

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

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**Northern New Mexico
Savannah River**

February 27, 2013

Mr. David Huizenga
Senior Advisor for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy, EM-1
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Huizenga:

The Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) has noted with considerable interest and support that the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) has been remarkably successful in disposing of transuranic waste (TRU) throughout the Department of Energy (DOE) complex for approximately 10 years. The success of the TRU waste program is among DOE's most notable achievements during this time frame.

The EM SSAB is also aware that the mission of WIPP is being assessed for possible expansion to include disposal of some surplus plutonium from defense programs weapons production activities and certain other nuclear waste such as Greater-Than-Class-C Waste from Nuclear Regulatory Commission-related programs.

The success and activity of the WIPP program represents an opportunity for DOE to make still further progress in addressing some of DOE's legacy waste streams.

The EM SSAB encourages DOE to evaluate additional storage and disposal options for DOE legacy waste that could result from an expansion of the WIPP disposal mission.

For example, one specific test program that would support this concept involves shipment of a small number of Savannah River Site (SRS) Defense Waste Processing Facility Canisters from SRS to WIPP for storage and evaluation for disposal. Such a test program would permit DOE to evaluate significant issues in DOE's complex-wide high-level waste disposition program such as:

- Shipment container development issues
- Packaging and shipment/receipt issues for both the shipper and the receiver
- Other transportation issues
- Dealing with consent-based approvals

It is the intent of this test program to provide valuable input and to serve as a precursor for the DOE program for the disposal of DOE's high-level waste.



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cc: Melissa Nielson, EM-3.2
Catherine Alexander, EM-3.2