

**EM SSAB CHAIRS**  
**Bi-Monthly Conference Call**  
**December 2, 2010**

**Participants**

<i>Board</i>	<i>Chairs/Representatives</i>	<i>Site Support Staff</i>
Hanford	Susan Leckband, Shelley Cimon	Pamela McCann
Idaho	R.D. Maynard, Willie Preacher	
Nevada	Walt Wegst	Cindy Lockwood, Denise Rupp
Northern New Mexico	Ralph Phelps, Robert Gallegos	Lee Bishop, Ed Worth, Menice Santistevan
Oak Ridge	Kevin Westervelt	Pat Halsey, Spencer Gross, Pete Osborne
Paducah	Ralph Young	Eric Roberts
Portsmouth	Larry Parker, Richard Snyder	
Savannah River	Manuel Bettencourt	Gerri Flemming

**DOE-HQ Representatives:**

EM-52	Rick Schassburger
EM-41	Tish O’Conor
EM-42	Melissa Nielson, Cate Brennan, Michelle Hudson, Allison Clark
EM-60	Joann Luczak

**Opening Remarks**

Ms. Catherine Brennan, Designated Federal Officer for the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), called the meeting to order.

**Long-Term Stewardship**

Ms. Brennan introduced Ms. Tish O’Conor from the Office of Environmental Compliance to the Chairs. Ms. O’Conor is EM’s new Long-Term Stewardship (LTS) point of contact. Ms. O’Conor has a multitude of experience with cleanup issues and previously worked for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Legacy Management (LM). She expressed her interest in working with the EM SSAB Chairs on LTS issues going forward and invited them to contact her with questions. Ms. O’Conor can be reached at [letitia.o’conor@em.doe.gov](mailto:letitia.o’conor@em.doe.gov).

Mr. Manuel Bettencourt, Chair of the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board (SRS CAB), asked Ms. O’Conor to explain the meaning of the term “in perpetuity” as it pertains to the government’s responsibility and control of cleanup sites. He noted that it will be difficult for the government to control land in perpetuity and suggested that DOE explore ways to communicate risk to future generations, perhaps through a roadmap with geographic information systems. He

also suggested that DOE work with the Library of Congress and other organizations to ensure that there are records of the land and potential hazards stressing that the information needs to be widely distributed.

Ms. O'Connor agreed to look into the issue. Strategies for managing the land and nuclear hazards in perpetuity will change over time. She also noted that it is important to involve local organizations. When it comes to LTS and managing hazards, it is very important to layer controls, circulate the information, and stay current with technology. Ms. O'Connor agreed that some guidance would be beneficial, similar to processes used by utility companies (i.e. the Miss Utility hotline). She noted that EPA has performed a number of successful institutional control pilot projects that have involved the Miss Utility hotline.

Mr. R.D. Maynard, Chair of the Idaho National Laboratory Site Environmental Management Citizens Advisory Board (INL CAB), asked how LTS responsibilities are carried out at sites with ongoing missions. For example, even after EM completes its work at INL, the Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) will have a continuing mission at the site. Mr. Maynard asked if the responsibility for LTS would then transfer from EM to NE.

Ms. O'Connor agreed to look into that issue and brief the Chairs during the next bi-monthly conference call. She stated that there needs to be a smart transition between programs. In the past, when dealing with site closures at Fernald, Mound, and Rocky Flats, LM got involved three years prior to mission completion in order to preserve information and help make the transition smooth.

## **Budget Update**

Ms. Joann Luczak from the Office of Program Planning and Budget provided the Chairs with a budget update. She reported that the House recently passed legislation to keep the federal government operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) through December 18, 2010. At the time of the Chairs call, the measure was still with the Senate for consideration. The December 18 date, although fast approaching, may become a point of discussion in negotiations that are expected to ensue between the White House and the new membership in Congress. Ms. Luczak suggested that more information regarding funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 would be available closer to December 18. Note: Congress approved a new CR the week of December 20, 2010, providing funding for DOE through March 4, 2011, at the FY 2010 level.

Information regarding the FY 2012 budget remains embargoed. Ms. Luczak suggested that the changes in political leadership, proposed federal employee pay freeze, and state of the national deficit, are all issues that have the potential to impact final decisions for the FY 2012 President's Budget Request. Unfortunately, there may be push on the part of some members of Congress to look at discretionary programs as a source for making a majority of needed budget adjustments and cuts. Mandatory programs, such as those related to national defense and the military, may not be similarly impacted. Funding for the EM program is considered discretionary and therefore may be subject to potential budget adjustments and cuts. Finally, DOE in response to OMB's call for a 5% budget reduction tried to make the case that EM be afforded the same treatment as other national security organizations, like NNSA, and be exempt from this reduction; however, DOE was not successful.

Mr. Bettencourt opined that although EM's funding was discretionary, it seemed likely that the program would receive sufficient funding for maintaining safe operations.

Ms. Susan Leckband, Chair of the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB), remarked that the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) budget embargo process seemed to impede efforts to make the government more transparent.

Ms. Luczak explained that the embargo was an important mechanism that enabled OMB to perform analyses, weigh variables, and make decisions on a program-driven basis without the pressure of having to defend preliminary figures to the agencies, Congress, and the public. The President's budget will be rolled out on February 7, 2011. (Note: The roll out has since been pushed back to February 14, 2011.)

### **ARRA Update**

Mr. Rick Schassburger, from the Office of Small Site Completion provided the Chairs with an update on EM's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) activities. EM has obligated all of the Recovery Act funds, and \$3.32 billion of the \$6 billion total has been paid out for cleanup activities. EM is on track to spend 95% of the \$6 billion by the end of 2011. Regarding jobs, 10,500 FTEs have been created at 17 sites in 12 states. Of awarded contracts, more than \$1.6 billion of Recovery Act funds have gone to small business contractors, including about \$6 billion to prime contractors and about \$1 billion to subcontractors. To date, EM has achieved 212 square miles in footprint reduction and is on track to reduce the footprint of the total EM complex by 40% in 2011. EM is on track to meet all Recovery Act compliance milestones and has already met 23 of the 46.

Mr. Young asked if there was an exit strategy concerning the reduction in the workforce as the Recovery Act comes to an end.

Ms. Leckband asked for an estimate of how many jobs will be retained beyond 2011.

Mr. Schassburger took responses to these questions for action.

### **Discussion of Legacy Management's LTS&M conference**

Ms. Brennan noted that nine members from the EM SSAB attended LM's Long-Term Surveillance and Maintenance (LTS&M) conference in Grand Junction, Colorado. Mr. Ron Murphree of the Oak Ridge Site-Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) and Mr. Bob Suyama from the HAB represented the EM SSAB on one of the conference panels. Presentations from the conference are available online at [http://www.lm.doe.gov/ltsm\\_conference/index.htm](http://www.lm.doe.gov/ltsm_conference/index.htm).

Mr. Maynard shared his experience from the LTS&M conference and highlighted a number of presentations that he found particularly interesting, specifically those pertaining to EM closure sites, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licensing, and cleanup and LTS efforts in the United Kingdom. He also noted that he was disturbed by what he learned about the impacts of uranium mining on local populations in the former Soviet Union and the problems associated

with uranium mill tailings from the Monticello site in Utah. Overall, Mr. Maynard found the LTS&M conference very interesting.

Mr. Dick Snyder, Co-Chair of the Portsmouth Site-Specific Advisory Board (PORTS SSAB), concurred with Mr. Maynard's comments and added that the presentation on Natural Resource Damages Assessment and Restoration was very interesting and relevant to his site. He also highlighted LM's Geospatial Environmental Mapping System (GEMS), which helps to disseminate environmental monitoring information and data. More information on the GEMS program is available online at <http://gems.lm.doe.gov/imf/ext/gems/jsp/launch.jsp?verify=true>.

## **Around the Complex**

### Oak Ridge Site-Specific Advisory Board – Kevin Westervelt

- During the September 2010 ORSSAB meeting, members received a presentation on the Transuranic (TRU) Waste Processing Center. The presenter noted that it would be helpful for the Board members to learn more about how other sites handle TRU waste streams and make recommendations that could help streamline the greater certification process.
- The ORSSAB is considering two issues for near-term recommendations: 1) thorium extraction from Building 3019, which contains highly enriched medical isotopes; and 2) dedicated EM staff for LTS at sites with ongoing missions.
- Several members of the ORSSAB attended the LTS&M Conference in Grand Junction, Colorado. LTS continues to be a concern for the ORSSAB, and Ms. O'Connor has been invited to attend the Board's December Stewardship Committee meeting to further discuss the topic.
- The ORSSAB is in the process of launching a new member recruitment campaign and is reaching out to elected officials, organizations, the public at large and previous applicants to fill vacancies left by those members scheduled to rotate off of the Board.
- The ORSSAB has established a new standing committee dedicated to working with DOE-EM at Oak Ridge on budget prioritization issues. The new committee will hold its first meeting in January 2011.
- The ORSSAB will publish its 2010 Annual Report in January 2011. The next edition of the Board's *Advocate* newsletter will be published at that time as well.

### Portsmouth Site-Specific Advisory Board – Larry Parker

- The PORTS SSAB held a meeting on December 2, 2010, with the local Community Reuse Organization to discuss issues related to asset transitions and recycling. Several of the ARRA projects at Portsmouth generated scrap metal that could be reused.
- A large D&D contract was recently awarded at the Portsmouth site that will take several years to execute. The PORTS SSAB is very interested in the D&D work and will look into making recommendations related to the waste streams and new technologies.

### Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board – Manuel Bettencourt

- The ARRA projects at SRS have continued to progress without any major glitches.

- New officers will assume their positions in January 2011. The new SRS CAB Chair will be Donald Bridges and the new Vice Chair will be Judith Green. Members will elect new committee chairs during the January meeting.
- The SRS CAB is currently reviewing and updating its internal procedures.
- The latest edition of *Board Beat*, the SRS CAB's newsletter, was published in November 2010 and should be available online in the near future.

#### Hanford Advisory Board – Susan Leckband

- HAB members toured the Hanford site in October 2010 and were impressed by the impact of the ARRA Deactivation and Decommissioning projects. The members also identified some items that they hope will be preserved in a museum and will consider drafting advice to that effect.
- The HAB held a meeting on November 4-5, 2010, which resulted in three pieces of advice pertaining to 1) DOE's public involvement strategy and community relations plan; 2) comprehensive systems planning for treating tank waste and operating the Waste Treatment Plant; 3) Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis from the 105 KE Reactor decommissioning and removal.
- The HAB's committee-of-the-whole meeting on the topic of Tank Closure was rescheduled for January 2011 due to inclement weather. This meeting will be the first of several workshops on tank closure in preparation for the first closure milestone in 2019.
- HAB members are preparing for discussions regarding the Hanford RCRA site-wide permitting process. Committee of the whole and public meetings will be held in support of this topic as well. Additionally, the HAB's Budget Committee is preparing to hold public budget meetings.

#### Idaho National Laboratory Site Environmental Management Citizens Advisory Board – Willie Preacher

- The INL CAB held a retreat in September 2010 and submitted several recommendations to DOE. Additionally, the INL CAB recently welcomed new members.
- INL CAB members have continued to express concern regarding ARRA workforce transition and issues related to the Blue Ribbon Commission, and specifically calcine and sodium-bearing waste.
- Efforts continue at INL to reduce the EM program's footprint and ship remote-handled TRU waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

#### Nevada Site-Specific Advisory Board – Walt Wegst

- The Nevada Site-Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB) has reorganized itself into two committees, one focused on soils and one on industrial sites. Any remaining topics will be addressed by a committee of the whole.
- Membership on the NSSAB is down to 11 people. Therefore, the Board will mount a membership recruitment campaign in January.
- The NSSAB is in the process of reviewing the Board's Standard Operating Procedures and hopes to complete its review by March 2011.
- Planning for the April 12-14, 2011, EM SSAB Chairs meeting in Las Vegas is currently underway. The Chairs are encouraged to provide the NSSAB and planning committee with

input on agenda topics. The NSSAB hopes to make a registration site available to the Chairs on February 1, 2011. Feedback on the meeting agenda, site tour and reception possibilities should be sent to [NSSAB@nv.doe.gov](mailto:NSSAB@nv.doe.gov).

#### Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board – Ralph Phelps

- The Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB) held a meeting on November 17, 2010, to discuss Los Alamos National Laboratory's (LANL) annual environmental monitoring report for 2009.
- During the November 17 meeting, the NNMCAB also completed its annual CAB member survey, which is a requirement included in the Board's operating procedures.
- The New Mexico Environment Department recently approved LANL's RCRA permit, but denied the Lab's proposal for open-air burning of explosives, which is tied to national security programs. LANL is currently deciding whether to appeal that decision. Otherwise, the outcome of the permit process is consistent with LANL's expectations.

#### Paducah Citizens Advisory Board – Ralph Young

- The Paducah Citizens Advisory Board (Paducah CAB) recently participated in a public workshop regarding future use of the site. General consensus from the workshop indicates that the public favors using the site for nuclear facilities, given the existing infrastructure. Input from the workshop will be used to generate a formal report in February 2011.
- Next year, the Paducah CAB will begin focusing on issues related to establishing a CERCLA cell for waste disposal at the Paducah site.

#### **Closing Remarks**

Ms. Brennan thanked the participants for their time and adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm EST.