

**EM SSAB CHAIRS**  
**Bi-Monthly Conference Call**  
**March 24, 2011**

**Participants**

<i>Board</i>	<i>Chairs/Representatives</i>	<i>Site Support Staff</i>
Hanford	Susan Leckband	Paula Call, Pamela McCann
Idaho	R.D. Maynard	
Nevada	Walt Wegst	Kelly Snyder, Denise Rupp
Northern New Mexico	Ralph Phelps	Lee Bishop, Menice Santistevan
Oak Ridge	Kevin Westervelt	Pete Osborne
Paducah		Buz Smith, Eric Roberts
Portsmouth	Dick Snyder, Larry Parker	Julie Galloway, Cindy Lewis
Savannah River	Don Bridges	Erica Williams

**DOE-HQ Representatives:**

EM-42	Catherine Brennan, Allison Clark, Melissa Nielson
EM-43	Arnie Edelman
EM-61	Connie Flohr

**Opening Remarks**

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

**Greater-Than-Class-C Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

Mr. Arnie Edelman from the Office of Disposal Operations provided the Chairs with an update on the public hearing schedule for the Greater-Than-Class C (GTCC) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

EM has moved forward with public hearings for the GTCC draft EIS and sidebar meetings with local site-specific advisory boards and citizen groups associated with sites that have been selected as prospective disposal locations, i.e. Savannah River Site (SRS), Idaho, Nevada, Los Alamos, Hanford, and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant. The public hearings are scheduled to be held in the evening, from 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm, and will include Q&A sessions, DOE presentations, and public comment periods. Public comments will likely be limited to approximately 3-5 minutes per speaker, depending on the levels of attendance. Interested individuals and organizations are also encouraged to submit their comments in writing.

Mr. Edelman noted that his office has already briefed the Nevada Site-Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB) and was scheduled to hold a sidebar meeting with the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) in late March. His office has also extended offers to the local boards at Idaho, Northern New Mexico, and SRS for briefings as either sidebar meetings held in conjunction with the public hearings or teleconferences.

## Discussion

Dr. Walt Wegst, NSSAB Chair, commented that Christine Gelles, Director for the Office of Waste Disposal Operations, provided the board with an excellent presentation during their last meeting. He recommended that the other boards invite her to their meetings for a brief on the GTCC draft EIS as well.

Ms. Susan Leckband, HAB Chair, asked when the final EIS will be issued.

Mr. Edelman responded that the timeline for finalizing the document will depend on the volume of comments received, but the plan is for early 2012. He also explained that following publication of the final EIS in 2012, DOE will still need to await Congressional action and guidance before issuing a Record of Decision.

## **Spring 2011 Chairs' Meeting**

Dr. Wegst reported that preparations for the upcoming Chairs' meeting were proceeding on schedule and that both the tour and meeting agendas were finalized.

Ms. Leckband reported that the HAB submitted a letter to EM recommending that the program develop its own open government plan in line with the Obama administration's Open Government Directive. The idea would be for EM to have a lower-tier, program-specific document to reinforce the overarching principles of open communication and transparency. Although the HAB has already sent this piece of advice forward to the Assistant Secretary, it has proposed that the Chairs consider endorsing the recommendation as a work product during the upcoming public meeting. A response from EM to the HAB's original advice is currently in development.

Dr. Wegst stated that the NSSAB has developed a proposed work product for the Chairs' meeting as well. The draft recommendation asks DOE to review its disposition policy for clean, surplus items and to determine whether there is a mechanism for transferring those items to outside parties. For example, there are unused locomotives and other items at the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) that DOE will need to either bury or leave in the desert. Beatty, NV, would like to obtain those locomotives and put them on display in its parks, but there is no mechanism for funding transport from the site to the town. The NSSAB will share a written draft of the recommendation with the Chairs prior to the April meeting.

Ms. Brennan noted that in addition to the HAB and NSSAB proposals, the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB) has circulated a draft recommendation for the Chairs' consideration. The NNMCAB recommendation pertains to the use of rail transport for moving waste.

Mr. Don Bridges, Chair of the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (SRS CAB), suggested that the language in the NNMCAB's recommendation requiring concurrence of local communities prior to shipment be revised because formal concurrence could result in more red tape; the revised language should read more along the lines of "local communities be informed and involved" as opposed to concurrence. Mr. Ralph Phelps, NNMCAB Chair, commented that the intent of the

recommendation is to promote community involvement. The concurrence language is open to revision.

Mr. R.D. Maynard, Chair of the Idaho National Laboratory Site Environmental Management Citizens Advisory Board (INL CAB), noted that his board was concerned that the consequences of a rail accident are greater than those of a truck accident. Mr. Phelps responded that the NNM CAB discussed that issue when developing the recommendation. However, it came to the conclusion that although the consequences of a rail accident are higher, the probability of a rail accident is lower.

Ms. Brennan reminded the Chairs that their boards' submissions for the Top Three Issues presentation are due on March 25, 2011.

### **Budget Update**

Ms. Connie Flohr, Director for the Office of Budget, provided a status update on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, 2012, and 2013 budgets.

#### FY 2011

A Continuing Resolution (CR) for the FY 2011 budget has been extended until April 8, 2011. According to reports from the DOE Chief Financial Officer and the Office of Management and Budget, a year-long CR is currently under development and will hopefully be in place before the current CR expires, or shortly thereafter. However, DOE has started conducting analyses to identify essential federal and contractor staff in order to prepare for a possible lapse in appropriations.

#### FY 2012

EM is in the process of conducting staff briefings on the Hill and preparing testimony for the FY 2012 budget process. A number of Cleanup Caucus briefings have already been held and more are scheduled to take place before the end of March.

#### FY 2013

EM kicked off the FY 2013 budget process in February and has provided preliminary guidance to the field. The program will take a slightly different approach to the process this year in order to minimize the burden on both EM Headquarters (HQ) and the field. Specifically, sites will be asked to meet with HQ leadership to discuss their goals and strategies for the coming year and receive input from management before developing their Integrated Priority Lists (IPLs). The sites have also been encouraged to engage local stakeholders before submitting their IPLs and budget summaries to HQ in mid-May, at which point the information will become embargoed.

#### Discussion

Mr. Maynard asked whether the boards could make recommendations requesting funding levels that extend over a period of years, or whether they had to focus on funding requests that were year-specific.

Ms. Melissa Nielson, Director, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Accountability, explained that the boards could make recommendations to field management on what levels of funding they think are appropriate and which activities they believe to be the highest priorities. The rationale behind the boards' recommendations for more funding is arguably more important than the actual dollar amounts. She also reminded the Chairs that their boards could not lobby Congress for more funding on behalf of the EM SSAB. Any appeals to Congress must be made as private citizens.

Ms. Leckband asked for more insight regarding the need to embargo budget request information.

Ms. Flohr explained that the embargo rules help maintain a separation of government powers. Ms. Brennan added that the embargo helps define a workable budget process without creating a free-for-all.

## **Around the Complex**

### Portsmouth Site-Specific Advisory Board – Dick Snyder and Larry Parker

- Last year, the PORTS SSAB recommended that DOE increase opportunities for community involvement in site land use decisions. DOE responded by awarding a contract to Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, which has since conducted a number of phone surveys and public meetings throughout the counties surrounding the site. Overall the PORTS SSAB is pleased with the results and believes that DOE will have a good understanding of what the local community's vision is for the future of the site.
- Transition of the site's D&D contractor is underway. The estimated date for completion of the transition is March 28, 2011.

### Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board – Don Bridges

- The SRS CAB is scheduled to meet on March 28-29, 2011. The issue of H-Canyon's operability will likely be a major focus of the meeting.
- Eight new members have joined the SRS CAB.

### Hanford Advisory Board – Susan Leckband

- The HAB recently submitted three pieces of advice to DOE:
  - [Recommendation 240](#) – DOE Open Government Plan and Hanford Community Relations Plan
  - [Recommendation 241](#) – Medical Support Contractor
  - [Recommendation 242](#) – Preservation of Historical Properties and Artifacts
- DOE will hold a State of the Site meeting for the general public on March 31, 2011. The HAB plans to staff an exhibit at the meeting.
- A number of HAB members recently attended a day-long budget workshop hosted by DOE.
- Layoffs have begun with the site's major infrastructure contractor. An additional 1650 layoffs are planned at the site by the end of September, mostly from the contractor work at the Central Plateau.
- The HAB is concerned about turnover of Office of River Protection (ORP) leadership; the ORP manager position has changed three times in the past nine months.

- The HAB's Public Involvement Committee is currently focused on developing proposals to update the HAB website to make it more user-friendly.

Idaho National Laboratory Site Environmental Management Citizens Advisory Board – R.D. Maynard

- Elections were held during the INL CAB's last meeting. Mr. Willie Preacher was elected Chair and Ms. Nicki Karst was elected Vice Chair; their terms will begin in May.
- Workforce transition continues to be a major focus for the INL CAB. The site is currently experiencing layoffs resulting from the discontinuation of ARRA funding.

Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board – Walt Wegst

- During its last meeting, the NSSAB received an interesting presentation on the DOE 2013 budget and proposed budget scenarios in the event of a 25% reduction in funding.
- The NSSAB recently completed a membership drive and submitted eight appointment nominations to HQ for approval. The NSSAB's is currently down to nine members.

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board – Ralph Phelps

- The NNM CAB will hold its next meeting on March 30, 2011. Planned agenda topics include a FY 2011 and 2012 budget update from the site and a proposed recommendation regarding the prioritization of milestones in the consent order between DOE and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The Board is interested in whether there is a more efficient way to achieve the milestones without changing the completion date of 2015.
- The NNM CAB Chair and Vice Chair are scheduled to meet with Mr. David Martin, Secretary for NMED, to brief him on the board's functions and priorities.
- The NNM CAB has gained one new member, but also lost another who resigned. Overall, the members are very motivated to participate in board activities and have had the opportunity to attend various industry events throughout the country (i.e. Waste Management Symposium, Long-Term Surveillance and Monitoring Workshop, the Chairs meeting).
- The NNM CAB will host a Water Forum for Northern New Mexico on May 24, 2011. The forum will feature panelists from DOE, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), NMED, and the pueblo environmental departments.

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board – Kevin Westervelt

- In February, the ORSSAB helped EM organize a public workshop on budget prioritization. The workshop featured speakers from DOE, EPA, and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and attracted approximately 75 participants from the public.
- The ORSSAB recently formed a new standing committee – the EM Budget Prioritization Committee. Committee members are studying a tool developed by DOE Oak Ridge to model the impact of different funding and budget prioritization scenarios on site cleanup.
- The ORSSAB recently approved a bylaws amendment to increase its ceiling to 22 members and has submitted nominations for new appointments to HQ. There are a number of current ORSSAB members rotating off of the board.
- The ORSSAB passed two recommendations since the last Chairs' call:
  - [Recommendation 195](#) – Mitigation of Contamination in Bear Creek Burial Grounds

- [Recommendation 196](#) – Revised Recommendations on Alternatives to Memorialize the K-25 Building at East Tennessee Technology Park and Manhattan Project Exhibits in Oak Ridge
- The ORSSAB has redesigned its quarterly newsletter. The new and improved *Advocate* will debut in April 2011.

Paducah Citizens Advisory Board – Eric Roberts

- Paducah CAB members are actively involved in historic preservation and the creation of historical site documents such as videos, books, and other publications.
- Budget cuts and employment continue to be major topics for the board.

**Closing Remarks**

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