



Citizens Advisory Board
Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory

USE OF VIDEO CONFERENCING FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

INTRODUCTION

Individual members of the Citizens Advisory Board to the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory have participated in and provided testimony at various public hearings held around the State on numerous issues and publications. The Department of Energy and the U.S. Navy also have interest in public participation and input regarding topics of individual and mutual interest to their organizations, as well as to the State of Idaho and the citizenry of the State.

It was suggested during the public comment period of the January CAB meeting that the use of interactive video conferencing throughout the state could broaden public access and input in the INEEL decision making process. The Board very much appreciates this interest expressed by the public groups and individuals in the proceedings of the Advisory Board and offers the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

The current state of communication technology is sufficiently advanced to allow the use of interactive video conferencing on topics of state-wide significance to be transmitted to multiple sites throughout the state. Idaho's universities and colleges typically have the requisite capabilities to accomplish such simultaneous statewide participation. The geographic distribution of the CAB members around the state would also allow facilitation and local leadership at each teleconference site. It is believed that considerable additional participation could be attained in this manner without greatly increasing the costs. This recommendation is based in part on the limited participation opportunities provided to the public by the single Idaho hearing regarding the Waste Isolation Pilot Project Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, a matter of great significance to the citizens of Idaho.

The Board recommends that DOE-ID evaluate and consider the use of this technology for future public hearings of state-wide significance.