

SAVANNAH PRESBYTERY

"SERVANT OF THE CHURCHES"



July 3, 2000

The Honorable Roy Barnes
Governor of the State of Georgia
203 State Capitol Building
Atlanta, GA 30334

Sent by FAX to 404/657-7332

Dear Governor Barnes:

A recent story published in *Golden Isles Weekend* about the possible use of the untested Hotec HISTAR dry casks for spent nuclear fuel storage at Plant Hatch in Baxley is alarming.

According to the article, the untested storage will sit along the Altamaha River near prime agricultural areas, in a floodplain, an earthquake zone, and in a region ripe for hurricane damage. It is close enough for the potential damage to have a powerful impact on the water, air, and soil of south coastal Georgia.

The estimated emission of mrems from these outdoor "casks" is so disturbing, if accurate, that immediate investigation by your staff is warranted. It is hard to understand how the Southern Company can "manage" an estimated one million mrems from these casks when the EPA allows only 25 mrems per year at the site. It seems that both Georgia's people and environment are at risk.

It is unconscionable to think that experimental nuclear storage is being tested in a populated, ecologically sensitive area such as the great Altamaha River, within in reach of Georgia's Golden Isles. A regional nuclear dumping ground can not be the coastal Georgia passed on to the next generation.

We are replete with Superfund Sites as it is. We must not risk either the health of our citizens or further destruction of our environment.

Sincerely,

Merriam A. Bass, Staff Associate for Ecology

- c: Chairman Meserve, NRC - Washington, DC by fax
Luis Reyes, Regional Administrator, NRC - Atlanta, GA by fax
Representative Stephen Scarlett
State Senator Tommie Williams
US Senators Max Cleland and Paul Coverdale

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