GALAN:** Great. Thank you, Virginia.

20 All right. We're on slide 18 now.

21 All right. When -- when a Federal agency
22 undertakes an EIS, it must analyze a full range of
23 environmental effects of the preferred alternative
24 and of the reasonable alternatives identified in the
25 Draft EIS. Here is a list of the environmental

1 topics that we plan on considering in the SPDP EIS.
2 These include air quality, cultural resources,
3 ecological resources, environmental justice, geology
4 and soils, human health of workers and the public,
5 the human health effects of accidents. And we'll
6 also look at the effects of -- on the
7 infrastructure, land and visual resources, noise,
8 socioeconomics, transportation, waste management,
9 and water resources.

10 Next slide.

11 All right. So finally, let's talk about
12 the topics for consideration during this scoping
13 process. NNSA is seeking comments from the public
14 on the following aspects of the Surplus Plutonium
15 Disposition Program EIS. We'd like to hear from you
16 about the appropriate scope of the SPDP EIS. We'd
17 like to hear from you about other reasonable
18 alternatives that DOE should consider and
19 environmental topics that DOE should evaluate in the
20 EIS.

21 Well, that concludes our presentation on
22 the SPDP EIS. Now it's time for the public comment
23 portion of this meeting. How can you provide
24 comments on this EIS? Well, today you can submit
25 oral comments on the scope of the Surplus Plutonium

1 Disposition Program EIS, and they will be
2 transcribed by a court reporter. You can also leave
3 a message on voice mail at 803-952-7434. And you
4 may mail your comment to me at Jeffrey Galan, NNSA
5 Office of Material Management and Minimization,
6 Savannah River Site, P.O. Box A, Building 730-2B,
7 Room 328, Aiken, South Carolina, 29803. Or you may
8 submit your comments by email to spd-
9 eis@nnsa.doe.gov.

10 If you've already provided a comment by
11 phone, mail, or email, you do not have to provide it
12 again tonight. However, you are welcome to do so.
13 All comments will be treated equally, regardless of
14 which method you choose to use.

15 Please remember that the comment period
16 closes on February 1st, 2021. Please try to submit
17 your comments before then. Any comments received
18 after February 1st will be considered to the extent
19 practical.

20 Thank you so much for your attention and
21 your input. And now I'm going to turn it back over
22 to Dave Goodman for the public comment portion of
23 this scoping meeting.

24 Dave?

25 **MR. GOODMAN:** Great. Thank you, Jeff.

1 And thank you to both you and Virginia.

2 I recognize that was a lot of information
3 in a short amount of time, but we hope that
4 addresses some of your questions about the program
5 and the scope of this Environmental Impact
6 Statement. Again, if you'd like more information,
7 we encourage you to read more on the project
8 website.

9 So we are just about ready to begin the
10 public comment period of the meeting. I think we
11 were planning -- it went a little quicker than I
12 think we were expecting, which is great. It
13 provides more time for -- for comments. But why
14 don't we go ahead now and take a 10-minute break,
15 and then we will proceed with starting in the queue
16 for comments.

17 Again, if you are on the webinar and you
18 would like to provide a comment, please press the
19 hand on the lower-right side of your screen to get
20 into the queue. And we will unmute your line when
21 it is your time to speak. Periodically, we will
22 also check in to see if there are folks on the phone
23 that would like to participate. If you're on the
24 phone and you would like to raise your hand, please
25 press Star 3, and you will get in the queue. And

1 then we'll unmute you when it's your turn. We'll
2 start with some comments from the webinar, and then
3 we'll shift over and see if there are comments on
4 the phone.

5 So right now, I have it at 5:44 p.m.
6 Eastern. Why don't we go ahead and take a 10-minute
7 break, allow folks to get into the queue if they
8 haven't already, and allow our folks to organize the
9 queue. And at 5:55 p.m., we will come back and
10 start with the public comment period. So thank you
11 very much.

12 **(WHEREUPON, a recess was taken.)**

13 **MR. GOODMAN:** So once again, for the folks
14 on the webinar, we are in the midst of a break here.
15 Again, if you would like to -- if you're on the
16 webinar and you would like to get in the queue to
17 provide a comment, please raise your hand using the
18 hand button on the lower-right side of the screen.
19 If you're on the phone, please press Star 3 to raise
20 your hand.

21 And I think we are realizing that a 10-
22 minute break might be a little long for these
23 purposes. So we're going to get going in just a
24 minute or two, and hopefully folks have had the
25 opportunity to get a snack, have time to go to the

1 bathroom, and we'll get going here again very
2 shortly.

3 **(WHEREUPON, a recess was taken.)**

4 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. I think for the
5 purposes of being respectful with everybody's time,
6 we're going to go ahead and get started with the
7 comment portion of the meeting. Again, we would
8 like to start the public comment portion of the
9 meeting with Tribal, Federal, State, and local
10 elected officials. Hopefully, you have raised your
11 hand and noted in the chat to our host, Catherine,
12 that you are an elected official to get to the top
13 of the queue. If you haven't done that, please do.

14 With that, we're going to start and -- and
15 request that comments be no longer than three
16 minutes. And I will track that on a timer that I am
17 going to share right now, hopefully.

18 And can I get confirmation from Catherine
19 or somebody else that you can see the three-minute
20 timer on the screen?

21 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Yes, I can.

22 **MR. GOODMAN:** Great. Okay. So as your
23 time begins to run short, I'll try to let you know.
24 When your time expires, I will respectfully ask you
25 to conclude.

1 We appreciate you being respectful of the
2 project staff and your fellow members of the public.
3 We certainly don't anticipate that this will be an
4 issue. But in order to make sure everybody has the
5 same amount of time to comment, we may need to mute
6 your line after three minutes. If time permits,
7 when everybody has had the opportunity to provide
8 their comment, you may have the opportunity to
9 provide a second comment.

10 So once again, if you're interested in
11 making a comment and you haven't already got in the
12 queue, please press the hand button on the right
13 side of the screen. Or if you're on the phone,
14 please press Star 3 to get into the queue.

15 Okay. So let's begin. First, we're going
16 to receive comments from Tribal, Federal, State, and
17 local officials.

18 Catherine, do we have any of those on the
19 line and ready to make a comment?

20 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Yes, we do. We're going to
21 start off with Joe Wilson.

22 Joe Wilson, you are unmuted.

23 **CONGRESSMAN WILSON:** Catherine, thank you.

24 And ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank
25 Virginia, Jeff, and Dave.

1 Good evening, everyone. As the National
2 Nuclear Security Administration acts on its promise
3 to remove plutonium from the State of South
4 Carolina, I support the effort related to the
5 preparation of that Environmental Impact Statement
6 to the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Program.

7 Moving this material out of South Carolina
8 is a top priority for South Carolinians. The
9 installation of three new gloveboxes, ventilation,
10 fire protection, and other support equipment in the
11 K area will expand the current capability of the
12 site to dilute and dispose of plutonium,
13 accelerating the removal.

14 The Savannah River Site continues to prove
15 itself as a leader in safety and experience,
16 especially when handling these types of materials.
17 Note the liquid waste contractor, Savannah River
18 Remediation, and the management operations
19 contractor, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, have
20 been awarded safety achievement awards over the past
21 year.

22 There is overwhelming community support
23 for the site as it goes to a talented workforce with
24 significant accomplishments. I know this firsthand
25 as a former staff member myself at the site and the

1 only member of Congress to have ever worked at the
2 site.

3 As we continue to seek innovative ways to
4 dispose of the nuclear material safely and
5 efficiently, I look forward to seeing the project
6 come to fruition to lay the groundwork for the
7 removal of plutonium from the State of South
8 Carolina and our adjacent State of Georgia.

9 Thank you for your time and consideration.
10 Best wishes for continued success. The
11 congressional office in the 2nd District is grateful
12 to serve. Thank you.

13 **MR. GOODMAN:** Congressman Wilson, thank
14 you very much for your time and for joining us
15 tonight. We appreciate your comment.

16 **CONGRESSMAN WILSON:** (Inaudible).

17 **MR. GOODMAN:** Catherine, do we have any
18 other Tribal, Federal, State, or local elected
19 officials?

20 **MS. HEGWOOD:** I do not see any at this
21 time.

22 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. Then with that, can
23 we just move on to members of the public?

24 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. Great. Our next
25 speaker will be (inaudible).

1 **MR. GOODMAN:** Catherine, I think you went
2 on mute right as you started saying the name.

3 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Sorry about that.

4 Susan Everitt, you are unmuted.

5 **MS. EVERITT:** Thank you so much.

6 My name is Susan Everitt. I'm with the
7 American Red Cross. And as the executive director
8 for the American Red Cross of East Central Georgia,
9 please accept these personal comments in support of
10 SRS and the NNSA's effort related to its preparation
11 of an EIS for its Surplus Plutonium Disposition
12 Program, which will involve the Savannah River Site
13 and other DOE sites across the nation.

14 SRS has been a vital partner with our
15 American Red Cross for many years, and the support
16 they provide allows our Red Cross to help alleviate
17 human suffering in the Central Savannah River area.
18 Last year alone, the support from SRS helped our
19 local Red Cross to be disaster specialists
20 responding to over 250 disasters; to be champions of
21 our military veterans and their families, providing
22 over 5,000 services; to be life savers by providing
23 40 percent of our nation's safe blood products; and
24 to be educators, teaching over 3,200 people to save
25 lives through first aid and CPR.

1 Quite simply, without the continued
2 support of SRS, our local Red Cross would not be
3 able to alleviate the significant amount of
4 suffering in our community. I know that SRS
5 employees have helped make the world safer for 70
6 years, and I am proud to have SRS representation on
7 our Red Cross of East Central Georgia Board of
8 Directors. I personally support the NNSA's proposed
9 downblending plan, and I have full and complete
10 confidence in the SRS workforce to safely and
11 securely complete this mission.

12 Thank you for your time.

13 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you very much, Ms.
14 Everitt, for your time and for your comment tonight.

15 Catherine, can you go to the next
16 commenter?

17 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Sure. Thank you.

18 Our next comment -- comment is from Don
19 Hancock.

20 Don, you are unmuted.

21 **MR. HANCOCK:** Hello. I'm Don Hancock with
22 Southwest Research and Information Center in
23 Albuquerque, New Mexico.

24 There are many deficiencies that
25 demonstrate that this entire Environmental Impact

1 Statement process is fundamentally flawed. In three
2 minutes, I will be limited to briefly mentioning
3 just three of those many deficiencies.

4 First, the 1996 PEIS shown on slide 8 did
5 not include the dilute and dispose alternative
6 because disposition was to meet the spent fuel
7 standard, which dilute and dispose does not. The
8 1996 PEIS specifically excluded WIPP as an
9 alternative. Thus, there is no PEIS to support the
10 preferred alternative of dilute and dispose at WIPP.

11 The NNSA NEPA process should stop until an
12 adequate new Final PEIS is issued. We've long
13 advocated for that. In 2020, the National Academy
14 of Sciences, in its review of the Department of
15 Energy's plan for disposal of surplus plutonium in
16 the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant also recommended a
17 PEIS. So there's no adequate legal or technical
18 support for proceeding with the DEIS that you are
19 proposing.

20 Second, according to another part of DOE,
21 the Office of Nuclear Energy, in its Draft Versatile
22 Test Reactor Environmental Impact Statement, 34
23 metric tons of surplus plutonium would be used for
24 fuel for that new reactor starting in 2026.
25 Probably various parts of DOE don't talk to each

1 other, but I'm now informing NNSA of that other
2 DEIS. Since that Versatile Test Reactor DEIS states
3 that it is a reasonable alternative for disposition
4 of 34 metric tons of surplus plutonium, NNSA either
5 has to include it as a reasonable alternative or
6 state why it is not a reasonable alternative.

7 To be clear, my organization opposes the
8 new reactor, but we would be pleased if NNSA also
9 objects to using surplus plutonium in that reactor.

10 Third, WIPP is not a reasonable
11 alternative for disposition of the 34 metric tons.
12 According to the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act, the New
13 Mexico DOE Consultation Cooperation Agreement, WIPP
14 doesn't have the capacity for the 34 metric tons.
15 Under the State of New Mexico's permit for WIPP,
16 WIPP will be closing long before the 34 metric tons
17 could get to WIPP.

18 So NNSA has to be considering long-term
19 storage; the no action alternative; and an
20 alternative that hasn't been mentioned in the Notice
21 of Intent, the development of a new repository other
22 than WIPP. I feel we should commence that effort
23 right away.

24 Thank you.

25 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Hancock.

1 Catherine, do we have our next commenter?

2 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Great. Thank you.

3 Our next one is from Suzanne Jackson.

4 Suzanne, you are unmuted.

5 **MS. JACKSON:** All right. Thank you.

6 I'm Suzanne Jackson. I'm the executive
7 director with ACTS. We are a local nonprofit with a
8 mission to serve individuals and families living in
9 poverty, the working poor, senior adults on fixed
10 income, and individuals who are facing financial
11 uncertainties due to loss of employment. We have
12 served extensively during COVID-19, providing
13 services across Aiken County, including many
14 underserved and rural communities, which has been
15 quite an undertaking.

16 I thank you for the opportunity to provide
17 comments in support of the Surplus Plutonium
18 Disposition Program EIS. ACTS has operated for more
19 than 34 years. And during this period, we have
20 experienced firsthand the impact of SRS in our
21 community. The support the site provides to ACTS
22 from a volunteer standpoint, as well as financially,
23 is to be commended. Without the support of SRS and
24 its employees, ACTS will be limited in the number of
25 clients we serve annually.

1 In 2020, we served more than 11,000
2 households, impacting more than 18,000 individuals,
3 many of whom are children and senior adults. We
4 rely on more than 300 volunteers to help deliver
5 these services. And employees from SRS have been,
6 and continue to be, active participants in our
7 volunteer workforce. During COVID-19, our
8 partnership with SRS has been even more essential in
9 our ability to serve individuals and families to
10 present unique issues related to the pandemic.

11 We are one of many nonprofits in the CSARA
12 that are grateful for the breadth of support that
13 are received from SRS. For 70 years, SRS has been a
14 vital community partner, not only providing an
15 economic impact by helping to sustain our economy
16 with direct and indirect jobs, but also in their
17 support of local businesses and nonprofits with
18 missions to support vulnerable populations with
19 limited resources, thus enhancing the quality of
20 life in our community.

21 As a citizen of Aiken County for 32 years,
22 I have witnessed the impact of SRS in our community
23 and their exemplary safety record and breadth of
24 nuclear management and operations experience that
25 has led, and will continue to lead, the day-to-day

1 operations. I support the Surplus Plutonium
2 Disposition Program EIS at SRS, knowing the site has
3 experience in plutonium downblending, taking into
4 account environmental impact and safety of our
5 community while supporting our national defense
6 missions.

7 I'm appreciative of the longstanding
8 partnership ACTS has had with SRS and the
9 opportunity to express support of this important
10 mission.

11 Thank you.

12 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you for your comment,
13 Ms. Jackson.

14 Catherine, next commenter?

15 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. Our next one is
16 from George Anastas.

17 George, you are unmuted.

18 **MR. ANASTAS:** Well, thank you. Good
19 afternoon, all.

20 I have -- I'm in Albuquerque, and I have
21 three points I'd like to raise. Several of the
22 speakers mentioned that this downblended plutonium
23 can never be readily used in nuclear weapons. I
24 think we need some discussion about what is meant by
25 not readily used in nuclear weapons.

1 The second point is that both speakers
2 talked about fiscal realities. I'm under the
3 impression that the production of this plutonium, 34
4 metric tons or 60 metric tons, cost many billions of
5 dollars over time. And my calculations show close
6 to \$100 billion it cost to produce that plutonium in
7 the 2019 dollars. And now we want to take that
8 plutonium and dilute it, add an adulterant to it,
9 and spend another billion or more dollars and put it
10 in the ground. It doesn't make fiscal sense. And I
11 think there should be a discussion in the EIS, if
12 there is another EIS on this, on the cost benefit of
13 burying billions of dollars' worth of plutonium.

14 The last point I'll make is that the Waste
15 Isolation Pilot Plant was not permitted, was not
16 evaluated for the disposal, for the burial, of
17 weapons-grade plutonium. And New Mexico, as some of
18 you may know, is known as the Land of Enchantment.
19 If you dump 34 metric tons of weapons PU into WIPP,
20 the motto for New Mexico will be no longer the Land
21 of Enchantment, but the land of the world's largest
22 plutonium ore body.

23 I will be submitting written comments in a
24 day or two. I will email it to the address that was
25 provided. Thank you very, very much.

1 The last point I made is that there are a
2 number of people in support of this program.
3 Perhaps they would like to host a repository where
4 NNSA can place this adulterated plutonium either in
5 South Carolina or Georgia.

6 Thank you very much for the opportunity to
7 present these comments.

8 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. Thank you, Mr.
9 Anastas.

10 Catherine?

11 **MS. HEGWOOD:** (Inaudible) -- sure. Thank
12 you.

13 Forest Mahan, you are unmuted.

14 **MR. MAHAN:** Oh, thank you. Yes. My name
15 is Forest Mahan. I'm the president of Aiken
16 Technical College, and I wanted to speak a few
17 minutes in support of this effort of the Savannah
18 River Site and the NNSA.

19 For the last 70 years, the SRS has had a
20 major impact in our community. And for 50 years,
21 Aiken Technical College has helped meet their
22 workforce needs. Over the course of the years, the
23 Savannah River Site has evolved to meet past
24 missions, current missions, and will evolve to meet
25 future missions regarding national defense and

1 environmental cleanup.

2 I just wanted to express my support for
3 this Surplus Plutonium Disposition Program and to
4 assure everyone at the NNSA that Aiken Technical
5 College will work very hard to ensure that this
6 talented workforce will be in place as we take on
7 this very important mission.

8 Thank you.

9 **MR. GOODMAN:** Great. Thank you, Mr.
10 Mahan.

11 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Great. Thank you.

12 And our next speaker is Cynthia Weehler.

13 Cynthia, you are unmuted.

14 **MS. WEEHLER:** Thank you. I'm Cynthia
15 Weehler. I live in New Mexico, and I grew up near
16 Carlsbad. I'm with the Southwest Alliance for our
17 Future. Thank you for taking comments, my concerns.

18 NNSA originally decided to turn the
19 surplus plutonium into MOX fuel. Several years
20 later, and over \$6 billion of public monies later,
21 it decided the plan wasn't feasible and was too
22 expensive. This kind of decision-making does not
23 give the public confidence in the decisions NNSA is
24 making now.

25 I live on the designated route for

1 radioactive transport, along with thousands of
2 others in New Mexico and hundreds of thousands of
3 others in other states. Each shipment will move
4 past my neighborhood at least twice.

5 LANL has a poor record of transporting
6 these shipments safely. At the least, the DEIS must
7 indicate exactly which routes will be used and how
8 often. We risk losing our property and our health
9 in an accident, and we're being forced into
10 accepting this risk. Imagine if it were your
11 community, your home, your school with children,
12 your business.

13 NNSA and DOE are also breaking every
14 promise made to the State of New Mexico that they
15 originally agreed to, to the -- originally required
16 to get New Mexico to accept the WIPP facility. The
17 State did not agree to take this waste in
18 perpetuity. And now you're breaking the legal and
19 social contract to operate this facility. It's
20 illegal.

21 To get New Mexico on board with WIPP, the
22 DOE promised to locate other repositories around the
23 country. New Mexico was never meant to be the sole
24 state holding the burden of the nation's nuclear
25 weapons waste.

1 Every state has benefitted from the
2 nuclear arsenal. New Mexico has done enough, other
3 states need to step up, and NNSA needs to fulfill
4 its legal promise to New Mexico to not make us the
5 nuclear waste dump of the nuclear weapons complex
6 and our nation. We do not support this mission
7 creep.

8 Thank you.

9 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you, Ms. Weehler.

10 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Thank you, Cynthia.

11 And the next speaker we have is Roger
12 Nelson.

13 Roger, you are unmuted.

14 **MR. NELSON:** Thank you for doing this.

15 Almost 15 years ago, I came up with the idea that
16 dilute and dispose for weapons-grade materials was a
17 much cheaper way to get rid of all of this weapons
18 material. Nuclear weapons are a terrible thing, and
19 we need to consider how to get rid of them.

20 And Don Hancock and others have a -- have
21 a chance to be heroes as well because we can get rid
22 of entire nuclear arsenals that threaten the world
23 in one fell swoop. That's what this weapons-grade
24 surplus plutonium program is all about.

25 So I'm going to up the game one more time,

1 Dan Hancock and George Anastas. I'm going to tell
2 you that NNSA should include another alternative,
3 the alternative of shipping pits directly -- no
4 downblending, no oxidation steps. Ship the pits
5 themselves to WIPP and dispose of them directly. It
6 -- it removes the argument of how many billions or
7 thousands of shipments will be required to go
8 through people's neighborhoods. It also makes the
9 cost of the program essentially miniscule -- in the
10 millions, not the billions.

11 If you're going to get rid of 34 tons of
12 pits, you can do that in less than 150 shipments.
13 So let's just be smart about this. An alternative
14 that NNSA should include in this EIS should be
15 direct disposal of pits without the D&D part.

16 Thank you for your time.

17 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you for your comment,
18 Mr. Nelson.

19 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Thank you.

20 And our next speaker is Jim Marra.

21 Jim, you are unmuted.

22 **DR. MARRA:** Okay. Thank you.

23 Good evening, everybody. My name is Dr.
24 James Marra, and I personally support all plutonium
25 missions at Savannah River Site, including the

1 storage, management, and disposition. SRS has the
2 culture, the facilities, and the experience to
3 support all these missions.

4 I would like to say, though, that I
5 personally have a long history with the disposition
6 of plutonium, starting at the inception of this
7 program in the mid-1990s with the identification,
8 evaluation, and development of disposition
9 technologies. I also continued these efforts well
10 into the 2000s.

11 I am -- as was said earlier, I am aware
12 and have read the recent study and report by the
13 National Academy of Sciences. In fact, I was one of
14 the presenters to the NAS panel during their initial
15 fact-finding missions. The report, I think, is an
16 excellent review and provides several
17 recommendations that I think need to be considered.
18 Specifically, recommendations regarding safeguards
19 and security, transportation, and regulatory
20 compliance are outlined in that report. I think
21 these considerations that were identified by the NAS
22 should be considered for any and all proposed
23 options for the disposition of plutonium.

24 Thank you very much for your attention.

25 **MR. GOODMAN:** (Inaudible).

1 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Thank you.

2 Our next speaker is from -- Joni.

3 Joni, you are unmuted.

4 **MS. ARENDS:** Hi. Good afternoon. Joni
5 Arends, Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety based
6 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

7 My comments today are about the process.
8 The link provided in the newspaper ad is not
9 working. I ended up having to go to the NEPA
10 website. I wrote these comments in the chat, and I
11 would ask that they be included in our -- in the
12 public comments.

13 But I am very concerned because -- about
14 the problem with the link. We wonder how many
15 people were discouraged by the flawed -- flawed
16 link, and that's number one.

17 Number two, what's the name of the LANL
18 operation for oxidizing the surplus plutonium? Is
19 it the ARIES program, or is it another specific
20 program at LANL?

21 Also, I would like the Draft EIS to
22 discuss the valence phases of the plutonium that
23 will be considered for oxidation.

24 With regard to the comments, I've seen
25 some references that the comments are due February

1 1st, 2021, at -- at 3:00 p.m., the deadline for
2 those people in the Mountain Standard Time Zone.
3 Could you clarify that? Sometimes when NNSA has
4 comment periods, we have until right before midnight
5 in the various time zones. So if you could clarify
6 that, I would appreciate it.

7 And I also want to add that I've been
8 involved in this project since the first scoping
9 meetings back in the mid-1990s. This is an ongoing
10 problem. And as a New Mexican, CCNS supports fully
11 the comments by Don Hancock of Southwest Research
12 and Information Center. Don has summarized those
13 points beautifully.

14 And specifically about Cindy Weehler's
15 comments about the social contract with DOE and the
16 State of New Mexico through the C&C agreement and
17 also through other agreements that WIPP would not be
18 the only repository, WIPP is currently scheduled to
19 close in 2024. And other repositories are needed.
20 One of the alternatives should be other repositories
21 for this waste.

22 Thank you.

23 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you, Ms. Arends. Can
24 you clarify for us the newspaper ad that you saw,
25 which newspaper that was and the link that didn't

1 work?

2 **MS. ARENDS:** It's the full-page ad that
3 was in the Santa Fe New Mexican on a Sunday a couple
4 of weeks ago announcing these meetings. And then,
5 also, with regard to the notice that you sent out
6 recently, that link isn't working because I cut and
7 pasted that link for our action alerts. It's really
8 disappointing. Yeah.

9 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. I'm sorry to hear
10 those links don't work. Again, if you do go to the
11 NNSA NEPA Reading Room, all of the links there
12 should work. I apologize if that got transcribed in
13 the newspaper incorrectly or -- or cut off, or
14 something like that.

15 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. Thank you.
16 And our next speaker is Rick McLeod.
17 Rick, you are unmuted.

18 **MR. MCLEOD:** Good evening. Rick McLeod.
19 I'm with the SRS Community Reuse Organization. And
20 I've already submitted to you a letter with my
21 comments in it. We are supportive of the mission
22 and, also, the site performing that mission.

23 I would like to see the -- part of the
24 scoping for the EIS to be expanded on the
25 socioeconomic front, give us a little bit better

1 picture on what the workforce looks like, what are
2 the impacts expected in the region.

3 And then the other thing a little
4 concerning is the timeline that this will take for
5 the dilute method. Right now, we're looking at
6 until 2049, I believe is the time frame. Thirty-
7 eight years is a long time to operate a mission.
8 I'm sure there will be new technologies developed
9 between now and then. But I believe the EIS should
10 discuss that and also discuss any type of ideas that
11 NNSA has for expediting removal of this material.

12 We are basically right now a de facto
13 storage site for the plutonium. So we are a
14 disposal site whether we like it or not. So we look
15 forward to getting this material out of the State of
16 South Carolina as quickly as possible.

17 Thank you.

18 **MR. GOODMAN:** (Inaudible).

19 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. Thank you, Rick.

20 And our next speaker is Robin.

21 Robin, you are unmuted.

22 **MS. SEYDEL:** Hi. Good -- good afternoon.

23 Thanks so much for doing this.

24 I would like to also confirm that the
25 links in the email that you sent out did not work as

1 well as the links in the newspaper. And it took me
2 a full hour to find you and get online. So I have
3 missed quite a few of the comments. But I would
4 like to say -- and I hope you do better next time
5 for that because I think there are many people who
6 just gave up because I was about to give up myself
7 in -- in trying to voice some of the concerns I
8 have.

9 And it's clear to me that when -- as a
10 long-term resident here in New Mexico, we were
11 promised by the DOE and -- and the NNSA, also, that
12 WIPP (inaudible) very limited mission. And I
13 clearly remember them talking about gloves and
14 booties back then. Surplus plutonium is a whole lot
15 more than gloves and -- and booties.

16 And so the broken promises that the DOE
17 has made -- it -- it would make in this process
18 would be the amount and kinds of waste that are
19 coming to WIPP and the promise that they would find
20 other sites. The gentleman just before me said we
21 want to get this waste out of our state. Well, we
22 don't want it in our state either. We -- we were
23 promised a very limited mission for WIPP, closing in
24 2024. This expands that mission in a way that we do
25 not consent to here in New Mexico.

1 And I think it behooves you all to take
2 another look and find other sites and figure out
3 other ways to deal with this surplus plutonium than
4 transporting it twice across the country, basically,
5 across almost the whole continent, for this dilution
6 process and then storage at WIPP, a site that was
7 not supposed to have this kind of waste in the first
8 place.

9 Other than that, I hope that you will also
10 slow this process down considerably because I think
11 that there are a lot of people in our state and
12 along the transportation realm who might not have
13 access to this kind of public scoping hearing,
14 public process, and would need to come in person
15 after the pandemic. So I want to say that this is
16 not a fair and just way to hold these kinds of
17 hearings because many people, certainly in our state
18 and rural communities, do not have the kind of
19 access they need to participate.

20 Thank you. Thank you very much.

21 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you for your comment,
22 Ms. Seydel. And I apologize that you had issues
23 joining the meeting. It seems like there's a couple
24 issues with maybe some cutting and pasting from
25 newspaper advertisements.

1 I -- I would like to -- I -- I would say
2 the best source of information and links that 100
3 percent do work would be found on the NNSA NEPA
4 Reading Room. And I'll also -- if you -- it sounded
5 like you -- you joined the meeting late. It means
6 you probably weren't able to hear the presentation
7 that was given. If you're interested, this meeting
8 will be held again tomorrow night at 7:00 Eastern,
9 5:00 p.m. Mountain. And you can find those details
10 on the NNSA Reading Room website.

11 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Okay. Great. Thank you.

12 Our next speaker is a phone-in-only
13 speaker.

14 I am going to unmute you. Can you please
15 announce your name? You are unmuted.

16 **MR. MCCOY:** Hello?

17 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Yes. We can hear you.

18 **MR. MCCOY:** Yes. This is David McCoy.

19 I'm Executive Director for Citizen Action New
20 Mexico, located in Albuquerque. Our organization is
21 opposed to this idea that you're going to bring
22 plutonium waste in any additional form to the WIPP
23 facility.

24 One of the problems that I think is not
25 adequately discussed, in addition to the issues that

1 Don Hancock brought up, is that: What are you going
2 to do with all the additional waste from processing
3 the plutonium -- the leftover gloveboxes, the
4 radioactive junk that goes along with these kind of
5 programs? And what are the chemicals that you're
6 going to use in the so-called dilution process?
7 You're proposing six times the amount of high-level
8 waste, well, that's already in WIPP, or proposed for
9 WIPP. So this is a massive increase that you're
10 proposing.

11 The other issue is that this is a scoping
12 proceeding. Are you going to have a transcript out
13 in time that people can review some of these
14 comments and incorporate them into written comments
15 that they might want to file? I think February 1st
16 is far too short a period for the closing of the
17 scoping period, given the issues that are involved.

18 And that would conclude my comments.

19 Thank you.

20 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you, Mr. McCoy.

21 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. Thank you.

22 And our next speaker is Tom.

23 Tom, you are unmuted.

24 **(No audible response.)**

25 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Tom Clements, are you there?

1 **MR. CLEMENTS:** Yes. I'm online. Can you
2 hear me?

3 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Yes, we can hear you.

4 **MR. CLEMENTS:** Okay. Thank you. Yes.
5 Sorry.

6 I had not intended to make an oral comment
7 here. I prepared about six pages of written
8 comments, and I'll be sending them in, in the coming
9 days.

10 But I wanted to reiterate a couple of
11 things. I also had problems accessing this event
12 tonight via the link that was sent out by email and
13 also via the link that was printed in The State
14 newspaper here in Columbia, South Carolina. I had
15 checked on the link in the email earlier today and
16 saw there was a problem and did figure out another
17 way to get in. But it -- it's really not acceptable
18 that information you put out to access a meeting
19 like this when so much time and resources have gone
20 into it that -- that the links are -- are not
21 working correctly.

22 And as long as I'm saying something, I --
23 I did want to reiterate the need for a Programmatic
24 EIS, which the National Academy of Sciences has
25 supported for plutonium disposition. And they cite

1 up to an additional 48.2 metric tons of plutonium,
2 though I know that this EIS would only cover 34.

3 But it really goes far beyond what the NAS
4 has said concerning a Programmatic Environmental
5 Impact Statement. The fuel fabrication for the
6 virtual -- Versatile Test Reactor at Savannah River
7 Site or Idaho National Lab could produce up to six
8 metric tons of plutonium, TRU waste that would need
9 to go somewhere. The pit production for -- for
10 nuclear weapons at the proposed plutonium bomb plant
11 at Savannah River Site would also have a large
12 amount of transuranic waste.

13 So it -- it appears that not only is NNSA
14 not talking to other parts of DOE, particularly the
15 Office of Nuclear Energy, but NNSA is not even
16 speaking to itself. WIPP may well be oversubscribed
17 when you throw in the additional amounts of existing
18 transuranic waste. It's clear that -- that the
19 facility doesn't have the capacity, and it should
20 not be assumed that the license is going to be
21 extended or that the Land Withdrawal Act volume cap
22 is going to be allowed to be increased.

23 So here in South Carolina, we're looking
24 at about 27 metric tons coming in for -- for dilute
25 and dispose, 30 metric tons fuel fabrication for the

1 Versatile Test Reactor is here, and 7 metric -- 7.5
2 metric tons of plutonium if the pit production issue
3 would go forward. That's a huge amount of
4 plutonium. So I'm quite concerned that we could see
5 more plutonium stranded in the State of South
6 Carolina just like we have now. And I will expand
7 on these things in my written comments.

8 Thank you.

9 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Clements.
10 And -- and, again, apologies that link was broken.
11 And we are glad that you were able to find a way
12 around that and join the meeting tonight. And
13 again, we'll try and get that resolved, particularly
14 as it relates to people being able to access
15 tomorrow night's meeting.

16 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. And it looks
17 like that is all of our hands raised at this time.

18 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. That sounds good.

19 So again, if you are interested in
20 providing a comment, if you've heard anything and
21 you'd like to -- to add to that, please raise your
22 hand either by pressing the hand button on the right
23 side of the screen or by pressing Star 3 on your
24 phone.

25 You know, we've provided the opportunity

1 for everybody to be heard once at this point, but we
2 certainly have the time if folks like to make a
3 second comment. I think we would welcome that. So
4 you may re-raise your hand if you are interested in
5 doing that.

6 And if there was, you know, any reason why
7 you were not able to or did not want to make a
8 comment orally in tonight's meeting, you continue to
9 have a number of options for doing so by phone,
10 mail, or email, as noted in the meeting
11 announcements if you are able to access those.

12 Again, as noted, the scoping comment
13 period ends February 1st.

14 We are going to leave the webinar and the
15 phone lines open until the end of the advertised
16 time. So you're welcome to, but are not required
17 to, stay. And we'll check in periodically to see if
18 there's anybody that joined late that would like to
19 make a comment.

20 So now, if you've already made a comment
21 and would like to make another comment, please do so
22 by raising your hand again. And I'll give that a
23 minute or two.

24 Catherine, if anybody re-raised their hand
25 or has raised their hand for the first time, please

1 let me know.

2 **MS. HEGWOOD:** Great. Thank you, Dave.

3 We do have a raised hand.

4 Don, I'm going to unmute you. You are
5 unmuted.

6 **MR. MONIAK:** Thank you. My name is Don
7 Moniak. I live in Aiken, South Carolina.

8 This is old plutonium. And hazards of old
9 plutonium, such as elevated americium levels,
10 dictate minimum processing. Removing plutonium from
11 SRS is a top priority, we are told by Joe Wilson. I
12 am not surprised, and I'm not shocked that he said
13 that. But at the same time, he did not raise any
14 objections to additional plutonium imports. And
15 this is after years of describing existing storage
16 as plutonium dumping. This is after DOE sent \$625
17 million in what is essentially extortion funds to
18 South Carolina simply for storing plutonium here, as
19 they promised to do.

20 So limiting the amount of plutonium sent
21 to Savannah River Site should be a top priority.
22 And the optimal means to accomplish this is to leave
23 the pits as they are -- not disassemble plutonium
24 pits, not convert the plutonium in those to oxide.
25 That would also prevent dozens of tons of plutonium

1 from having to be sent to WIPP.

2 At the same time, DOE should address an
3 additional alternative, that of demilitarizing
4 plutonium pits via pit stuffing. This is a proven
5 technology that was raised back in the late '90s,
6 and it should be addressed again.

7 Avoiding pit disassembly conversion at
8 this time is through continued storage or pit
9 stuffing will eliminate unnecessary worker
10 exposures, unnecessary transportation, unnecessary
11 cost, and unnecessary processing and unnecessary
12 waste.

13 Pits are best left as they are. They are
14 already storage containers. The plutonium within
15 them is the most stable form of plutonium that the
16 labs have developed. Many, if not most, of the pits
17 have no utility in the existing arsenal, and several
18 are not even designed to be disassembled, mostly
19 Livermore pits, as we all know. Stuffing them would
20 remove any utility.

21 However, leaving plutonium in pit form is
22 not equivalent to leaving it alone. The term "safe
23 pit storage at Pantex" remains a misnomer. Another
24 option for pit storage beyond the current 50-year
25 time frame for Pantex storage should be addressed.

1 As for the Savannah River Site plutonium,
2 consideration should be given to temporary storage
3 at the abandoned plutonium MOX fuel plant after the
4 option of fabricating new pits there is also
5 abandoned. Thank you.

6 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thank you for your comment,
7 Mr. Moniak.

8 Catherine, do we have anybody else that
9 has raised their hand or re-raised their hand?

10 **MS. HEGWOOD:** I do not show any other
11 raised hands at this time.

12 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. I think with that, we
13 will take a break. I will stop the countdown here.

14 Catherine, would you mind sharing the
15 PowerPoint? Oh, it's -- I think -- I think it is
16 being shared right now.

17 So we'll take a short break, and I will
18 check in periodically if anybody has joined the
19 webinar and would like to make a comment.

20 Again, for those that are on the webinar
21 and have provided their comment and have heard the
22 presentation, we very much appreciate your time and
23 your consideration and your comments here tonight.
24 You are -- again, are welcome to -- to stay on the
25 webinar if you'd like. If -- but, you know, I can't

1 guarantee that anybody else will -- will join and
2 want to make a comment. So defer to you on that.
3 But again, thank you.

4 **(WHEREUPON, the line remained open without**
5 **public comment from audio time 1:32:12 to 3:55:25.)**

6 **MR. GOODMAN:** Okay. Can you see my
7 countdown clock? It's at 15 seconds. That was the
8 last person.

9 **MS. HEGWOOD:** We sure can.

10 **MR. GOODMAN:** It feels like New Year's to
11 me.

12 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right.

13 **MR. GOODMAN:** All right. Well, again,
14 everybody, thank you very much for your -- for your
15 time and your patience. And everybody, we really
16 appreciate you sticking with us on this. And I
17 guess we will improve some things, and we'll do it
18 again tomorrow night.

19 **MS. HEGWOOD:** All right. Ladies and
20 gentlemen, thank you for attending today's webinar.
21 This concludes today's event. You may now
22 disconnect your lines and have a great rest of your
23 night.

24 **MR. GOODMAN:** Thanks, Catherine.

25 **(WHEREUPON, the meeting was concluded.)**

1 CERTIFICATE

2
3 I, Karynn S. Willman, do hereby certify that
4 the proceeding named herein was professionally transcribed
5 on the date set forth in the certificate herein; that I
6 transcribed all testimony adduced and other oral
7 proceedings had in the foregoing matter; and that the
8 foregoing transcript pages constitute a full, true, and
9 correct record of such testimony adduced and oral
10 proceeding had and of the whole thereof.

11
12 IN WITNESS HEREOF, I have hereunto set my
13 hand this 4th day of February, 2021.

14
15
16 

17
18
19 _____
20 Karynn S. Willman
21
22
23
24
25

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