

United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Atlanta, GA
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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

February 23, 2001

4EAD

U.S. Department of Energy
Oak Ridge Operations Office
Attn: Mr. Gary Hartman
P.O. Box 2001 EM-912
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

**RE: EPA Review and Comments on
Draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement for the
Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant
CEQ No. 000451**

Dear Mr. Hartman:

Thank you for submitting the above-referenced document. Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the referenced Draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (DSWEIS). The document provides information to educate the public regarding general and project-specific environmental impacts and analysis procedures, and follows the public review and disclosure aspects of the NEPA process. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with our comments regarding potential impacts of the proposed action, based on our review of the document.

The Y-12 Draft SWEIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts from continued operation of the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant, and the construction and operation of new facilities for two of Y-12's missions (preferred alternative): Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) Materials Storage mission and Special Materials mission. Alternatives considered for the HEU Materials Storage mission include constructing and operating a new HEU Materials Facility at one of two candidate sites, or expanding and operating Building 9215. The attached comments describe environmental concerns regarding potential impacts of the proposed project.

Based on the information provided in the DSWEIS, the document received a rating of "EC-2," that is, environmental concerns exist regarding some aspects of the proposed project and more information is needed. In particular, more detail is needed in the FSWEIS regarding environmental justice, wetland impacts, and cultural resource issues.

ENCLOSURE

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Draft SWEIS. If you have any questions or require technical assistance you may contact Ramona McConney of my staff at (404) 562-9615.

Sincerely,



Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
Office of Environmental Assessment