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Savannah River Site
CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD
A U.S. Department of Energy Site-Specific Advisory Board

May 9, 2005

Mr. Charles E. Anderson, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Congratulations on your appointment as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. Although the SRS CAB will miss you greatly, we're excited for you, proud of your accomplishments, and of course wish you the best in your new assignment.

As you are aware, the EM Site Specific Advisory Board Chairs met last week in Augusta, Georgia. On behalf of the nine EM SSAB Chairs, I am transmitting the attached proposal for a National Stakeholder Workshop regarding waste disposition. A tremendous amount of effort was put forth to develop this proposal, and in response to Paul Golan's letter of April 22, 2005, we wanted to provide further details.

We strongly encourage the Department of Energy to consider this proposal for a national stakeholder workshop. As always your timely consideration is appreciated. We look forward to your continuing support and an enduring positive working relationship as you enter your new role with the Department.

Sincerely,

Jean Sulc
Chairman

cc: Sandra Waisley, DOE-HQ
Melissa Nielson, DOE-HQ
SSAB Chairs

Title: **National Stakeholder Workshop on Waste Disposition**

Objective:

To produce values, principles, priority-setting criteria and/or recommendations to guide common sense solutions to current and future waste disposition challenges.

Background:

In November of 2004, the DOE Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Chairs sent a letter to the Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (attached). This letter noted the increasing vulnerability of DOE's waste disposition assumptions.

The impacts of waste disposition barriers are on the increase and resulting in rising cleanup costs and delayed cleanup schedules. The National Research Council has noted these barriers in a report published in 2005, "Litigation over authority and agreements about waste disposition has left DOE's waste disposition program with substantial uncertainty concerning the path forward" (Page 4, Risk and Decision, National Research Council).

Examples of barriers include:

- Uncertainty associated with current deep geologic repository plans.
- Disposition path for pre-1970 transuranic waste.
- Multiple 'orphan' waste streams.
- Statutory and/or political barriers to waste disposition in individual states.

The Chairs recommended DOE sponsor a workshop to "produce technically sound, fiscally responsible, politically acceptable, sustainable, and comprehensive solutions to DOE's system-wide waste and material disposition challenges."

This is not a new or original idea. The need for such a workshop has been discussed in DOE's cleanup community for years. In the late1990's, the League of Women Voters recommended a similar workshop in conjunction with DOE developing a national material and waste management strategy. In its recent report on transuranic and high level wastes, the National Research Council recommended DOE "define the decisions-making process that will be acceptable to all parties" (p. 193, Risk and Decision, National Research Council).

In addition to the report cited above, DOE documents have recently noted rising concerns with disposition challenges and need for nationwide planning and discussion. For example, the SRS Draft End State Vision highlighted the challenges by stating, "EM cleanup baselines at multiple sites are at risk until a single DOE-wide integrated disposition plan for all nuclear materials and waste is established." The same report noted "Next Steps" as including, "Network with other DOE sites to develop and implement an integrated disposition plan for nuclear materials and waste."

It is in this context of rising concern over DOE's disposition challenges that the Chairs offer this outline of a process for the National Stakeholder Workshop on Waste Disposition.

Workshop Content

- The workshop should ensure an educational basis for participants from which discussions, values, principles and recommendations may flow. This educational basis can be reached by answering two questions: (1) Where is the waste and what are DOE's disposition plans for its waste streams? And, (2) What are the barriers to implementing these disposition plans?

Workshop Output/Product

- Ultimately, the workshop should lead to values, principles and/or recommendations guiding disposition decision-making. More specifically, this would involve:
    - Defining and prioritizing problems and issues throughout the DOE complex.
    - Recommending specific solutions if possible.
    - If specific solutions are not possible, recommending a path that will lead to resolution (e.g. further study, collection of data, etc.).
    - Defining process steps to lead to resolution of intractable problems.

Workshop Scope and Goals

The workshop should:

- Be independently organized and facilitated.
- Be funded by DOE.
- Involve a breadth of participants with a stake in DOE disposition decisions and yet remain sufficiently small to ensure productive meetings (approximately 100 participants).

Participant Roles

- The independent facilitation team should:
    - coordinate meetings and craft agendas with input from a steering committee and DOE.
    - determine meeting needs (number, locations, participants, etc.) with input from a steering committee and DOE.

- A subgroup of the SSAB Chairs should participate in the aforementioned steering committee.

- DOE should serve as a technical resource to ensure the workshop is based on the most recent, credible disposition information. This role will be particularly important given the need for education during the workshop.

Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board

Fernald	Nevada	Paducah
Hanford	Northern New Mexico	Rocky Flats
Idaho	Oak Ridge	Savannah River

November 30, 2004

Mr. Paul Golan
Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Subject: **National Stakeholder Forum on Waste Disposition**

Dear Mr. Golan:

The Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Chairs reviewed the status of waste disposition interdependencies among Department of Energy (DOE) EM sites during their October 2004 meeting. The Chairs identified several vulnerabilities in the existing waste disposition assumptions. Some examples include: the lack of a disposition path for pre-1970 transuranic waste and orphan waste and multiple legal barriers to shipping for treatment or disposal. These and other disposition challenges raise concerns of potential gridlock resulting in skyrocketing costs and completion delays throughout the DOE system.

Therefore, the undersigned boards recommend DOE sponsor a national forum by the end of Calendar Year 2005 to produce technically sound, fiscally responsible, politically acceptable, sustainable, and comprehensive solutions to DOE's system-wide waste and material disposition challenges. The forum should be administered and organized by an entity independent of DOE.

This forum should include broad participation by DOE, the National Governors Association, regulators, Tribal governments, SSABs, and stakeholders. The forum should focus on complex-wide waste disposition challenges, contingencies, assumptions, and requirements. Ultimately, the forum should result in principles, priority-setting criteria, and recommendations to guide common sense solutions to current and future waste disposition challenges.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and look forward to your written response.

Sincerely,

James C. Bierer, Chair
Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

Charles A. Phillips, Chair, Community Advisory Board for Nevada Test Site Programs

Bill Tanner, Chair, Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Citizens Advisory Board

Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

Timothy A. DeLong, Chair
Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board

Victor Holm, Chair
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

David Kipping, Chair, Idaho National Engineering & Environmental Laboratory Citizens Advisory Board

Kerry Trammell, Chair
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

Jean M. Sulc, Chair
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board

cc: Sandra Waisley, DOE