



Citizens Advisory Board
Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory

**Public Involvement to Support Priority Setting for the
Expedited Cleanup Account at the
Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory**

The Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) is currently reviewing the Department of Energy (DOE)'s Fiscal Year 2003 Budget Request, the Environmental Management Top-to-Bottom Review, and information regarding the proposed Expedited Cleanup Account.

The INEEL CAB supports the Department's renewed thrust within the Environmental Management (EM) program to focus on and accelerate cleanup of contamination that poses the highest risks to workers, the public, and the environment. We believe the Expedited Cleanup Account approach has significant merit.

The past history of EM activities and the multitude of regulatory and environmental concerns have led to various consent orders, settlement agreements, and records of decision. These commitments have contributed to significant public expectations involving end states, milestones, and timetables for accomplishment under the INEEL cleanup program.

The INEEL CAB recommends that DOE's Idaho Operations Office (DOE-ID) begin immediately to implement the DOE-Headquarters plan to conduct a series of workshops involving stakeholders, communities, regulators, and elected officials to refocus DOE-ID's EM efforts. We note that the plan neglected to include specific mention of tribes, and suggest that DOE-ID involve the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in the workshops. The workshops should allow full participation of the citizens of Idaho. Public meetings throughout the state should emphasize discussion of the risks at INEEL, the current status of cleanup activities, and which cleanup projects might benefit from acceleration. The goal is to determine which cleanup projects are the most urgent and important for reducing risks at INEEL. Those projects should be candidates for funding under the Expedited Cleanup Account.

The INEEL CAB recommends that the public involvement program be completed in a timely fashion, and not delay DOE-ID's application for Accelerated Cleanup funding. We note that other sites, such as Savannah River and Hanford are well along in submitting their applications for funding.

The INEEL CAB further recommends that any presenters at the public workshops clearly state what they want the public to comment on. For the meetings to be productive, worksheets, assessments, and supporting documents should be made available beforehand and at the beginning of the meeting. Members of the public can mark up the worksheets, which would be collected and tabulated after the meetings.