



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

November 2, 2022

Mr. Leon Shields  
Chair  
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board  
P.O. Box 2001, EM-942  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831

Dear Mr. Shields:

Thank you for your June 30, 2022, letter, and the compilation of guiding principles for stakeholder communication developed by the Chairs of the Environmental Management (EM) Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB). I support your recommendations. Enhancing engagement with stakeholders at all levels is a top priority for EM. I appreciate your extensive work and detailed, actionable recommendations on this topic.

I shared the *EM SSAB Expectations and Guiding Principles for Stakeholder Communication* document with my staff and asked them to consider how the information you provided could inform our communication practices and products, including future iterations of the EM Strategic Vision. Like safety, good communication relies on a commitment to continuous improvement, and we will work toward this goal with the aid of your input. Below are a few examples of how we plan to implement your recommendations.

Several of your recommendations encourage EM to reduce technical jargon when communicating with the public. We strive for this in all our activities. Our Office of Communications recently conducted a training on Plain Language for communications officials and produced a guidance document to share with the field offices. We will continue to review our webpages and outreach materials to identify opportunities for replacing complex technical descriptions with language that is clear, concise, and specific.

Your recommendations on the EM Strategic Vision will inform development of the next iteration of this important publication. We will seek opportunities to increase stakeholder participation as we update the Strategic Vision, including hosting a webinar to share programmatic goals, provide information on EM successes, roadblocks, or course changes, and discuss how we establish our priorities.

Your support for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and workforce development in your recommendations reflect a shared priority for both EM and the Department of Energy. We are implementing internship programs and recruitment activities at colleges and universities, including Minority Serving Institutions

to strengthen the pipeline of new and diverse talent for the next generation workforce required to complete the EM mission.

Lastly, several of your recommendations pertained to local boards operations, ensuring that members are meaningfully engaged and equipped to provide sites with informed advice. We plan to explore these issues, and particularly the topics of new member orientation and work plan development, at an upcoming workshop for Headquarters and field site advisory board staff. Please keep in mind that the EM SSAB is one of many FACA committees managed by the Department and some committee operating processes and initiatives may involve Department-wide considerations.

I appreciate the work of the Chairs and the EM SSAB. Thank you for your recommendations, and the volunteer hours spent gathering and consolidating this information.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Ms. Kelly Snyder, the EM SSAB Designated Federal Officer (DFO), at (702) 918-6715 or [kelly.snyder@em.doe.gov](mailto:kelly.snyder@em.doe.gov).

Sincerely,



William I. White  
Senior Advisor for Environmental Management

cc: Melyssa Noe, Alternate Deputy DFO  
Candice Robertson, EM-2 (Acting)  
John Mullis, EM-4 (Acting)  
Kristen Ellis, EM-4.3  
Joceline Nahigian, EM-4.32  
Kelly Snyder, EM-4.32