

REPORT: EM Energy Park Initiative

March 31, 2010

Background:

As cleanup and decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) efforts continue throughout the Environmental Management (EM) complex, the sites will have opportunities to make their assets available for future uses and development. Among many of the potential opportunities is the reutilization of EM site resources and human capital for the development of energy parks.

National energy policy has become an increasingly high-visibility focus for many stakeholders, including those in close proximity to EM sites. Pursuing the reutilization of EM assets and development of energy parks would help support national and local energy policy objectives. Additionally, these endeavors have the potential to help local communities further develop their economies and create jobs for local citizens, including those who previously supported EM work on the sites and are looking to utilize highly-refined technical skills.

Findings and Observations:

During the September 30, 2009, Environmental Management Advisory Board (EMAB) public meeting, the Energy Park Initiative (EPI) Subcommittee received presentations from EM management on the evolution of the EPI concept over the previous six months. At that time, EMAB recommended that EM encourage the Secretary of Energy to issue a memorandum convening an interdepartmental taskforce to facilitate the coordination of other Departmental program offices who are also stakeholders in the EPI concept (EMAB Recommendation 2009-08). The Board also suggested that EM reach out to colleagues in the various technology organizations of DOE to discuss further the prospects of the EPI.

On February 17, 2010, the EPI Subcommittee held a conference call with Mark Gilbertson, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program and Site Support, and James Antizzo from the Office of D&D and Facility Engineering. Mr. Gilbertson and Mr. Antizzo reviewed in detail many of the meetings and conversations that had taken place since EMAB issued recommendation 2009-08. In that time, EM implemented the recommendation, met with the Undersecretary's office to discuss the EPI, and found that her staff supports intra-department coordination. EM also held meetings with several other DOE program offices that showed support for EPI, including the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), the Office of Nuclear Energy (NE), and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). During those meetings, it was communicated that in order for the EPI concept to move forward, EM would need leadership from the sites and their respective communities, as well as other areas of DOE.

Based on the discussion the EPI Subcommittee had with Mr. Gilbertson and Mr. Antizzo, it is clear that EM's mandate is to focus on legacy waste clean-up, and not to lead the development of new energy resources. Therefore, in order for the EPI concept to move forward, some combination of other DOE program offices (ex: EERE, NE, etc.) along with the field sites and their respective communities will need to take the lead. That being said, the EPI Subcommittee

believes that EM still has an important role in the implementation and success of the EPI concept. The sites' land, facilities, infrastructure, workforce, and other assets can only be made available for reutilization and EPI possibilities through the reduction of EM's footprint and the completion of cleanup.

Recommendations:

To further aid the Assistant Secretary in her efforts to implement the Energy Park Initiative, the EPI Subcommittee offers the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2010-01: EM should conduct a survey of physical assets that are currently available or could become available for EPI development in the next few years at its various sites, and make that survey available to the public and to other DOE program offices.

Although development of new energy resources would need to be led by the sites, local communities, and/or other DOE program offices, a clear layout of EM's available physical assets, under current D&D plans, would be very helpful to stakeholders and other interested parties as they begin to review future use options and potential Energy Parks.