



Department of Energy

Oak Ridge Operations Office
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831—

April 1, 1998

Mr. William M. Pardue, Chair
Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management
Site Specific Advisory Board
222 Connors Circle
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

Dear Mr. Pardue:

RESPONSE TO THE OAK RIDGE RESERVATION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Reference is made to the following recommendations provided to the Department of Energy (DOE) from the Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board:

- 1) "Proposed Plan for Surface Impoundments Operable Unit, Waste Area Grouping 1, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee" dated July 9, 1997.
- 2) "End Use for the Surface Impoundment Operable Unit at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory" dated June 16, 1997.

The recommendations referenced above have been reviewed by my staff and I and found to be acceptable and applicable to decision making for the DOE Environmental Management cleanup program.

The Board's recommendation concerning the proposed plan and end use for the surface impoundment operable unit area generally agreed with DOE's preferred alternative of waste removal, treatment, and disposal of surface impoundment sediments. The Board's recommendation on the proposed plan stated that in order to create as few waste disposal areas as possible, the impoundment sediment should be transported to either an on-site waste management facility (provided that waste acceptance criteria for the facility could be met) or to the Nevada Test Site. A proposed plan was issued which my staff and I believe reflects the goals of:

- 1) reducing risks to human health and the environment,
- 2) eliminating releases of contaminated water to White Oak Creek; and
- 3) eliminating further contamination of groundwater and surrounding soil. It is our intent as we remediate the contaminated impoundment area to protect that area from recontamination. We believe this makes sense and should be assured in order to be effective in our cleanup

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approach to Bethel Valley. I signed a record of decision on September 16, 1997, which is consistent with the recommendations of the Board and calls for removal, treatment, and disposal of surface impoundment sediments.

As the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) decision-making process for the Bethel Valley watershed progresses, my staff and I look forward to discussing our plans and any exceptions to your recommendations should they come up.

I'd like to thank the Board for the time and effort spent providing these recommendations to the Department. This kind of input, early on in the CERCLA process has already proved to be invaluable to my staff as they work to evaluate the "community acceptance" aspects as part of the nine CERCLA evaluation criteria.

Sincerely,



Rodney R. Nelson
Assistant Manager for
Environmental Management

cc:

John Hankinson, USEPA Region 4
Earl Leming, TDEC
Karol Hazard, DOE/HQ
Susan Gawarecki, LOC
ORREMSSAB Members
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