

HLW if the waste meets either of the following two criteria:

(I) Does not exceed concentration limits for Class C low-level radioactive waste as set out in section 61.55 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, and meets the performance objectives of a disposal facility; or

(II) Does not require disposal in a deep geologic repository and meets the performance objectives of a disposal facility as demonstrated through a performance assessment conducted in accordance with applicable requirements.

Reprocessing waste meeting either I or II of the above criteria is non-HLW, and—pursuant to appropriate processes—may be classified and disposed in accordance with its radiological characteristics in an appropriate disposal facility provided all applicable requirements of the disposal facility are met.

During 2019–2020, in determining whether and how to implement the HLW interpretation specific to a particular waste stream, DOE initiated a public process pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with disposing of that waste. DOE completed its environmental analysis and decided to apply the HLW interpretation to a specific waste stream, shipping eight gallons of the SRS Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) recycle wastewater to the Waste Control Specialists, LLC Federal Waste Facility, a licensed commercial low-level radioactive waste facility located near Andrews, Texas, for stabilization and disposal as non-HLW.<sup>4</sup>

Each reprocessing waste stream has unique radiological characteristics and, accordingly, the interpretation will continue to be implemented for subsequent proposed actions on a case-by-case basis, following consideration of: Evaluation and characterization of specific reprocessing waste streams in conjunction with the waste acceptance criteria and requirements of a specific waste disposal facility; input from affected stakeholders (*e.g.*, federal, state, local and tribal officials; and members of the public); and compliance with applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and agreements.

## II. Summary Description of Changes

DOE Manual 435.1–1 has been updated to include as Departmental policy DOE's interpretation of the

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/nepa/doeea-2115-commercial-disposal-defense-waste-processing-facility-recycle-wastewater-savannah>.

statutory term HLW, as defined in the AEA and NWSA and consistent with the Supplemental Notice. Specifically, Chapter II of the Manual is revised to include a new Section C that sets forth the HLW interpretation and provides a basis for its use by DOE. DOE Manual 435.1–1 also is revised to set forth the roles and responsibilities of Field Managers and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Waste and Materials Management with respect to the application of the HLW interpretation.

The HLW interpretation limited change to DOE Manual 435.1–1 does not affect DOE's current policies and practices relating to determinations under Chapter II.B of the Manual or under Section 3116 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005.<sup>5</sup> Section 3116 will continue to apply to reprocessing waste covered under Section 3116. Chapter II.B of the Manual will continue to be used for tank closures not covered by Section 3116 and may be used in other cases determined to be appropriate by DOE.

In addition, DOE is canceling DOE Guide 435.1–1, *Implementation Guide for Use with DOE Manual 435.1–1*, as it is out of date. The cancellation of DOE Guide 435.1–1 is recognized in the administrative change to DOE Order 435.1. The definition of “reprocessing waste” in the Guide has now been incorporated in DOE Manual 435.1–1.

These directives can be viewed at <https://www.directives.doe.gov/>.

## III. Reviews Under the National Environmental Policy Act

The objective of the limited change to DOE Manual 435.1–1 is to continue to ensure that all DOE radioactive waste, including reprocessing waste, is managed in a manner that protects worker and public health and safety, and the environment. When proposing to apply the HLW interpretation to future waste streams, DOE will prepare the necessary environmental analyses and documentation in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality regulations and DOE NEPA implementing procedures at 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508 and 10 CFR part 1021, respectively, as was done with the application of the interpretation to the disposal of SRS DWPF recycle wastewater<sup>6</sup> (August 10, 2020 FRN).

## Signing Authority

This document of the Department of Energy was signed on January 13, 2021,

<sup>5</sup> Public Law 108–375.

<sup>6</sup> 85 FR 48236.

by William I. White, Senior Advisor for Environmental Management to the Under Secretary for Science, Office of Environmental Management, pursuant to delegated authority from the Secretary of Energy. That document with the original signature and date is maintained by DOE. For administrative purposes only, and in compliance with requirements of the Office of the Federal Register, the undersigned DOE **Federal Register** Liaison Officer has been authorized to sign and submit the document in electronic format for publication, as an official document of the Department of Energy. This administrative process in no way alters the legal effect of this document upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

Signed in Washington, DC, January 13, 2021.

**Treena V. Garrett,**

*Federal Register Liaison Officer, U.S. Department of Energy.*

[FR Doc. 2021–01053 Filed 1–15–21; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450–01–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Draft Environmental Assessment for the Commercial Disposal of Savannah River Site Contaminated Process Equipment

**AGENCY:** Office of Environmental Management, U.S. Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announces its intent to prepare a draft environmental assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) to dispose of contaminated process equipment from the Savannah River Site (SRS) at a commercial low-level radioactive waste (LLW) disposal facility located outside of South Carolina licensed by either the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) or an Agreement State. This effort will analyze capabilities for alternative disposal options through the use of existing, licensed, off-site commercial disposal facilities. The SRS contaminated process equipment would be characterized, stabilized as appropriate, and packaged, and if the waste acceptance criteria and performance objectives of a specific disposal facility are met, DOE could consider whether to dispose of the waste as LLW under the Department's interpretation of the statutory term “high-level radioactive waste” (HLW) as defined in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (AEA), and Nuclear

Waste Policy Act of 1982, as amended (NHPA). As a result of this NEPA process, DOE may consider what actions, if any, are needed and appropriate to implement any decision to dispose of the SRS contaminated process equipment as LLW.

**ADDRESSES:** This Federal Register Notice is available on <https://www.energy.gov/em/high-level-radioactive-waste-hlw-interpretation>. The Draft Environmental Assessment for the Commercial Disposal of Savannah River Site Contaminated Process Equipment (Draft EA) will also be made available at this website.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Theresa Kliczewski and/or James Joyce, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Environmental Management, Office of Waste and Materials Management (EM-4.2), 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585. Emails: [Theresa.Kliczewski@em.doe.gov](mailto:Theresa.Kliczewski@em.doe.gov) and [James.Joyce@em.doe.gov](mailto:James.Joyce@em.doe.gov). Phone number: (202) 586-5000.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

SRS occupies approximately 300 square miles primarily in Aiken and Barnwell Counties, South Carolina. Until the early 1990s, the primary SRS mission was the production of special radioactive isotopes to support national defense programs. More recently, the SRS mission has emphasized waste management, environmental restoration, and the decontamination and decommissioning of facilities that are no longer needed for SRS's traditional defense activities.

The SRS contaminated process equipment is generated during the on-site treatment of the reprocessing waste. The Draft EA will analyze commercial disposal options for three specific types of process equipment contaminated with reprocessing waste: Tank 28F salt sampling drill string, glass bubblers, and glass pumps. These waste streams do not meet the criteria for disposal at existing SRS disposal facilities given the waste form, radionuclide inventory, dose rates, and internal lead shielding.

The Tank 28F salt sampling drill string was used to collect reprocessing waste samples from the waste storage tank. The drill string consists of steel piping measuring 2.25 inches outer diameter by 41 feet long, contaminated with reprocessing waste (supernatant) from Tank 28F. Contaminants include a mixture of beta, gamma, and alpha emitting radionuclides (e.g., cesium 137 and plutonium 238). The drill string is currently stored in a large container on-

site until a disposal path can be established.

The glass bubblers are used to increase efficiency of Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) melter operations, where high-activity tank waste is vitrified into glass under high-temperature. Each bubbler is comprised of a 3/4 inch Schedule 160 Inconel pipe, which is inserted into the DWPF melter and through which an inert gas is introduced to increase melter efficiency. Approximately three feet of the lower portion of the bubbler was in the melt pool and contains contaminated glass, including transuranic radionuclides (e.g., plutonium 238) and short-lived radionuclides (e.g., cesium 137). SRS currently has approximately 60 contaminated bubblers in storage and will generate four contaminated glass bubblers every six months until DWPF operations are completed in the 2034 timeframe.

The glass pumps were used to support melter efficiency and are no longer in use at SRS having been replaced by the glass bubblers. Each pump is comprised of an Inconel pipe, measuring approximately 3 5/8 inches in outer diameter. The lower two feet was in the melt pool and contains contaminated glass similar to the glass bubblers. There are approximately 10 glass pumps in storage at SRS requiring final disposal.

In August 2020, DOE completed its first NEPA analysis and waste determination for a waste stream (SRS DWPF recycle wastewater) under the HLW interpretation.<sup>1</sup> This was implemented in accordance with the June 10, 2019 *Supplemental Notice Concerning U.S. Department of Energy Interpretation of High-Level Radioactive Waste*<sup>2</sup> (Supplemental Notice) in which DOE provided its interpretation of the statutory term HLW as defined in the AEA<sup>3</sup> and NHPA.<sup>4</sup>

##### Purpose and Need for Action

Currently there is no disposal pathway for the SRS process equipment contaminated with reprocessing waste (Tank 28F salt sampling drill string, glass bubblers, and glass pumps). DOE's purpose and need for this action is to dispose of SRS contaminated process equipment at a commercial LLW facility outside of South Carolina and licensed by either the NRC or an Agreement State

under 10 CFR part 61. Therefore, no NEPA analyses on disposal at Federal facilities will be conducted. Any proposal to dispose of additional SRS process equipment contaminated with reprocessing waste, other than those identified and analyzed in the Draft EA, would be evaluated in separate NEPA documentation. Disposal of the SRS contaminated process equipment at a licensed off-site commercial LLW facility would help to mitigate on-site storage constraints, improve worker safety, and support accelerated completion of the environmental cleanup mission at SRS.

##### Proposed Action and Alternatives

Under the proposed action, DOE would dispose of the SRS contaminated process equipment (Tank 28F salt sampling drill string, glass bubblers, and glass pumps) at a commercial LLW facility outside of South Carolina and licensed by either the NRC or an Agreement State under 10 CFR part 61. The Draft EA will analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed commercial disposal of the contaminated process equipment. Prior to a disposal decision, DOE would characterize the contaminated process equipment to verify with the licensed off-site commercial LLW disposal facility whether the waste meets DOE's HLW interpretation for disposal as non-HLW, in accordance with DOE Order 435.1, *Radioactive Waste Management*, DOE Manual 435.1-1, *Radioactive Waste Management Manual*, and consistent with the Supplemental Notice. DOE would also demonstrate compliance with the waste acceptance criteria and all other requirements of the disposal facility, including any applicable regulatory requirements (e.g., Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) for treatment of the waste prior to disposal and applicable Department of Transportation requirements for packaging and transportation from SRS to the commercial disposal facility. DOE has identified two action alternatives for the proposed action:

- *Alternative 1*—If determined to be Class A LLW,<sup>5</sup> stabilize and package the waste at SRS and ship to either EnergySolutions<sup>6</sup> in Clive, Utah or Waste Control Specialists, LLC (WCS) in Andrews County, Texas for disposal.

<sup>1</sup> NEPA documents and technical documents for the commercial disposal of DWPF recycle wastewater from SRS under the HLW interpretation can be found at: <https://www.energy.gov/em/program-scope/high-level-radioactive-waste-hlw-interpretation>.

<sup>2</sup> 84 FR 26835.

<sup>3</sup> 42 U.S.C. 2011 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> 42 U.S.C. 10101 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> In its 10 CFR part 61 regulations, NRC has identified classes of LLW—Class A, B, or C—for which near-surface disposal is safe for public health and the environment. This waste classification regime is based on the concentration levels of a combination of specified short-lived and long-lived radionuclides in a waste stream, with Class C LLW having the highest concentration levels.

<sup>6</sup> EnergySolutions is currently licensed to only dispose of Class A LLW and mixed LLW.

This is dependent upon waste content and compliance with facility waste acceptance criteria.

- *Alternative 2*—If determined to be Class B or C LLW, stabilize and package the waste at SRS and ship to WCS. This is dependent upon waste content and compliance with facility waste acceptance criteria.

The EA will also analyze a no action alternative under which the contaminated process equipment would remain in storage at SRS until disposition occurs.

#### Potential Areas of Environmental Analysis

DOE has tentatively identified the following areas for detailed analysis in the EA: Human health and safety; land use; air quality; water, cultural, and ecological resources; waste management; socioeconomic; and transportation. This list is not intended to be comprehensive or to predetermine the potential impacts to be analyzed. The level of analysis for different impacts will be in proportion to their significance.

#### NEPA Process and Public Participation

DOE will prepare the Draft EA in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500–1508 and DOE NEPA implementing procedures at 10 CFR part 1021. DOE plans to issue a **Federal Register** notice in 2021 on the availability of the Draft EA. Based on the EA analysis, DOE will either issue a Finding of No Significant Impact or announce its intention to prepare an environmental impact statement.

#### Signing Authority

This document of the Department of Energy was signed on January 12, 2021 by Mark A. Gilbertson, Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regulatory and Policy Affairs, Office of Environmental Management, pursuant to delegated authority from the Secretary of Energy. That document with the original signature and date is maintained by DOE. For administrative purposes only, and in compliance with requirements of the Office of the Federal Register, the undersigned DOE Federal Register Liaison Officer has been authorized to sign and submit the document in electronic format for publication, as an official document of the Department of Energy. This administrative process in no way alters the legal effect of this document upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

Signed at Washington, DC, on January 13, 2021.

**Treana V. Garrett,**

*Federal Register Liaison Officer, U.S. Department of Energy.*

[FR Doc. 2021–01052 Filed 1–15–21; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450–01–P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

##### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

##### Combined Notice of Filings

Take notice that the Commission has received the following Natural Gas Pipeline Rate and Refund Report filings:

*Docket Numbers:* RP21–377–000.

*Applicants:* Gas Transmission Northwest LLC.

*Description:* Compliance filing Report of Refunds—Coyote Springs Lateral IT Revenue (Nov 2019–Oct 2020).

*Filed Date:* 1/8/21.

*Accession Number:* 20210108–5216

*Comments Due:* 5 p.m. ET 1/21/21.

*Docket Numbers:* RP21–378–000.

*Applicants:* Carolina Gas Transmission, LLC.

*Description:* Compliance filing 2020 Interruptible Revenue Sharing Report.

*Filed Date:* 1/11/21.

*Accession Number:* 20210111–5118.

*Comments Due:* 5 p.m. ET 1/25/21.

*Docket Numbers:* RP21–379–000.

*Applicants:* Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline, L.L.C.

*Description:* § 4(d) Rate Filing: Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline, L.L.C. RCA Modifications to be effective 3/1/2021.

*Filed Date:* 1/11/21.

*Accession Number:* 20210111–5166.

*Comments Due:* 5 p.m. ET 1/25/21.

The filings are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system (<https://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/search/fercgensearch.asp>) by querying the docket number.

Any person desiring to intervene or protest in any of the above proceedings must file in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Regulations (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214) on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern time on the specified date. Protests may be considered, but intervention is necessary to become a party to the proceeding.

eFiling is encouraged. More detailed information relating to filing requirements, interventions, protests, service, and qualifying facilities filings can be found at: <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling/filing-req.pdf>. For other information, call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659.

Dated: January 12, 2021.

**Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2021–01038 Filed 1–15–21; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6717–01–P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

##### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 4718–039]

##### Notice of Application Tendered for Filing With the Commission and Soliciting Additional Study Requests and Establishing Procedural Schedule for Relicensing and a Deadline for Submission of Final Amendments; Cocheco Falls Associates

Take notice that the following hydroelectric application has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection.

a. *Type of Application:* Subsequent Minor License.

b. *Project No.:* 4718–039.

c. *Date filed:* December 29, 2020.

d. *Applicant:* Cocheco Falls Associates.

e. *Name of Project:* Cocheco Falls Dam Project.

f. *Location:* On the Cocheco River in Dover, Strafford County, New Hampshire. The project does not occupy any federal land.

g. *Filed Pursuant to:* Federal Power Act 16 U.S.C. 791(a)–825(r).

h. *Applicant Contact:* Mr. John Webster, Cocheco Falls Associates, P.O. Box 178, South Berwick, ME 03908; Phone at (207) 384–5334, or email at [Hydromagnt@gwi.net](mailto:Hydromagnt@gwi.net).

i. *FERC Contact:* Amy Chang at (202) 502–8250, or [amy.chang@ferc.gov](mailto:amy.chang@ferc.gov).

j. *Cooperating agencies:* Federal, state, local, and tribal agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues that wish to cooperate in the preparation of the environmental document should follow the instructions for filing such requests described in item l below. Cooperating agencies should note the Commission's policy that agencies that cooperate in the preparation of the environmental document cannot also intervene. See 94 FERC 61,076 (2001).

k. Pursuant to section 4.32(b)(7) of 18 CFR of the Commission's regulations, if any resource agency, Indian Tribe, or person believes that an additional scientific study should be conducted in order to form an adequate factual basis for a complete analysis of the application on its merit, the resource agency, Indian Tribe, or person must file