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Recommendation 18-01

January 11, 2018

RECOMMENDATION 18-01: Portsmouth (PORTS) Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Priorities for President's 2019 Budget Request

BACKGROUND: In recent years, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) has requested input from advisory boards across the EM complex regarding community priorities as site budgets are formulated.

The PORTS EM SSAB recognizes that each community has a unique set of circumstances to consider when establishing priorities for large-scale projects. The circumstances surrounding the Portsmouth site, located in an economically depressed area of Appalachia, is an economic climate with high unemployment. Therefore, the focus for the PORTS EM SSAB is on workforce continuity, job creation, a local workforce development and training program that will prepare the next generation workforce for the energy and environmental technology industry. Our community is full of capable, dedicated professionals who understand our challenges and look for innovative ways to work with government and the private sector to improve the standard of living for people here.

The PORTS EM SSAB emphatically supports funding for the Portsmouth decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) project to maintain the current employment levels and complete activities that will result in an end state that provides land and buildings and maintains site infrastructure for reindustrialization to ensure workforce stability during and after the D&D project. It is with confidence, and these critical circumstances for the Portsmouth site in mind, that the PORTS EM SSAB makes the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: The PORTS EM SSAB recommends DOE move forward on a closure fund site approach for the Portsmouth site as has been executed at other DOE sites. The Portsmouth site does not have extraordinary technical and environmental challenges. The threat to our D&D Project is one of stability based on potentially inconsistent funding levels, partly as a result of the reliance on uranium barter proceeds. The uranium barter proceeds have supplanted more than \$1B in funding for the PORTS D&D project and allowed the U.S. Congress to appropriate more than \$1B of taxpayer dollars that would have otherwise funded the PORTS D&D project to other sites in the complex.

By establishing Portsmouth as a closure fund site, the D&D project can move forward with certainty and more efficiency. This approach proved to be successful at the Fernald, and Mound facilities in southwest Ohio, and Rocky Flats in Colorado. The PORTS EM SSAB believes history shows the closure fund site approach will be successful at the Portsmouth site.

In addition to the closure fund approval, priorities for the PORTS EM SSAB community are listed below:

- Recover and recycle the nickel from all converters. We applaud DOE for its progress on segmentation activities and we look forward to those efforts continuing.
- Maintain and update infrastructure to support future reindustrialization. We recognize the collaborative efforts between DOE and the Portsmouth Community Reuse Organization, the Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative (SODI), including communication on infrastructure planning to best position the community for future economic success.
- Transfer property and establish utility use agreements between DOE and SODI to make property and utilities available to SODI for potential development. We want to thank DOE for its efforts related to Parcel 1 and believe it can be a catalyst for reindustrialization.
- Establish a robust robotics laboratory on or adjacent to the Portsmouth Site. The Portsmouth Site has shown it can be an excellent research and development venue in the area of robotics and a robotic laboratory would be a mutually-beneficial endeavor that could have complex-wide benefits and be a catalyst for the type of development that could assist in our redevelopment aspirations.
- Continue recycling efforts through the DOE-SODI Asset Transition Agreement. This program is providing SODI necessary resources to operate and continue its site repurposing activities.
- Support future workforce development and training programs that will prepare the next generation workforce for the D&D project, the region's energy and environmental technology industry, and future reindustrialization of the site.

The PORTS EM Board would like to thank DOE for soliciting this input. The value of the SSAB program and all programs where public engagement occurs is significant as evidenced by numerous examples across the EM complex of how communications with the public have benefitted DOE and stakeholders alike.

Thank you for your attention to the Portsmouth D&D project and recognizing its importance to southern Ohio.