



11-CAB-008

## INL Site Environmental Management

July 21, 2011

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Mr. David Huizenga  
Assistant Secretary Environmental Management  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Huizenga:

We appreciate Frank Marcinowski's reply to our February 18, 2011, letter recommending an increase to Idaho National Laboratory (INL) funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012. We understand and are sensitive to the budgetary constraints Environmental Management (EM) faces in FY 2012.

With that said, we would like to respectfully voice our concerns regarding the reduced funding levels proposed by the Department of Energy (DOE) for FY 2012 and beyond. We feel that the planned \$66 million reduction in the INL budget from the FY 2010 level will increase the risks of failing to achieve the DOE-Idaho's goals for reducing the overall footprint and environmental risks.

Maintaining funding at INL's proposed \$460 million in FYs 2012-2015 would avoid future cost increases and facilitate full utilization of the current highly skilled workforce and allow DOE the opportunity to realize the 2015 vision of early closure and its associated long-term cost savings.

At a proposed funding level of only \$403 million, further workforce reductions will make it difficult to retain the current skilled workforce. This will ultimately delay completion of essential projects, such as capping the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center tank farm, capping the Subsurface Disposal Area, decontamination and decommissioning of the DOE-Nuclear Energy liabilities agreed to in the February 2009 Memorandum of Agreement, and completion of the Accelerated Retrieval Project.

This reduced funding level could adversely affect timely completion of the critical missions to treat the sodium bearing waste and the calcine waste and prepare both for transportation out of Idaho as required by the 1995 Settlement Agreement.

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Reinstatement of the requested funding would position Idaho to lead in EM's "Journey to Excellence" for footprint reduction, protection of the Snake River aquifer, and minimization of life-cycle cleanup costs.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Preacher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a long, sweeping underline.

Willie Preacher  
Chair

cc: Senator Mike Crapo  
Senator Jim Risch  
Congressman Mike Simpson  
Rick Provencher, DOE-ID  
Jim Cooper, DOE-ID  
Bob Pence, DOE-ID  
Cate Brennan, DOE