

### Overview of This Information Collection

NSF has standing authority to support activities to improve the participation of women and minorities in science and engineering under the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (Pub. L. 96-516), and authority to collect data on those issues.

The Partnerships for Research and Education in Materials (PREM) aims to enhance diversity in materials research and education by stimulating the development of formal, long-term, collaborative research and education relationships between minority-serving colleges and universities and centers, institutes and facilities supported by the NSF Division of Materials Research (DMR). With this collaborative model PREMs build intellectual and physical infrastructure within and between disciplines, weaving together knowledge creation, knowledge integration, and knowledge transfer. PREMs conduct world-class research through partnerships of academic institutions, national laboratories, industrial organizations, and/or other public/private entities. New knowledge thus created is meaningfully linked to society, with an emphasis on enhancing diversity.

PREMs enable and foster excellent education, integrate research and education, and create bonds between learning and inquiry so that discovery and creativity more fully support the learning process. PREMs capitalize on diversity through participation and collaboration in center activities and demonstrate leadership in the involvement of groups underrepresented in science and engineering.

PREMs will be required to submit annual reports on progress and plans, which will be used as a basis for performance review and determining the level of continued funding. To support this review and the management of the award PREMs will be required to develop a set of management and performance indicators for submission annually to NSF via the Research Performance Project Reporting module in Research.gov and an external technical assistance contractor that collects programmatic data electronically. These indicators are both quantitative and descriptive and may include, for example, the characteristics of personnel and students; sources of financial support and in-kind support; expenditures by operational component; research activities; education activities; patents, licenses; publications; degrees

granted to students involved in PREM activities; descriptions of significant advances and other outcomes of the PREM effort.

Each PREM's annual report will address the following categories of activities: (1) Research, (2) education, (3) knowledge transfer, (4) partnerships, (5) diversity, (6) management, and (7) budget issues.

For each of the categories the report will describe overall objectives for the year, problems the PREM has encountered in making progress towards goals, anticipated problems in the following year, and specific outputs and outcomes.

PREMs are required to file a final report through the RPPR and external technical assistance contractor. Final reports contain similar information and metrics as annual reports, but are retrospective.

*Use of the Information:* NSF will use the information to continue funding of PREMs, and to evaluate the progress of the program.

*Estimate of Burden:* 44 hours per PREM for 15 PREMs for a total of 660 hours.

*Respondents:* Non-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Report:* One from each of the fifteen PREMs.

Dated: September 23, 2013.

**Suzanne H. Plimpton,**

*Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation.*

[FR Doc. 2013-23538 Filed 9-26-13; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7555-01-P**

### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

#### Notice of Permit Applications Received Under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978

**AGENCY:** National Science Foundation.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The National Science Foundation (NSF) is required to publish a notice of permit applications received to conduct activities regulated under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978. NSF has published regulations under the Antarctic Conservation Act at Title 45 Part 670 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This is the required notice of permit applications received.

**DATES:** Interested parties are invited to submit written data, comments, or views with respect to this permit application by October 28, 2013. This application may be inspected by interested parties at the Permit Office, address below.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be addressed to Permit Office, Room 755, Division of Polar Programs, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Adrian Dahood, ACA Permit Officer, at the above address or [ACApermits@nsf.gov](mailto:ACApermits@nsf.gov) or (703) 292-7149.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The National Science Foundation, as directed by the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978 (Pub. L. 95-541), as amended by the Antarctic Science, Tourism and Conservation Act of 1996, has developed regulations for the establishment of a permit system for various activities in Antarctica and designation of certain animals and certain geographic areas requiring special protection. The regulations establish such a permit system to designate Antarctic Specially Protected Areas.

#### Application Details

##### Permit Application: 2014-020

1. *Applicant* Scott Borg, National Science Foundation, Arlington Virginia.

##### *Activity for Which Permit Is Requested*

The National Science Foundation funds numerous science projects to be conducted in Antarctica. The Program Officers sometimes need to experience the area where the work is conducted, observe the scientists at work or inspect facilities to help inform funding decisions.

Visits to the ASPAs listed in this application will be limited as operational, scientific conditions and the availability of transportation permit. Visits will take place in conjunction with scientific activities or with maintenance activities undertaken by the contractor (ASC).

Program officers visiting an ASPA will be accompanied by an escort. The escort will be either a scientist or staff hired by the contractor (ASC) who is currently working in the ASPA. The escort will be very familiar with the area and the management plan and will ensure that the requirements contained in the ASPA management plans and the Antarctic Conservation Act are followed.

##### *Location*

ASPAs 124: Cape Crozier, Ross Island.

**Dates**

November 1, 2013 to March 31, 2018.

**Nadene G. Kennedy,**

*Polar Coordination Specialist, Division of Polar Programs.*

[FR Doc. 2013-23582 Filed 9-26-13; 8:45 am]

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## **NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**[NRC-2012-0218]**

### **Final Comparative Environmental Evaluation of Alternatives for Handling Low-Level Radioactive Waste Spent Ion Exchange Resins From Commercial Nuclear Power Plants**

**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**ACTION:** Final report; issuance.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing the Final Comparative Environmental Evaluation of Alternatives for Handling Low-Level Radioactive Waste Spent Ion Exchange Resins from Commercial Nuclear Power Reactors (Final Report).

**ADDRESSES:** Please refer to Docket ID NRC-2012-0218 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information regarding this document. You may access publicly-available information related to this action by the following methods:

- Federal Rulemaking Web site: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRC-2012-0218. Address questions about NRC dockets to Carol Gallagher; telephone: 301-287-3422; email: [Carol.Gallagher@nrc.gov](mailto:Carol.Gallagher@nrc.gov). For technical questions, contact the individual listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document.

- NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):

You may access publicly available documents online in the NRC Library at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To begin the search, select "ADAMS Public Documents" and then select "Begin Web-based ADAMS Search." For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by email to [pdr.resource@nrc.gov](mailto:pdr.resource@nrc.gov). The Final Report is available in ADAMS under Accession No. ML13263A276.

- NRC's PDR: You may examine and purchase copies of public documents at the NRC's PDR, Room O1-F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

- NRC's Blending of Low-Level Radioactive Waste Web site: The Final Report is available online, at <http://www.nrc.gov/waste/llw-disposal/llw-pa/llw-blending.html>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Stephen Lemont, Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; telephone: 301-415-5163; email: [Stephen.Lemont@nrc.gov](mailto:Stephen.Lemont@nrc.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Background Information**

In the Final Report, the NRC staff identifies and compares potential environmental impacts of six alternatives for managing low-level radioactive waste (LLRW) spent ion exchange resins (IERS) generated at commercial nuclear power plants (NPPs). This comparative environmental evaluation has been conducted consistent with Option 2 in the NRC staff's paper for the Commission, SECY-10-0043, "Blending of Low-Level Radioactive Waste," April 7, 2010 (ADAMS Accession No. ML090410246), which identified policy, safety, and regulatory issues associated with LLRW blending, provided options for an NRC blending position, and proposed that the NRC staff revise the Commission position on blending to be risk-informed and performance based. Option 2 of SECY-10-0043 was approved by the Commission in the October 13, 2010, Staff Requirements Memorandum, SRM-SECY-10-0043, "Staff Requirements—SECY-10-0043—Blending of Low-Level Radioactive Waste" (ADAMS Accession No. ML102861764) and instructed staff on addressing blending in the rulemaking setting; this is not a licensing action.

Additionally, in consideration of stakeholder concerns expressed regarding potential environmental impacts associated with the blending of certain LLRW, as documented in the NRC's Official Transcript of its January 14, 2010, "Public Meeting on Blending of Low-Level Radioactive Waste" (ADAMS Accession No. ML100220019), in SECY-10-0043, Option 2, the NRC staff also proposed that ". . . disposal of blended ion exchange resins from a central processing facility would be compared to direct disposal of the resins, onsite storage of certain wastes when disposal is not possible and further volume reduction of the Class B and C concentration resins." The Final Report addresses this comparison of IER waste handling alternatives. The six alternatives evaluated in the report include the four identified by the NRC

staff in SECY-10-0043, plus two additional alternatives that represent variations on the disposal of blended ion exchange resins from a central processing facility and volume reduction of the Class B and C concentration resins alternatives. The assumptions and methodologies used in the staff's evaluation and the evaluation results are documented in the report. Additional information regarding the Final Report is presented in the "Final Report Overview" section of this document.

On September 20, 2012 (77 FR 58416), the NRC staff published a notice in the **Federal Register** requesting public comments on the Draft Comparative Environmental Evaluation of Alternatives for Handling Low-Level Radioactive Waste Spent Ion Exchange Resins from Commercial Nuclear Power Plants (Draft Report) (ADAMS Accession No. ML12256A965). The 120-day public comment period ended on January 18, 2013. The NRC received comments from six commenters in response to the notice, including one governmental agency, four nongovernmental organizations, and one member of the general public. Appendix B of the Final Report presents all of the comments received and the staff's response to each of those comments. The Final Report has been prepared in consideration of all the comments received, and includes revisions to the Draft Report based on some of these comments.

#### **Final Report Overview**

In the comparative environmental evaluation presented in the Final Report, the alternatives are described and potential environmental impacts of the alternatives are: (1) Identified for a range of resource or impact areas (e.g., air quality, ecological resources, public and occupational health, transportation, waste management, water resources); and (2) compared in terms of their relative potential effects on human health and the environment. For reasons discussed in the report, the six alternatives are generic and not location-specific, and the comparative environmental evaluation of the alternatives is largely qualitative. An exception is that potential transportation impacts are assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Furthermore, the evaluation is based on conservative, often bounding assumptions regarding the alternatives and various aspects of the analysis. This approach is consistent with the assessment of generic, non-location-specific alternatives, for which exact data and information would not be