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ANNE WHITE SWORN IN AS EM-1

On March 29, Anne M. White was sworn in as Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (EM-1) at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). White was confirmed by the Senate on March 22 by voice vote.

In an email to Office of Environmental Management (EM) staff, White wrote, "I am honored to have been sworn in as the new Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. The EM mission is a vital one for this country. [...] I know the EM program has a history of success, and I am committed to continuing that progress while ensuring the safety of the workers at our sites, the public and the environment."

ECA members expressed support for the new EM-1. ECA Chair and Roane County, TN Executive Ron Woody stated, "We are looking forward to working with the new Assistant Secretary. Our member local governments' close relationship to EM has been vital to ensure an on-going dialogue which promotes success of the cleanup program."

ECA looks forward to working with Assistant Secretary White on the many critical issues facing local communities across the EM complex that are affected by cleanup operations and other EM activities.



Ms. Anne Marie White

DOE PILT PROGRAM ADDRESSED IN OMNIBUS

With the release of the FY18 Omnibus came good news for local government members regarding the status of Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) made by DOE.

At the beginning of last year, it looked like the PILT program was going to go through a large upheaval. Instead, Congress decided to first look at what is working in the program prior to making changes. This ensures that school, emergency response and other critical

government services funded by PILT payments are not impacted.

Last year, the House Appropriations Committee [issued a report](#) on their FY18 Energy and Water appropriations bill, passed by committee on July 12, 2017. In the report, the Committee directed DOE to undertake a "full overhaul" of the PILT program. The Committee instructed that "DOE shall terminate all existing PILT agreements and enter into new PILT agreements that

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DOE PILT Program Addressed in Omnibus

are consistent across all eligible sites and are in compliance with the requirement that payments are not made in excess of the taxes that would have been payable for such property in the condition in which it was originally acquired.”

ECA members worked hard to ensure that Congressional members understood the negative impacts such a mandate would create for communities – especially the direct termination of PILT without new agreements in place. PILT payments are an essential source of income that compensates communities which host DOE national defense facilities for the loss of tax revenues on properties condemned or acquired for DOE purposes, where such properties had previously been subject to state and local taxes. PILT payments are used to support schools, hospital districts, critical infrastructure, and to provide fire, police, and other vital municipal services in DOE-host communities.

ECA staff and members met with staff from both the House and Senate Appropriations committees to express the concerns of ECA communities in receipt of PILT. We recommended that the Committee *not* require the termination of PILT payments and instead request DOE to prepare a report to Congress with information on the PILT program. The FY18 Omnibus bill language is consistent with ECA’s recommendation.

The PILT language in the Omnibus reads as follows:

“Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). – In lieu of House direction, DOE shall conduct a review of its current PIL T agreements and provide to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress not later than 180 days after enactment of this Act a report that describes the following:

- 1. the terms and costs of each PIL T agreement;*
- 2. description of how DOE determines site eligibility;*
- 3. an analysis of whether the current PILT agreements use methods of calculation that are consistent with current DOE policy guidelines, with guidance in the Atomic Energy Act that the Department shall be guided by the policy of not making payments in excess of the taxes which would have been payable for such property in the condition in which it was acquired, or with methods of calculation at other DOE sites;*
- 4. an explanation for any agreements with notable variances, including special burdens;*
- 5. a description of DOE procedures for negotiating and approving new agreements, including internal oversight mechanisms in place;*
- 6. recommendations for changes needed to ensure that agreements are consistent across sites.*

The agreement includes direction in the House report for the Comptroller General to provide an update on any changes to DOE's PIL T program since the issue was last examined by the Government Accountability Office.”

Legislative Update

Congress Passes \$1.3 Trillion Omnibus Bill

On March 23, President Trump signed a \$1.3 trillion omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 to fund the government through September 30. The spending bill contained \$34.5 billion for the Department of Energy, a nearly \$3.8 billion increase over the FY17 enacted level. This amount is also \$6.6 billion above the President’s budget request for DOE.

Office of Environmental Management

The Office of Environmental Management (EM) received over \$7.1 billion. For defense environmental cleanup, the bill provided nearly \$6 billion, a \$600 million increase over the FY17 level. Several sites, including Hanford, Idaho National Laboratory, Oak Ridge Reservation, Savannah River Site, and WIPP saw increases in

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funding. Despite the President’s request for \$120 million to restart the Yucca Mountain licensing process, the omnibus bill did not include such funds.

National Nuclear Security Administration

Compared to the FY17 enacted level, NNSA’s funding increased \$1.7 billion for a total of \$14.6 billion in FY18. Of that amount, the bill provides \$10.6 billion for weapons activities (a \$1.4 billion increase), and \$2 billion for defense nuclear nonproliferation (a \$116 million increase). The bill also directed NNSA to “report to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress on the status of commitments for funds provided for Maintenance and Repair of Facilities, Recapitalization, major items of equipment, general plant projects, and all construction projects on a quarterly basis.”

Office of Nuclear Energy

The Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) was appropriated \$1.2 billion in the omnibus bill, an increase of \$189 million compared to the FY17 level. Within the NE budget, \$237 million was provided for advanced reactor R&D, of which \$60 million is dedicated to a solicitation to support development of “next generation light water and non-light water reactor technologies, including small modular reactors.”

Office of Science

The bill provided \$6.2 billion for the Office of Science, \$867 million above the FY17 level. This funding amount is also \$1.8 billion above the President’s FY18 budget request.

White House Response to Omnibus

Upon signing the FY18 omnibus in late March, President Trump held a press conference and expressed dissatisfaction with several aspects of the bill. He explained that he signed the bill as a matter of national security, but also warned, “...I say to Congress, I will never sign another bill like this again. I’m not going to do it again. Nobody read it. It’s only hours old...it’s \$1.3 trillion.” The President

also requested from Congress the authority for a line item veto in future spending bills.

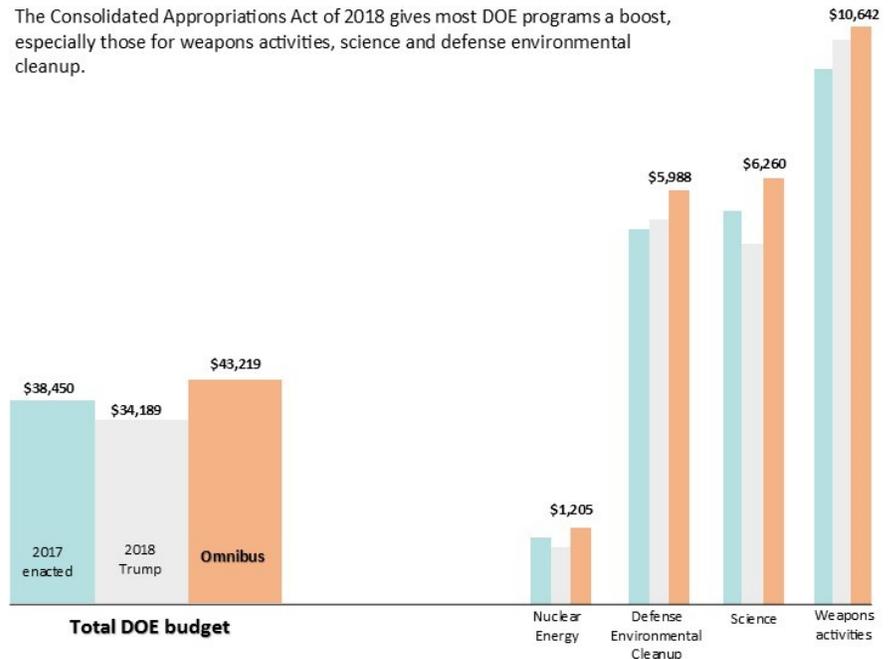
The White House is still examining ways to reduce funding from the recently signed omnibus. Politico reported that House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) is discussing a rescission package—a resolution that would cut FY18 funding for certain programs—with the White House. The rescission package could pass the Senate with a simple majority vote under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

With the government funded through the end of FY18 (September 2019), Congress will begin the FY19 appropriations process later this month. The House Armed Services subcommittees will hold their markup hearings for the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY19 on April 26. The full House Armed Services Committee will

March 23, 2018

Omnibus DOE Highlights

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 gives most DOE programs a boost, especially those for weapons activities, science and defense environmental cleanup.



consider the Chairman’s markup of the bill on May 9. The NDAA authorizes overall funding levels for DOE’s national security and defense programs, marking one of the first steps in the congressional appropriations process for FY19. Following the

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FY 2018/2019 Budget & Appropriations Highlights*

(amounts in thousands of dollars)

	FY 2018 Enacted	FY 2019 Requested
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	34,520,049	30,609,071
Environmental Management	7,126,448	6,601,366
Defense Environmental Cleanup	5,988,048	5,630,217
Hanford/ Richland	863,192	747,097
Office of River Protection	1,560,000	1,438,513
Idaho National Laboratory	434,071	359,226
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory	1,175	1,704
Separations Process Research Unit	4,800	15,000
Nevada NNSA Sites	60,136	60,136
Sandia National Laboratory	2,600	2,600
Los Alamos National Laboratory	220,000	191,629
Oak Ridge Reservation	400,219	226,206
Savannah River Site	1,312,314	1,656,180
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	376,571	403,487
Non-Defense Environmental Cleanup	298,400	218,400
West Valley Demonstration Project	75,000	63,687
Gaseous Diffusion Plants	101,304	100,575
Uranium Enrichment Decontamination & Decommissioning Fund	840,000	752,749
Oak Ridge	194,673	151,039
Paducah	205,530	270,224
Portsmouth	381,271	415,458
Legacy Management	154,606	158,877
National Nuclear Security Administration	14,668,952	15,091,050
Weapons Activities	10,642,138	11,017,078
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation	1,999,219	1,862,825
Naval Reactors	1,620,000	1,788,618
Nuclear Energy	1,205,056	757,090
Science	6,259,903	5,390,972
Yucca Mountain and Interim Storage	---	120,000
Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	90,000
Defense Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	30,000

* These figures are compiled from different sources: the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Appropriations committee reports, and press releases. There are some discrepancies in how each calculates government spending.

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passage of the NDAA, Congress will aim to pass a funding bill similar to the omnibus that passed last month. The budget The FY19 funding bill must be passed by September 30 to avoid a government shutdown.

Federal agencies are already beginning their budget formulation processes for the FY20 budget proposal. For example, EM’s budget formulation process (pictured below) entails meetings and deliberations among sites and regulators. These deliberations are submitted to the Office of Management and Budget to be considered as part of the President’s proposal.

Congress Holds Hearings on FY19 Budget Request

On February 12, the White House released its [FY19 budget request](#). Since then, Appropriators on Capitol Hill have been holding hearings to discuss and scrutinize the President’s funding priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

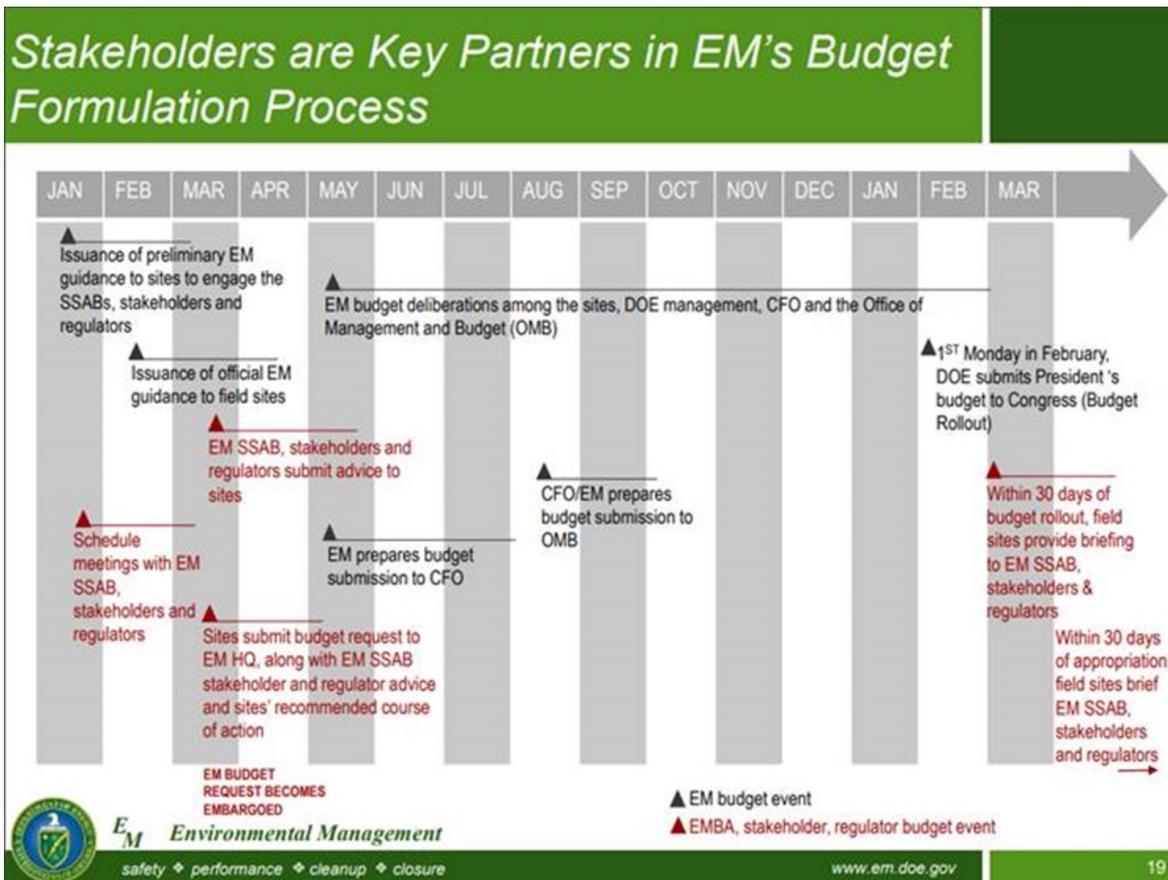
On March 20, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a [hearing](#) on the FY19 request for DOE at which Secretary Rick Perry

testified. In his opening statement, Perry stated that two of his priorities over the past year have been to modernize the US nuclear weapons arsenal, and the address the Cold War environmental legacy.

During the hearing, Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) asked Perry to halt DOE’s practice of selling—or bartering—excess uranium on the marketplace, insisting that it hurts his state’s uranium mining industry. Perry told Barrasso that the uranium bartering program was “poorly designed,” and that he hopes to end bartering “beyond the fiscal year by working together to fully fund our environmental management cleanup through the appropriations process.”

Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) pushed back on Perry’s commitment to end uranium bartering. Portman argued that the practice helps to fund the environmental cleanup and reindustrialization of DOE sites like the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon, OH. “Let’s not pull the plug on the bartering until we have the appropriations,” said Portman. Perry replied that he is committed to the cleanup at Piketon and that his preference is to fund

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the work there through a normal appropriation and not bartering.

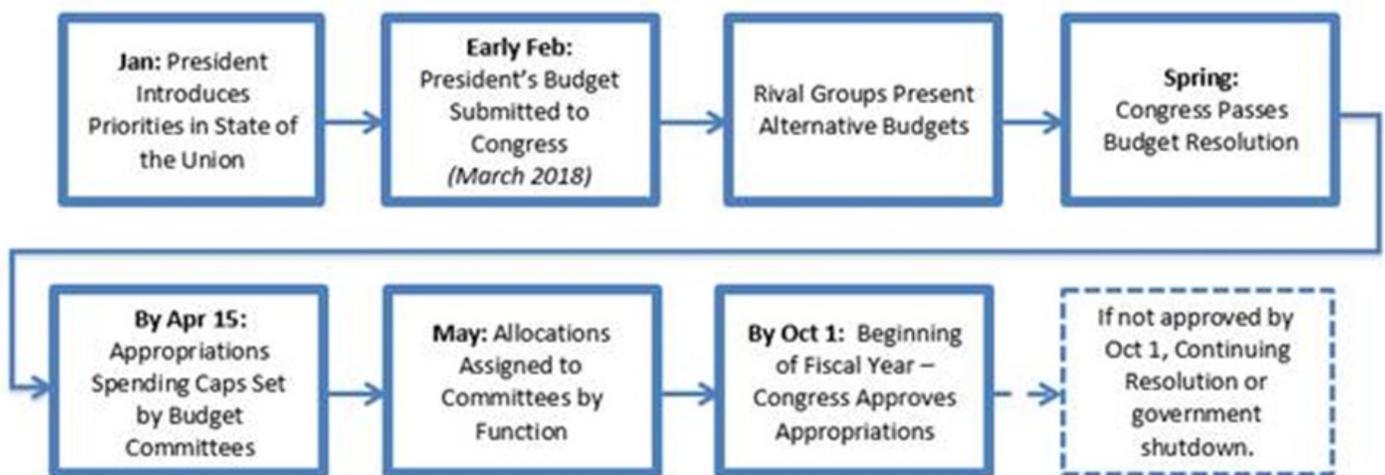
Also on March 20, the House Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee held a [hearing](#) on the NNSA FY19 request. Testifying at the hearing were NNSA Administrator Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs Phil Calbos, Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation Dave Huizenga, and Admiral James Coldwell of the Office of Naval Reactors.

In her opening statement, Administrator Gordon-Hagerty stated, “the President’s FY19 budget request for NNSA is \$15.1 billion, providing the resources required to help ensure we are able to protect and keep our nation, allies, and partners safe. This request moves us toward a deterrent that is modern, robust, flexible, resilient, ready and appropriately-tailored to meet current and future uncertainties as outlined in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review.”

When asked by Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID) about what she plans to do to repair the reputation and past practices of NNSA which have led to project mismanagement and cost overruns, Gordon-Hagerty replied that she is ensuring that NNSA “continue to institute good governance and good management practices.” She promised to make full use of her position at DOE to take some of the governance reforms started by Secretary Perry and Deputy Secretary Brouillette and implement them throughout NNSA headquarters, sites, and laboratories.

During the hearing, Gordon-Hagerty was asked about her position on the completion of the Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility. She noted that facility, which was originally estimated to cost \$4.5 billion and be finished by 2016, has to-date cost over \$5.4 billion as is not even 50 percent complete. Gordon-Hagerty stated that she is currently working with Secretary Perry on a path forward for the termination of the MOX facility project. She also stated that a lifecycle cost determination of the MOX alternative (a dilute-and-dispose method of handling the 34 metric tons of surplus plutonium at the Savannah River Site) leaves her confident that it will be billions of dollars cheaper than MOX.

The Budget & Appropriations Process



MAJOR CONTRACTS AND AWARDS

DOE Releases Request for Proposals for Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility Procurement

On March 22, DOE Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center (EMCBC) [released](#) a request for proposals for the Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility (OF200 MTF). The Firm-Fixed-Price contract has a period of performance of four years. The contract includes the construction of water treatment facility for mercury remediation at Y-12 in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The objectives of the contract are to: “(1) Provide a capability to treat mercury-contaminated water that discharges from the Y-12 storm sewer to East Fork Poplar Creek (EFPC); and (2) provide future capability to assist with treatment of contaminated water that is expected to be generated during large-scale demolition and soil remediation projects.” EMCBC also announced that a pre-proposal site tour has been scheduled, and interested parties may register for the tour on the [procurement website](#). Proposals from potential contractors are due by May 7, 2018.

Despite Concerns - NNSA Announces Contract Extension for the M&O of the Pantex Plant and the Y-12 National Security Complex

Although communities have expressed concern over the failures of having two sites being managed by one contractor, NNSA, without comment, granted a contract extension through fiscal year 2021 to Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC (CNS) for management and operations (M&O) of the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas. NNSA granted the extension after its favorable review of CNS’s performance during the first three years of M&O (FY 2015-2017). There are two additional options terms available for a maximum term of ten years; the next decision regarding the option year is expected in calendar year 2020. Communities continue to express concern that failure to have leadership at both sites impacts site operations.



2018 U.S. EPA Community Involvement Training Program

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Email questions to: CITprogram@epa.gov

For additional information, please visit the training website:
<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/community-involvement-training-program-0>

DOE INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT REPORTS

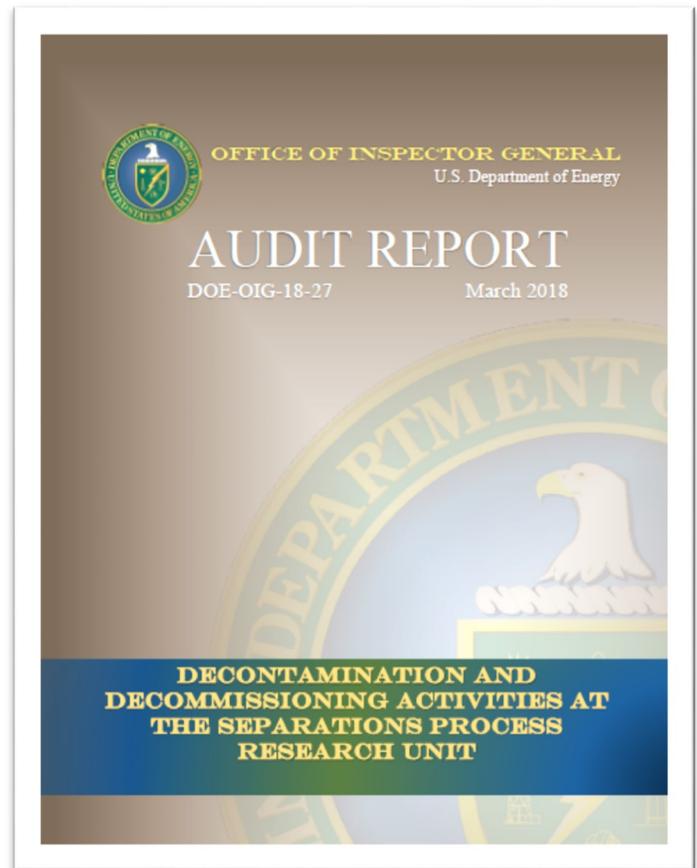
Audit Report: Decontamination and Decommissioning Activities at the Separations Process Research Unit

The DOE Office of Inspector General (OIG) released the results of an [audit](#) of decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) activities at the Separations Process Research Unit (SPRU) on March 23. The Office of Environmental Management (EM) awarded a D&D contract in 2007 to URS Energy & Construction Inc., which was intended to conclude by November 4, 2011. OIG conducted the audit to examine whether EM effectively managed the D&D of nuclear facilities at SPRU because the project was still not complete by 2016.

The results showed that the Department's management was "not always effective." The report acknowledged that the contractor has made significant progress in cleanup and that some of the factors that impacted the schedule and costs of the contract were outside of DOE's control. A radiological release in 2010 resulted in a temporary halt of the project, and a new D&D strategy was established in February 2011 to aim for completion by December 31, 2011. Additionally, weather conditions in 2011 required the contractor to stabilize the area near SPRU, contributing to schedule delays and cost increases.

However, OIG warned that the D&D work would likely continue into July 2018 (seven years after the original target completion date) and that the contract's cost increased to \$180 million through January 2018. OIG noted that DOE should have established project baselines in 2011 and implemented schedule incentives.

The report made two recommendations to EM: "1) Implement a process to identify, document, and



disseminate lessons-learned from Environmental Management's projects utilizing cost caps; and 2) Consider incorporating alternative methods to enforce schedule milestones, such as schedule or milestone-based financial penalties, in any future Environmental Management contracts containing a cost cap." EM concurred with the first recommendation and said that it will "consider incorporation of alternative methods" regarding schedule milestones and price/fee reductions in future contracts.



Check out Daughters of Hanford, a project that highlights women's perspectives of the Hanford nuclear site. The project offers a cross-section of politicians, leaders, and environmental cleanup advocates - all women who were part of history and the future talent putting their minds on the nuclear site's toughest problems. More information [here](#).

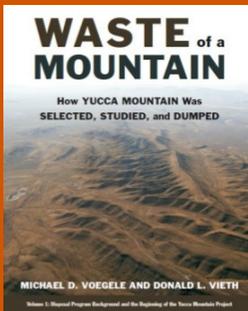
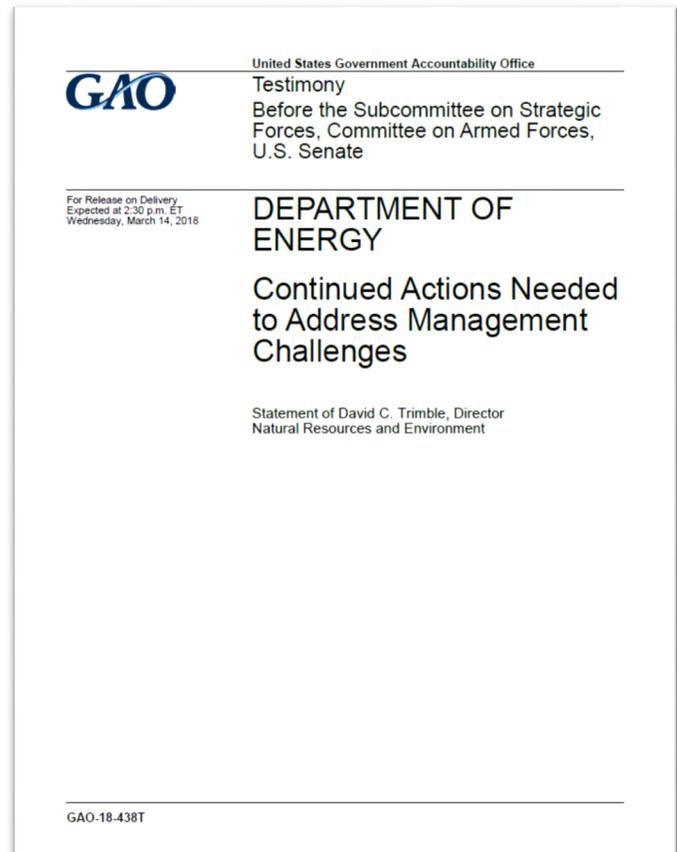
GAO REPORTS

Department of Energy: Continued Actions Needed to Address Management Challenges

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a [report](#) on March 14 which found that NNSA’s modernization plans and the associated estimated budgetary resources were misaligned. For example, NNSA’s modernization funding estimates exceeded were higher than the President’s projections for the near-term (FY 2018 through 2021) and the long-term (FY 2022 through 2026) budgets. Additionally, GAO found challenges with implementing nonproliferation programs, specifically that NNSA’s Office of Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation (DNN) did not measure performance against schedule and cost baselines for certain programs. Following a separate GAO report in September 2017, NNSA stated that it would address that issue.

GAO noted that DOE is responsible for 83 percent of the federal government’s \$464.5 billion total reported environmental liability. Of the 30 recommendations on long-term cost reductions and environmental risks since 1994, 15 of the recommendations have not yet been implemented by DOE.

GAO acknowledged that DOE has made progress regarding its contract and project management, citing the Department’s May 2016 revised project management order. However, GAO stated that DOE’s recent actions have not addressed acquisition planning for major contracts. While GAO did not make any new recommendations in the report, it urged DOE to continue to address previously issued recommendations.



Yucca Mountain proponents and opponents are preparing for a fresh fight in the 115th Congress, but the politics of today are still greatly colored by the long history of the proposed repository. The book, *Waste of a Mountain*, tells the story of the 70-year-long effort to dispose of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain. The book, written by Michael Voegele and Donald Vieth, details the history of government action in the effort to locate and develop a site for the permanent disposition of the waste. The book is available on the Pahrump Valley Museum’s website [here](#).

SECRETARY PERRY TESTIFIES ON DOE DEFENSE PROGRAMS

On March 22, Secretary of Energy Rick Perry [testified](#) before the Senate Armed Services Committee regarding the DOE's atomic energy defense programs and the FY19 budget request. In his testimony, Perry reiterated that addressing legacy management and nuclear waste management remain among his highest priorities. He highlighted some of DOE's accomplishments in the nuclear security mission from 2017, including the resumption of waste shipments to WIPP and the publication of the FY18 Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan (SSMP).

Secretary Perry supported the administration's FY19 budget request by noting its proposal to invest in modernization of NNSA infrastructure. Additionally, he mentioned that the EM budget request includes \$150 million for decontamination and decommissioning of certain facilities that are not currently in the EM portfolio at the Y-12 National Security Complex and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Perry expressed optimism about cleanup efforts given the new alignment of the Offices of Science and EM, now both reporting to the Under Secretary for Science. He testified that the increase in the EM budget for FY19 would "[provide] the resources to make progress on cleanup activities across the complex."

As members of the Committee questioned Secretary Perry about the budget request, Senators Jim Inhofe (R-OK) and John McCain (R-AZ) (through a



written statement) claimed that "DOE's defense programs, including the cleanup of nuclear waste, have gone without sufficient oversight." Perry welcomed the additional oversight by the Committee. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) advocated for additional funding for research at national laboratories and for cleanup at Hanford, to which the Secretary noted he is requesting increased spending on nuclear deterrence programs and legacy waste cleanup.

The National Defense Authorization Act for FY19 process, which authorizes overall funding levels for DOE's defense and national security programs, is expected to begin in late April, when the House Armed Services Committee will mark up the legislation.

ECA STAFF SPEAKS AT NUCLEAR WASTE STRATEGY COUNCIL MEETING

On March 7, ECA's Director of Nuclear Energy Programs Kara Colton participated in the 2018 spring meeting of the Nuclear Waste Strategy Council (NWSC) in Washington, DC. The NWSC is an ad-hoc organization representing the collective interests of member state utility regulators, state consumer advocates, state radiation control officials, state energy officials, tribal governments, local governments, electric utilities, and other public and private sector experts on nuclear waste policy matters.

Speaking as part of a panel entitled, "Stakeholder Coordination: Raising Awareness of Nuclear Waste Issues on the Hill, Colton outlined recommendations from ECA's paper, "[Waste Disposition: A New Approach to DOE's Waste Management Must Be Pursued](#)," and provided an update on ECA activities in support of clarifying how nuclear waste is defined to create alternative, safe disposal paths for some legacy waste. The panel also included speakers from the National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES LOOKS AT WIPP FOR DISPOSING OF SURPLUS PLUTONIUM

As part of a nuclear nonproliferation effort, the US and Russia each committed in 1998 to dispose of 34 metric tons of surplus weapons-grade plutonium. In 2002, DOE proposed doing this by combining it with uranium to make mixed oxide (MOX) fuel to power existing U.S. commercial nuclear reactors. Once taken out of a reactor, the MOX fuel would not be reprocessed or reused.

Construction began in 2007 on DOE's MOX fuel fabrication facility at the Savannah River Site near Aiken County, South Carolina. Billions of dollars have been spent on the project. However, DOE and NNSA have proposed halting MOX facility construction. Congress continues to provide funding for the MOX facility.

NNSA, while trying to come up with ways to stop the MOX program, proposed an alternative to MOX – dilute the plutonium and dispose of it in a geologic repository – at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad, New Mexico. In September 2017, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a [report](#) looking at this “dilute and dispose” alternative wherein DOE would ultimately dispose of the diluted plutonium at WIPP. GAO concluded in that report that DOE does not have sufficient space at WIPP to dispose of all defense transuranic (TRU) waste and the 34 metric tons of surplus plutonium without expansion of the facility. Furthermore DOE's TRU waste management plan does not include a schedule for expanding DOE's disposal space before existing space is full. The report recommended specific steps for DOE to develop a plan for expanding disposal space at WIPP.

Soon after the GAO report was released, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) began an evaluation of DOE's “conceptual plans for disposing of surplus plutonium in [WIPP] to support U.S. commitments under the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement, identify gaps, and recommend actions that could be taken by DOE and others to address those gaps.”

More specifically, the study will examine:



- DOE's plans to ship, receive, and emplace surplus plutonium in WIPP.
- DOE's understanding of the impacts of these plans on the following:
 - Transportation safety, security, and regulatory compliance.
 - Current and future WIPP operations, including the need to construct additional waste disposal panels and/or operate WIPP beyond its currently planned closure date.
 - Disposal of other potential waste streams in WIPP, for example other plutonium wastes, Greater-than-Class-C-like wastes, and tank wastes.
 - WIPP pre- and post-closure safety and performance.
 - Compliance with WIPP waste acceptance criteria; Environmental Protection Agency disposal regulations; and The Land Withdrawal Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requirements.

Since the project began, NAS has held a number of meetings, including one in Carlsbad in mid-March. ECA staff also recently met with the Senior Program Officer for NAS, to learn more about the project.

NAS has a [study webpage](#) and aims to provide recommendations to DOE by the end of December 2018.

CONSOLIDATED INTERIM STORAGE FACILITY FOR USE NUCLEAR FUEL - WCS AND ORANO FORM JOINT VENTURE

On March 13, Orano USA (a subsidiary of the French global nuclear energy company Orano, formerly known as Areva) and Waste Control Specialists (WCS) [announced](#) their intent to form a joint venture to license a consolidated interim storage facility for used nuclear fuel at WCS' site in Andrews County, TX.

The joint venture will request that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) resume its review of the [consolidated interim storage facility license application](#) originally submitted by WCS in April 2016 and docketed by the NRC for review in January 2017.

WCS had requested that the NRC suspend its review in April 2017 due to complications related to the sale of WCS to Energy Solutions – a sale that ultimately did not happen on antitrust grounds. In January 2018, J.F. Lehman & Company announced it had acquired Waste Control Specialists.



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DOE COMPLETES TREATMENT OF UNREMIEDIATED NITRATE SALT WASTE AT LANL

DOE has completed treatment of 27 unremediated nitrate salt drums at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The drums contained some of the same material that caused the 2014 radiation release at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, NM.

The treatment was a collaboration between the National Nuclear Security Administration and DOE's Environmental Management Los Alamos Field Office. The treatment, which began in December, involved mixing the drum waste with water and a neutralizing agent to render the waste non-reactive. After treatment, the waste mixture was repackaged into new drums that meet the WIPP waste acceptance criteria. The treated drums are now being stored at LANL, awaiting shipment to WIPP for disposal.



A worker manipulates a glove box used to treat unremediated nitrate salt waste. Courtesy photo

DOE COMMENCES WORK ON URANIUM PROCESSING FACILITY



Contributed photo rendering / A rendering of how the Uranium Processing Facility at Y-12 in Oak Ridge, Tenn., will appear when it's finished in 2025.

DOE has authorized construction to begin on the final three buildings of the Y-12 National Security Complex's Uranium Processing Facility (UPF) in Oak Ridge, TN. DOE Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette approved the cost and baseline for the project on March 23, paving the way for the three buildings: a Main Process Building, a Salvage & Accountability Building, and Process Support Facilities.

The UPF is scheduled for completion and production by 2025. During peak construction, the \$6.5 billion facility is expected to bring in close to 2,000 jobs. The UPF will replace an early-Cold War plant with a modern, more efficient, and safer facility for conducting highly-enriched uranium operations at Y-12.

"This is a great example of our efforts to keep projects on schedule and to be good stewards of taxpayer resources," DOE Secretary Rick Perry said.

"This milestone is another important step toward delivering UPF and strengthening our Nation's nuclear security," Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, DOE undersecretary for nuclear security and NNSA administrator, said. "I'm proud of the UPF team for keeping an acquisition project of this size and scope on budget and on schedule."

WEST VALLEY SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES CRITICAL DEMOLITION ACTIVITY

Four hot cell coolers were [removed](#) from the Vitrification Facility at the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP). The facility is one of two main buildings that will be taken down at the site. The removal of in-cell coolers was the highest hazard task remaining at the facility.

The cleanup contractor, CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) began the removal process in early March.

Upon the successful removal of the coolers, CHBWV President Jeff Bradford said, "This work was a significant accomplishment for our team. They completed this work safely and compliantly using a deliberate and methodical approach, along with lessons learned."



Officials at the West Valley Demonstration Project announced the recent removal of hot cell coolers as part of the Vitrification Facility demolition.

DOE CONSIDERING SHIPPING WASHINGTON WASTE TO IDAHO FOR TREATMENT AT AMWTP

DOE is weighing the idea of keeping an existing nuclear waste treatment facility in Idaho operational beyond its current mission in order to treat waste from out of state.

The Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project (AMWTP) at the Idaho cleanup site is currently processing barrels of transuranic (TRU) waste stored in Idaho and preparing them for eventual shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico for permanent storage.

AMWTP is expected to finish processing the Idaho TRU waste sometime in 2019, after which the fate of the nearly 700 local jobs it supports is unclear. DOE is currently evaluating whether to keep the facility open to treat TRU waste from the Hanford Site in Washington State.

According to a [Post Register](#) article, proponents of extending the current mission of AMWTP point to the facility's unique technical capabilities—it has

DOE's only super-compactor, which can crush a 55-gallon drum of waste into a fifth of its size.

"These are not off-the-shelf capabilities," Idaho National Laboratory Director Mark Peters said. "These are capabilities we spend a lot of money on as taxpayers."

The Idaho Cleanup Project Citizens Advisory Board held a meeting on March 28, wherein they discussed the possibility of bringing Hanford TRU Waste into Idaho for treatment at AMWTP. The Board voted 5-3 to [send a letter](#) to DOE asking to share the results of a study the agency is doing on the issue. "Considering the imminent completion of AMWTP's current mission, we stress that time is of the essence," the letter reads.

"The ICP CAB recommends DOE commit the resources necessary for a vigorous fact-based and open consideration of the ongoing use of this unique and valuable asset. We recognize that inaction is, by default, likely a decision to close AMWTP."

DOE INVESTIGATES SPREAD OF RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION AT HANFORD



Part of the Plutonium Finishing Plant, right, still needs to be demolished. A truck sprays dirt piles of demolition debris. The blue color is from fixative sprayed to prevent radioactive particles from becoming airborne. *Courtesy Department of Energy*

The Department of Energy's Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) is [conducting](#) an independent investigation into the spread of radioactive contamination at Hanford's Plutonium Finishing

Plant. The office reports directly to the Secretary of Energy and has the authority to impose fines on contractors if security and safety requirements were not followed.

The investigation comes after small radioactive particles were discovered outside of demolition area boundaries, and eleven workers tested positive for small amounts of internal contamination. Demolition of the Plutonium Finishing Plant halted in mid-December.

EA sent a letter to the Hanford contractor CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Co. to examine contamination in 2017 and 2018. EA plans to request documents and interviews with the contractor, in addition to visiting Hanford.

DOE is reviewing CH2M's report of the incident and the plans to demolish the remaining parts of the Plutonium Finishing Plant. The demolition activities will not resume until DOE determines that it can be completed safely.



2018 Congressional Calendar



Both chambers in session
 Senate only in session

April

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1 Easter Sunday	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Orthodox Easter	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

May

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16 Ramadan (begins)	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Memorial Day	29 Vesak	30	31		

June

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 Eid al-Fitr	16
17 Father's Day	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

July

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

August

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 Eid al-Adha	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

September

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1
2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9 Rosh Hashana (begins)	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Yom Kippur (begins)	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	1 FY '19 (begins)	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Columbus Day	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Election Day	7 Diwali	8	9	10
11	12 Veterans' Day (observed)	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1
2 Hanukkah (begins)	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29
30	31					



2018 Upcoming Events

April 11	ECA Board of Directors Meeting (for ECA members only); contact meganc@energyca.org for details.
April 11	House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus Event ; contact meganc@energyca.org for details.
April 12	2018 ECA Annual Conference ; contact meganc@energyca.org for details.
June 28	ECA Peer Exchange: Manhattan Project National Historical Park ; contact meganc@energyca.org for details.
September 11	ECA Board of Directors Meeting (for ECA members only); contact meganc@energyca.org for details.
September 12	House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus Event ; contact meganc@energyca.org for details.
September 12-13	2018 National Cleanup Workshop ; see page 5 and visit www.cleanupworkshop.com for more information.
November 14-16	2018 Intergovernmental Meeting with DOE ; New Orleans, LA; contact meganc@energyca.org for details.

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