

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Hanford
Oak Ridge

Idaho
Paducah

Nevada
Portsmouth

Northern New Mexico
Savannah River

September 30, 2014

Mark Whitney
Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy, EM-1
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Whitney:

Background

The Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) believes the fiscal year 2015 budget request is insufficient to meet the cleanup obligations facing the EM cleanup sites. We also believe that the Department of Energy (DOE) needs to honor the agreements and established milestones between the federal government, the states, Tribes and affected stakeholders in a more timely fashion.

How Underfunding Increases Cost and Risk

- Funding shortfalls increase the long-term cost of cleanup to the American taxpayers.
- Flat funding increases cleanup costs because it does not consider inflation or escalation of added costs.
- Continuing funding shortfalls result in the downward spiral of additional delays and more costs.
- Continued use of facilities past their design lives increases risk, as has been demonstrated by recent reports of leaking double shell tanks at the Hanford site.
- Loss of institutional knowledge inhibits cleanup efficiency and increases costs.

Cleanup Commitments Must Be Honored

The United States government is obligated to meet existing cleanup commitments and establish new commitments for cleanup in a timely fashion. At the larger sites, much of the low hanging fruit, the most easily completed work, is done. The remaining cleanup at these sites is more complex and will cost more money. This fact cannot be ignored. Some sites, such as Fernald and Rocky Flats, have completed all cleanup activities. Many remaining sites are facing the most difficult, risk laden, and expensive cleanup activities across the DOE EM complex. There are also sites, such as Paducah, whose end state metrics have yet to be established.

We believe these cleanup obligations must be met in real time, not delayed. Every year DOE needs to honor their current commitments by requesting all funding to support cleanup activities and milestones, and request funding for newly established milestones.

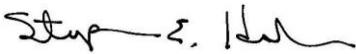
The EM SSAB, comprising about 200 people, is composed of eight regional citizens advisory boards from communities in Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee and Washington. We are cumulatively representative of a stakeholder population totaling millions of people who are affected by generator sites, transportation routes and disposal sites.

Recommendation

The EM SSAB requests that:

- DOE meet its cleanup obligations by requesting all annual funding required to support cleanup activities and milestones at each site we represent to complete committed cleanup activities, without delay.
- DOE expedite milestone establishment, and requests funds for those sites that do not have site end state cleanup milestones in place.


The EM SSAB requests that you share this recommendation with the Secretary of Energy.



Steve Hudson, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board



Herb Bohrer, Chair
Idaho National Laboratory
Site EM Citizens Advisory
Board



Kathleen Bienenstein, Chair
Nevada SSAB



Carlos Valdez, Chair
Northern New Mexico
Citizens' Advisory Board



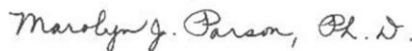
David Hemelright, Chair
Oak Ridge SSAB



Ben Peterson, Chair
Paducah Citizens
Advisory Board



William Henderson, Chair
Portsmouth SSAB



Marolyn Parson
Savannah River Site
Citizens' Advisory Board

cc: Kristen Ellis, EM-3.2
Dave Borak, EM-3.2