



*A U.S. Department of Energy
Site-Specific Advisory Board*

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May 22, 2023

Mr. Michael Mikolanis, Manager
Environmental Management Los Alamos Field Office
1200 Trinity Drive, Suite 400
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Dear Mr. Mikolanis,

I am pleased to enclose Recommendation 2023-03 "DOE Response, Implementation and Reporting on NNMCAB Recommendations," which was unanimously approved by the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board during its meeting on May 17, 2023.

Please contact me if you have questions regarding this recommendation. We look forward to the response from the Department of Energy.

Sincerely,

Cherylin Atcitty
Chair, NNMCAB

Enclosure: a/s

Cc w/encl:

U. S. Senator Ben R. Lujan

U. S. Senator Martin Heinrich

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NNMCAB File

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**NORTHERN NEW MEXICO CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD
CONSENT ORDER SUBCOMMITTEE**

Recommendation to the Department of Energy

No. 2023-03

Title: DOE Response, Implementation and Reporting on NNM CAB Recommendations

Drafted By: Mark R. Hayden

Background

The Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board (NNMCAB) is chartered to give stakeholder input on the cleanup program of legacy waste at Los Alamos National Laboratory through public outreach and recommendations to the Department of Energy (DOE). It is not known if or how these recommendations are manifested, and DOE and the Environmental Management DOE Field Office in Los Alamos (EM-LA) are not required to implement and report on NNM CAB recommendations. This recommendation asks that annual reporting take place for each recommendation so the public and the NNM CAB are informed of action taken and reasons for those actions. A similar national Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) recommendation was presented to the Site-Specific Advisory Boards and DOE Senior Advisor Mr. William "Ike" White in March 2023. The EM SSAB encouraged all advisory boards to adopt the recommendation and to propose similar recommendations within our respective Boards.

The NNM CAB provides EM-LA with advice and recommendations concerning issues affecting clean up at Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL) regarding public health and safety. The NNM CAB has made annual recommendations, but EM-LA has not always responded, implemented nor reported on the status of past NNM CAB recommendations. The recommendation process includes three parts: (1) the NNM CAB recommendation, (2) the DOE response to the NNM CAB recommendation, and (3) the final policy action or implementation of the NNM CAB recommendation by DOE. While parts of the recommendation process may occur at different times, sometimes years after or not at all, no annual accounting of the NNM CAB recommendations is required.

It is important to review the implementation of recommendations for several reasons:

1. Ensuring accountability: Recommendation implementation reviews help ensure that DOE is held accountable for the advice it requests and/or receives from its volunteer Board members. By examining whether recommendations have been implemented as written, NNM CAB can assess how its efforts are valued and identify areas where further deliberations and recommendations are needed.
2. Improving effectiveness: Recommendation reviews provide an opportunity to assess whether recommended activities are working as intended and identify areas for improvement. By examining the results of recommendation implementation, the NNM CAB and DOE can make adjustments to recommended activities to ensure they achieve their intended goals.
3. Enhancing transparency: Reviews of recommendation implementation increase transparency by providing a clear understanding of how recommendations are being implemented and the outcomes they are producing. This transparency is critical for building trust in DOE and ensuring that the public has confidence in DOE and its clean-up activities.

- 46 4. Promoting learning: Recommendation implementation reviews provide an opportunity for the
47 NNM CAB and DOE to learn from their experiences and identify best practices for making and
48 implementing recommendations. By sharing these best practices, the NNM CAB and DOE can
49 promote more effective and efficient recommendations and implementation.
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51 **NNMCAB Recommendations:**

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- 53 1. DOE provide clear and publicly accessible information regarding implementation of NNM CAB
54 recommendations for the last five years. In addition to a clear statement about implementation
55 status (e.g., "Implementation of the recommendation is complete (or "ongoing", "suspended", or
56 "discontinued"), the information should include an explanation of any deviations from the DOE
57 response to the recommendation. The requested annual status report shall include an explanation
58 why a recommendation is not implemented or only implemented in part.
 - 59 2. DOE report to the EM SSAB at least annually a summary of the status of all EM SSAB Chairs
60 recommendation items and any recommendation action item completed during the reporting
61 period. (This would be a Headquarters function, coming from EM-1.)
 - 62 3. The NNM CAB recommends an annual summary of recommendations for use by the general
63 public and should be drafted in layman's terms for ease of understanding.
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65 **Intent**

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67 It is the intent of the NNM CAB to promote meaningful reporting for the public, provide a public
68 overview of recommendations, accomplishments and strengthening the sense of cooperative progress by
69 the State of New Mexico and DOE toward cleanup completion. To enhance public outreach, the
70 NNM CAB is recommending the formal scheduling of public outreach meetings regarding the annual
71 summary of recommendations along with their status and providing the projected year's meeting
72 schedule at the start of each fiscal year, for increased public participation.
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75 **References**

- 76 1. EM SSAB recommendation to the DOE addressed to DOE Senior Advisor Mr. William "Ike" White
77 in March 2023 in Washington, DC at the annual CAB Chairs Meeting.