

SONGS Community Engagement Panel Meeting
Federal Spent Nuclear Fuel Management Program
13 June 2024

Key Takeaways

A joint meeting of the SONGS Community Engagement Panel and the Spent Fuel Solutions coalition included comments by Representative Mike Levin and a briefing on the past, present, and future of the federal spent nuclear fuel management program by Paul Murray, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Spent Fuel and Waste Disposition at the US Department of Energy.

Representative Levin stated that, since taking office in 2019, a priority has been to relocate the spent fuel at SONGS as soon and safely as possible. He noted a successful bipartisan effort in Congress that provided appropriations for the DOE's consent-based siting effort for federal consolidated interim storage facilities.

Spent Fuel Solutions coalition Co-Chairs Katrina Foley and Jim Desmond provided a recap of a recent trip to Washington DC to meet with Congressional leaders. CEP Chair Dan Stetson mentioned recently testifying before a Congressional subcommittee on spent fuel policy.

Murray outlined the DOE's current work to provide operational consolidated federal interim storage of spent fuel in the 2038-2042 timeframe, as well as the need to develop a non-site-specific plan covering where we are today through siting, licensing, operating, and closure of a deep geologic repository for the permanent disposal of spent fuel.

Murray also discussed a number of near-term, trust-building demonstrations including a durability test to build trust and confidence in the safety of spent fuel transportation casks and moving a cask with "high burnup" fuel within the next few years.

SCE reported on the recent completion of the cutup and packaging of Greater Than Class-C material in the same type of containers used to store and transport spent fuel.

Stetson closed the meeting by stating that progress on spent fuel solutions is slow but DOE is building trust and making progress, and champions in Congress are emerging.

Shareables

- Consider becoming a supporting member of the Spent Fuel Solutions coalition (it's free)
- Learn more about the DOE's consent-based siting initiative to establish federal consolidated interim storage facilities for spent nuclear fuel from sites such as SONGS
- Register for a tour of SONGS, stay up to date on the CEP, and/or book a speaker for a civic group meeting using the SONGS community engagement page