

News from the Savannah River Site

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For Immediate Release

Savannah River Site completes D&R phase for Plutonium Processing Facility

AIKEN, S.C. (JULY 24, 2024) – The Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site (SRS) has reached a major milestone in the construction of a plutonium pit production facility at the site located near Aiken, S.C.

After 18 months of “hands on” work involving local trade unions, the dismantlement and removal (D&R) of commodities and equipment throughout the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility (SRPPF), previously installed by the Mixed Oxide (MOX) project, was completed in June 2024.

“Constructing SRPPF is a directive from the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), and this is one of the top projects within the Nuclear Security Enterprise today,” said Dennis Carr, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) President and Chief Executive Officer. “Reaching this milestone at SRS allows crews to begin the next stages of work in the field to build this pit production facility for our country.”



SRNS subcontractor Aecon-Wachs performed the dismantlement and removal (D&R) of equipment and commodities from the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility (SRPPF) at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

In support of the nation’s nuclear deterrent, the NNSA plans to make at least 80 pits per year in production facilities at SRS and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in New Mexico. A pit is a critical component in every nuclear weapon.

SRS is constructing the SRPPF complex through repurposing the unfinished MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility. Repurposing this facility allows NNSA to make use of an existing seismically-qualified structure, with numerous supporting facilities and existing SRS services and infrastructure, such as security, fire protection and emergency response.

Subcontractor Aecon-Wachs performed the D&R scope, which included the dismantlement and removal of equipment such as HVAC ducts, piping, electrical conduits, pumps, tanks and gloveboxes from the structure without damaging the configuration of items projected for reuse.

A total of 2,535 gross tons of materials were removed from the 400,000-square-foot SRPPF Main Process Building (MPB) concrete structure and sent offsite for recycling.

“It was very challenging work, and completion of D&R shows we’re making great progress,” said Jon Lunn, SRNS Senior Vice President and SRPPF Project Director.

In support of the construction of SRPPF, SRNS entered into a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) in 2022 with the Augusta Building and Construction Trades Council, which is comprised of 19 local unions. There are approximately 2,500 construction and trade union jobs to fill for the life of the entire SRPPF project.

Once the construction of the facility is completed, the enduring plutonium pit production mission will continue to employ approximately 2,000 people.

“The nation called upon the Savannah River Site during the Cold War, and we delivered,” said Carr. “The United States is once again calling on SRS to enhance stability and security for our country, our allies, and our partners. We are answering this challenge to bring forth this production capability, and we will deliver.”

SRS is a 310-square-mile site located near Aiken, S.C., on the Savannah River, which borders South Carolina and Georgia. SRS covers 198,046 acres, including parts of Aiken, Barnwell and Allendale counties in South Carolina. The SRS annual budget is approximately \$3.8 billion, with a workforce of about 12,700.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile; works to reduce the global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and militarily effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor and HII partnership company, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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