

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

CHAIRS MEETING RECOMMENDATION

October 30, 2019

Sun Valley, Idaho

Recommendation on Improving EM SSAB and Public Engagement in the DOE Environmental Management Budget Process

Each Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management (DOE-EM) site is unique in its stage of cleanup – some are smaller, some are closer to the end of their cleanup and some have decades to go. Because of the uniqueness, difference in size, complexity, Federal Facility Agreements and length of cleanup the level of budget detail needed by each board may be different.

The eight citizen advisory boards that make up the EM Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) that provide recommendations, advice and public perspectives to their local DOE-EM management believe that it is important to provide well-informed and timely recommendations, advice and comments regarding priorities at their sites. In order to do that they need to have an adequate level of priority planning detail provided in time to deliberate, develop and transmit timely recommendations to their respective local DOE-EM management. Consideration of our recommendations while the local EM offices are developing their priorities and budget requests and prior to local offices transmitting their priorities and budget request to DOE-EM HQ is in the spirit of transparency and collaboration.

The EM SSAB recommends:

1. DOE engage the local boards that make up the EM SSAB in the December-January-February timeframe in the budget process to ensure adequate time for the boards to be able to provide informed advice/recommendations for submittal to their local DOE EM management for review and consideration as local priorities and budget requests are being developed.
2. Local EM site offices work with their advisory board early in the December-January-February timeframe to identify the level of priority and budget detail that each Board needs to discuss and develop informed

advice/recommendations in time for DOE consideration as they develop their budget request submittal to DOE-EM HQ. For larger sites with multiple cleanup actions the detail should include an integrated priority planning list that identifies those cleanup activities that would be delayed if funding levels are not sufficient or if unplanned/emerging issues must be addressed.

3. DOE-EM HQ relay to the local EM offices whatever guidance is required in the December-January-February timeframe to ensure that the information local advisory boards need in order to understand and develop priorities and budget advice, recommendations are submitted to local EM management for review and consideration prior to their budget request submittal to HQ deadlines.

Who We Are

The EM SSAB is the DOE-EM's most effective vehicle for fostering two-way communication between DOE-EM and the communities it serves. The EM program is the world's largest environmental cleanup program, and the EM SSAB its only citizen advisory board. For more than 20 years, the volunteer citizens of the EM SSAB have partnered with EM officials at both the local and national levels to ensure that the public has a meaningful voice in cleanup decisions.

Public participation is required/recommended as part of a number of environmental regulations. It is also good business practice, resulting in better decisions that often result in improved cleanup. Over the past two decades, EM SSAB members have volunteered over 48,000 hours of their time and submitted to EM officials over 1500 recommendations, 88% of which have been fully or partially implemented, resulting in improved cleanup decisions.

The EM SSAB comprises approximately 200 people from communities in Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee and Washington. The Board is cumulatively representative of a stakeholder population totaling millions of people who are affected by generator sites, transportation routes and disposal sites. As we move forward, the EM SSAB welcomes the opportunity to highlight the value of this unique volunteer board and discuss its priorities during the months and years ahead.