

SONGS Community Engagement Panel Meeting

SONGS Dismantlement Update
by San Onofre Decommissioning Solutions
5 November 2026

Key Takeaways

The SONGS CEP hosted a virtual meeting focused on dismantlement progress, encouraging news regarding the federal used fuel management program, and the San Onofre nuclear plant site's ability to withstand extreme climate events such as El Nino.

Joe Nowak, Executive Sponsor, San Onofre Decommissioning Solutions general contractor, provided updates on SONGS safety performance, culture and continuous improvement, current and planned decommissioning activities, waste management, and environmental stewardship. Ninety percent of the total project is complete with Unit 3 containment interior demolition well underway. Both Unit 2 and 3 containment domes are expected to commence exterior demolition in 2027, and the current phase of dismantlement will be complete by year-end 2028.

Nowak also discussed the recent notifications to the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board and NRC following two recent unintended wastewater discharge events. On September 23, 2026, approximately 5,000 gallons of demolition wastewater entered the Unit 2 storm drain system, discharging through the offshore conduits to the ocean. On November 3, approximately 900 gallons of wastewater spilled on an asphalt surface when a hose failed. In both cases, pH levels exceeded permit levels prompting notifications, but there was no risk to public health or safety. SCE takes any permit exceedance very seriously and will complete cause evaluations and corrective actions to prevent reoccurrence. Nowak also provided an update regarding the recent penetration of a wall in a basement below the water table. Groundwater from the basement is being included in batch releases which will increase in volume and frequency until the hole is repaired. Overall, approximately one million gallons of water will be processed and released, with a focus on adjusting pH, and ensuring total suspended solids are within regulatory limits (tritium levels are a small fraction of regulatory limits). All releases remain within safe regulatory limits.

CEP Chair, Dan Stetson provided updates regarding the federal used fuel management program, and recent constructive hearings in the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction, noting bipartisan supporting for Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campuses (NLICs) at both hearings, and advocated for the legislation needed to break Yucca Mountain's exclusivity as only authorized repository site. Stetson was also a guest speaker at Rep. Mike Levin's news conference on NLICs, and the Congressman's SONGS Task Force Report 2.0 hosted at SONGS on October 28. SCE President and CEO Steve Powell, Orange County Supervisor and Spent Fuel Solutions Co-Chair Katrina Foley also provided remarks regarding the safe storage of the used nuclear fuel at SONGS and the potential solutions to removing the fuel from the site.

Read-only content in the presentation includes an update from Spent Fuel Solutions coalition and information regarding improvements to the SONGS public walkway, Gunite slope repairs, batch releases, tritium monitoring, Kelvin waves, and sea level rise.

Shareables

- Join the Spent Fuel Solutions coalition and support efforts to clear San Onofre of used fuel
- Learn about how used fuel is safely stored at San Onofre by visiting the SONGS website