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The Savannah River Site
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Removal Site Evaluation Report/Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis for the D-Area Groundwater Operable Unit Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Plume Available for Public Comment

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to perform a non-time critical removal action for the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) plume in the Upper Three Runs Aquifer (UTRA) of the D-Area Groundwater (DAG) Operable Unit (OU). Under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), the Removal Site Evaluation Report/Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (RSER/EE/CA) describes how the proposed removal action meets the criteria established in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Contingency Plan, 40 Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.415. The purpose of the RSER/EE/CA is to identify the objectives of the removal action and to develop and evaluate alternatives that address potential threats from release of contaminants to the environment from this OU. This document will be available for public review and copying at the locations listed below. The thirty (30) day public comment period is scheduled for September 24, 2026, to October 24, 2026.

DOE has worked with the United States Environmental Protection Agency-Region 4 (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) to ensure the removal approach is consistent with all applicable environmental requirements. DOE, EPA, and SCDES have reviewed the risks associated with this OU and have evaluated the alternatives presented in this report.

Groundwater in the DAG OU is contaminated with several PFAS compounds which exceed EPA promulgated maximum contaminant levels. The PFAS plume overlaps with a trichloroethylene plume. The PFAS plume originates in the northeast portion of D Area, where known use of firefighting foam containing PFAS occurred, and is migrating southwest through the UTRA toward the Savannah River wetlands. A non-time critical removal action is warranted in groundwater to reduce the concentrations of PFAS migrating toward the Savannah River wetlands.

The removal action objective for the non-time critical removal action is to reduce regulated PFAS (those with maximum contaminant levels) concentrations in monitoring wells within or immediately downgradient of the treatment zone by 90% compared to upgradient monitoring wells. Four alternatives were evaluated based on effectiveness, ease of implementation, and cost. The preferred removal action is Alternative 2a, Permeable Adsorptive Barrier (Colloidal Activated Carbon Injections). This alternative proposes injections of colloidal activated carbon into the aquifer which will coat the aquifer sediments and adsorb the PFAS and trichloroethylene resulting in a subsurface treatment barrier wall. The 1000 foot long subsurface barrier wall will be constructed in the path of contaminated groundwater flow and will reduce downgradient migration of the highest concentration portion of the PFAS plume by capturing it on the adsorptive carbon particles, allowing the clean groundwater to continue on past the wall. This alternative will not preclude any additional remediation of the D-Area Operable Unit and is consistent with the current and future land use.

For additional information, contact: Lindsey MonBarren, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, Savannah River Site, Building 703-43A, Aiken, SC 29808 / (803) 645-5455 / lindsey.monbarren@srs.gov

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Upon completion of the public comment period, an Action Memorandum with a Responsiveness Summary that addresses public comments will be prepared. The Action Memorandum will be made available to the public.

Copies of the RSER/EE/CA are available in the Administrative Record. The Administrative Record is available in the information repositories listed below:

US Department of Energy Public Reading Room
Gregg-Graniteville Library
University of South Carolina - Aiken
471 University Parkway
Aiken, South Carolina 29801
(803) 641-3456

Thomas Cooper Library
Government Information and Maps Department
University of South Carolina
1322 Greene Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29208
(803) 777-4841

Hard copies of the RSER/EE/CA are available at the following locations:

Reese Library, Government Information Department
Augusta University
2500 Walton Way
Augusta, Georgia 30904
(706) 737-1744

Asa H. Gordon Library
Savannah State University
2200 Tompkins Road
Savannah, Georgia 31404
(912) 358-4324

The RSER/EE/CA are available electronically at the following address:
https://public.srs.gov/missions-and-programs/environmental-stewardship/public-involvement-2/

If there is interest in discussing the recommended approach, a public hearing may be requested. Comments on the RSER/EE/CA should be sent to Lindsey MonBarren.

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