



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

October 4, 2019

Dennis Wilson, Chair
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Thank you for your August 26 letter, providing the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) recommendations concerning improving the Office of Environmental Management's (EM) Science and Technology (S&T) Program. It is my understanding that the EM SSAB Chairs wish to respond to the National Academies of Sciences' (NAS) report, "Independent Assessment of Science and Technology for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Defense Environmental Cleanup Program" (2019), which assesses the success of the EM S&T program, a program that defines needs for near-term and out-year cleanup of radioactive material.

We appreciate the Chairs' engagement to ensure successful EM cleanup efforts. EM Headquarters has previously met with NAS representatives concerning this report. We were pleased to see that NAS, EM SSAB, and EM share a common interest with regard to the EM S&T program direction.

As we move forward with our EM Technology Development program, we plan to take the NAS and EM SSAB findings and recommendations into consideration. The first step taken to address the NAS and EM SSAB recommendations is understanding the current capital technology investment in the field. At this time, EM's Technology Development office at DOE-Headquarters is teaming with DOE-EM field offices to conduct an assessment of all technology development activities currently being sponsored, to determine if the projects are focused on addressing high-priority, near-term site needs. At the conclusion of each site review, recommendations will be made to the site office. In addition, we plan to host a meeting with the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to discuss their involvement and make a determination on a path forward.

We are also requesting the Environmental Management Advisory Board to review the NAS Report and provide their recommendations on how to best utilize our limited resources to realign the S&T Program.

Please note that DOE continues to conduct internal analyses and evaluations of breakthrough solutions with technical merit to reduce risk, schedule, and cost that address implementation of those recommendations posed by the EM SSAB on the NAS report.



Thank you for your continued support of EM's environmental cleanup mission. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. David Borak, EM SSAB Designated Federal Officer, at (202) 586-9928, or Mr. Kurt Gerdes, Director for Technology Development, at (301) 903-7289.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wm White", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William I. White
Senior Advisor for Environmental Management
to the Under Secretary for Science

cc: Jeff Griffin, EM-3
Kurt Gerdes, EM-3.2
Elizabeth Connell, EM-4
Linda Suttora EM-4.3 (Acting)
David Borak, EM-4.32