



Department of Energy

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JUN 29 2017

Mr. Robert Berry, Chair
Portsmouth EM Site Specific Advisory Board
1862 Shyville Road
Piketon, Ohio 45661

PPPO-03-3181741-17

Dear Mr. Berry:

RESPONSE TO PORTSMOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SITE SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS 15-05, 16-02, AND 17-01

References:

1. Letter from R. Berry to J. Bradburne, "RECOMMENDATION 17-01: Portsmouth (PORTS) Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Priorities for President's 2019 Budget Request," dated May 5, 2017
2. Letter from R. Berry to J. Bradburne, "RECOMMENDATION 16-02: Portsmouth (PORTS) Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Priorities for President's 2018 Budget Request," dated November 3, 2016
3. Letter from W. Henderson, II to J. Bradburne, "RECOMMENDATION 15-05: Portsmouth (PORTS) Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) recommends modification to Waste Disposition Record of Decision (ROD)," dated September 17, 2015

This correspondence is written in response to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) Portsmouth Site Specific Advisory Board (PORTS SSAB) Recommendations 15-05, 16-02, and 17-01.

DOE would like to thank the PORTS SSAB for its continuing input regarding the complicated issues of waste disposition and budget at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon, Ohio (PORTS). For many years, DOE, the PORTS SSAB, and other community groups have engaged in a dialogue regarding these important issues.

PORTS SSAB Recommendation 15-05 calls on the Department to modify the waste disposition Record of Decision (ROD) to have DOE commit to the SSAB's conditions for support. I have reviewed both RODs affecting the decommissioning and decontamination (D&D) activities at PORTS. Both RODs focus on reaching decisions on Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) remedial actions. As you are aware, the landfills have been determined, in accordance with Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), to require no further actions; therefore, they were not considered as part of either ROD. Similarly,

DOE has implemented remedial actions of the plumes in accordance with the 1989 Consent Decree; and therefore, were not included within the RODS.

The Waste Disposition ROD contemplates the use of engineered fill from site landfills and plumes. DOE has evaluated the beneficial use of landfill and plume materials to meet the required volume of fill material to mix with D&D debris that will be disposed of at the On-Site Waste Disposal Facility (OSWDF). This is known as the business case. DOE has received Headquarters (HQ) approval to utilize landfill and plume engineered fill in support of OSWDF operations. The site is incorporating this approach into the lifecycle baseline schedule and into the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 - FY 2023 Budget Field Request.

As DOE has previously stated, the conditions for support that were outlined in SSAB Recommendations 13-02 and 15-05 have been incorporated into the project's lifecycle baseline and the D&D contractor – Fluor-BWXT Portsmouth LLC (FBP) – has been given contract direction implementing the shared end state. Further, DOE provides the following in response to other community concerns raised in the Recommendations:

- No wastes from offsite locations will be disposed of in the OSWDF.
- The Waste Disposition ROD authorizes the use of contaminated soil (fill material) from the landfills and plumes within Perimeter Road, leading to the consolidation of those landfills and plumes in the OSWDF.
- Portsmouth's project baseline calls for the size reduction and segmentation of converters allowing for nickel recovery until recycling/reuse technologies can be further evaluated.
- The ROD does not permit disposal of DUF₆ material in any of its forms in the OSWDF and DOE will not dispose of this material in the OSWDF.
- Economic reuse of lands and facilities is considered in the prioritization, planning, and execution of the D&D Project within the funding constraints.

DOE rejects Recommendation 15-05 to modify the Waste Disposition ROD, however, as discussed above, existing authorizations, approvals, and budget requests make it clear DOE is executing the project in a manner that is consistent with the SSAB's recommendation.

PORTS SSAB Recommendations 16-02 and 17-01 are partially accepted. DOE agrees that a closure fund approach could be in the best interest of taxpayers while assisting the community in its reindustrialization initiatives.

Although DOE is unable to commit to the condition of consolidation of all landfills and plumes inside Perimeter Road into an OSWDF in either of the PB or WD RODs, it is our intent to do so. DOE's objectives are identified in the RODs and the project's lifecycle baseline.

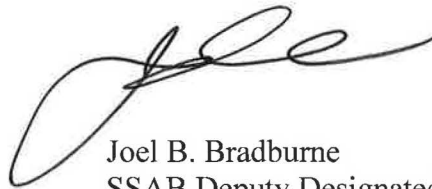
DOE understands the community's concern regarding the fluctuation of the uranium market, which has an impact on funding at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant based on the uranium transfer arrangement DOE has with FBP. DOE will continue to work with the Ohio delegation and other members of Congress to address concerns related to the Portsmouth site, including consideration of the board's desire to move forward with a closure fund approach and reduce the site's reliance on uranium transfer dollars.

As always, DOE will request from Congress that funding of sites across the DOE-EM complex be consistent with carrying out EM's mission, which is to complete the safe cleanup of the environmental legacy brought about from five decades of nuclear weapons development and government-sponsored nuclear energy research.

Again, DOE sincerely appreciates your volunteerism and looks forward to continuing to work with the board on these issues, providing updates relative to progress toward the desired end state, and other issues as the D&D project continues.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Greg Simonton at (740) 897-3737.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bradburne', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Joel B. Bradburne
SSAB Deputy Designated
Federal Official
Portsmouth Site Lead
Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office

cc:

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