



## *Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB)*

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### **Full Board Virtual Meeting**

**4:00 p.m. – November 18, 2020**

- Members Present:** Gail Alexander, Frank Bonesteel (Chair), William DeWitt, William Dolan, Karen Eastman, Gary Elgort, Charles Fullen, Anthony Graham, Mark Hilton, Bruce Jabbour, Ronald Korner, James Moldenhauer, Dan Peterson, Janice Six, Richard Stephans, Favil West, Dina Williamson-Erdag
- Liaisons Present:** Chris Andres (State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection [NDEP]), Richard Friese, (U.S. National Park Service [NPS]), Phil Klevorick (Clark County), Patrick Lazenby (Nye County Emergency Management [NCEM]), Darrell Lacy (Nye County Nuclear Waste Repository Project Office [NWRPO])
- Liaisons Absent:** Richard Arnold (Consolidated Group of Tribes and Organizations [CGTO]), Jared Brackenbury (Lincoln County Commission), Leo Blundo (Nye County Commission), Delon Winsor (Esmeralda County Commission)
- Department of Energy (DOE):** **Environmental Management (EM) Nevada Program:** Robert Boehlecke (Deputy Designated Federal Officer [DDFO]), Tiffany Gamero, Catherine Hampton, Kelly Snyder (Designated Federal Officer [DFO]), Bill Wilborn  
**National Nuclear Security Administration/Nevada Field Office (NNSA/NFO):** Darwin Morgan
- Government Contractor:** **Navarro:** Michelle French, Dona Merritt, Christy Morris, Patty Neese, Ari Rosenberg, Jesse Sleezer, and Barbara Ulmer

## **Open Meeting/Chair's Opening Remarks**

Chair Frank Bonesteel thanked everyone for attending the meeting with a special welcome to the new members. He informed the Board of the passing of Vice-Chair Dick Gardner and the resignation of Member Tanya Henderson as she recently moved to Colorado. Following the Chair's opening remarks, Member Richard Stephans moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **Written Public Comment Read into Record**

There was no written public comment.

## **Liaison Updates**

### **Clark County** (*Phil Klevorick*)

Liaison Phil Klevorick welcomed the new members to the NSSAB and introduced himself as the Program Manager for the Clark County Nuclear Waste Division for over 14 years with 11 of those years as an NSSAB Liaison. He reported that he participated in a virtual meeting the last two days for the annual DOE EM HQ Intergovernmental Meeting.

### **NCEM** (*Patrick Lazenby*)

Liaison Patrick Lazenby had nothing new to report as COVID-19 continues to be the focus.

### **NWRPO** (*Darrell Lacy*)

Liaison Darrell Lacy introduced himself to the new members as the Director for NWRPO. He noted that Liaison John Klenke normally attends the NSSAB meetings on behalf of the NWRPO. Per directives from the State of Nevada, the county has decreased its office hours and employees are working from home when possible. Since June 2020, the county offices had been open, but recently limited their direct interactions with the public until after Thanksgiving.

### **NDEP** (*Christine Andres*)

Liaison Christine Andres updated that she also participated in the DOE EM HQ Intergovernmental Meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for six organizations to discuss issues with DOE that are pertinent to all involved. She reiterated from past meetings that NDEP's workload has not decreased during the pandemic, which is a testament to the EM Nevada Program staff as they continue to make progress on a number of activities. Liaison Andres signed the closure report letter for the Yucca Flat groundwater area, which is a big milestone that three of the four groundwater areas are in closure. The last groundwater area, Pahute Mesa, is undergoing investigation for closure. In response to the Y-12 incident from July 2019, Liaison Andres concluded that a subgroup has been meeting regularly to develop a mutual consent agreement to make improvements for waste management at the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS).

### **NPS** (*Richard Friese*)

Liaison Richard Friese provided the following written update: At Death Valley National Park (DVNP), 2020 was an extremely hot summer, which saw the second highest ever recorded temperature at Furnace Creek of 130F. The month of August was the second hottest August ever, and a record for the highest September temperature was set at 125F. Visitation was very low through the summer months. This was not due to soaring temperatures, but because COVID-19 had discouraged foreign travel; however, there are early indications for a very busy fall/winter

season. Over the longer term, park visitation has skyrocketed, doubling in the last ten years. There has been a lot of progress at Scotty's Castle, but DVNP is still about two years from reopening the attraction. DVNP is hopeful that the Great American Outdoors Act will provide funding for crumbling infrastructure.

### **NNSA/NFO Update** (*Darwin Morgan, NNSA/NFO*)

Mr. Darwin Morgan reported that work continues at the NNSS with about half of the employees working on-site and little less than half continuing to telework. NNSA/NFO continues to support national stockpile stewardship programs through experiments. Under the Defense Nonproliferation Program, experiments have been conducted through the summer and into the fall. Despite the global pandemic, Mr. Morgan noted that the NNSA/NFO has been active achieving all its national-level milestones to support the national security mission. Mr. Morgan concluded that NNSA/NFO continues to support the EM mission with various waste streams and continues to partner with NDEP to resolve the Y-12 incident.

### **U.S. DOE Update** (*Robert Boehlecke, DOE*)

DDFO Robert Boehlecke opened with a status of EM Nevada Program mission activities. The majority of EM Federal and contractor staff continue to telework. Crews are currently performing fieldwork as the work does lend itself to social distancing. During the health situation, the Program continues to meet its commitments to stakeholders, primarily via virtual meetings. Based on the current conditions, the EM Nevada Program intends to continue meeting virtually with stakeholders through March 31, 2021.

DDFO Boehlecke reported that Paul Dabbar, Under Secretary for Science, visited the NNSS on October 20, 2020. DDFO Boehlecke briefed Under Secretary Dabbar at the Area 5 Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC) on EM activities, including the recent transfer of 70 sites on the Tonopah Test Range (TTR) to the Office of Legacy Management (OLM) for long-term stewardship. This transfer is the first within the Department in ten years and one of EM HQ's strategic objectives for fiscal year (FY) 2020 that was successfully met on September 30, 2020. Mr. Dabbar also visited NNSA sites on the NNSS. A recap article on the visit was published in the EM Update Newsletter available at [https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOEOEM/bulletins/2a6e512?fbclid=IwAR2swXyELRMcADz9wQh7VR4Ea9Tg\\_NSROHAh-fFW6QuwTuP9WYyoOXQGg804#link\\_5](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOEOEM/bulletins/2a6e512?fbclid=IwAR2swXyELRMcADz9wQh7VR4Ea9Tg_NSROHAh-fFW6QuwTuP9WYyoOXQGg804#link_5).

DDFO Boehlecke echoed Liaison Andres' update that closure approval for the Yucca Flat groundwater area was received from NDEP in October 2020 with a NNSS News article available at <http://www.nnss.gov/pages/News/news.html>. This is the second groundwater area closure this calendar year along with Rainier Mesa approved for closure in April 2020. As a result, three of the four major groundwater areas that require characterization are in closure. The remaining groundwater area, Pahute Mesa, will be undergoing environmental restoration activities for a number of years. When Pahute Mesa is in closure, all environmental restoration activities for the EM Nevada Program will be complete.

DDFO Boehlecke reiterated comments made by Mr. Morgan and Liaison Andres that the EM Nevada Program is working with both NDEP and NNSA/NFO on developing an agreement in response to the Y-12 incident. A Radioactive Waste Acceptance Program (RWAP) team is

currently at Y-12 conducting a facility evaluation to verify all the corrective actions put in place by the generator. An update including results will be reported at future NSSAB meetings.

DDFO Boehlecke noted that he also participated in the virtual DOE EM HQ Intergovernmental Meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for the Department to interact, receive feedback, provide information, and conduct transparent communication with its stakeholders. EM Update article available at <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOEOEM/bulletins/2ad5813>.

Within the next two weeks, DDFO Boehlecke updated that final preparations are underway for receipt and disposal at the NNSS of three radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTGs) repatriated by the U.S. from France.

### **Other NSSAB Business** (*Frank Bonesteel, NSSAB Chair*)

On October 19-20, 2020, Chair Bonesteel reported that he participated in the virtual fall EM Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) National Chairs Meeting. During day 1, the eight local advisory boards presented their round robins to EM HQ Senior Management that highlighted board concerns and accomplishments. The recordings are available for day 1 at <https://youtu.be/gxF72g9YMHQ> and for day 2 at <https://youtu.be/PtdF69V10Co>.

During day 2, DFO Kelly Snyder announced two charges to the EM SSAB that Chair Bonesteel introduced to the NSSAB, as follows:

#### **Charge #1 - Advisory Board and Site Outreach**

- Develop a best practices white paper that the Department could use as a guide to augment existing outreach programs and set expectations for future outreach activities
  - Each Board shall identify existing outreach practices performed at their site by both the SSAB and DOE (a template will be provided)
    - Outreach data should include, but not limited to, STEM, budget prioritization, and events
    - Determine if there are any gaps or need for additional outreach
    - Each Board will present their results during the Spring 2021 Chairs meeting
  - The Chairs will collaboratively discuss the individual Board results and develop the requested white paper. (Spring 2021 – Fall 2021)

#### **Charge #2 – SSAB Expectations/ Guiding Principles**

- Identify SSAB end-state expectations and guiding principles that could be used as a complex-wide framework for DOE EM's interaction with stakeholders/communities
  - Each Board will document their expectations regarding what EM mission completion looks like at their site and the Board's expectations for how DOE EM will interact with local stakeholders/communities to reach that vision (a template will be provided to each board)
    - Each Board will present their results during the Spring 2021 Chairs meeting
  - The Chairs will collaboratively discuss the individual Board results, identify commonalities and develop a complex-wide SSAB expectations and guiding principles framework (Spring 2021 – Fall 2021)

DFO Snyder noted that the date for the spring 2021 EM SSAB National Chairs Meeting has not been finalized. During this meeting, the eight local advisory boards, including the NSSAB, will

begin work on these two charges. The NSSAB will continue review of the charges at the January 20, 2021 NSSAB meeting.

Chair Bonesteel announced the vacancy of the Vice-Chair position for the remainder of FY 2021 and asked members to consider running for this office. Member Anthony Graham expressed interest during the meeting. Interested members are to contact the NSSAB Office. Election for the Vice-Chair vacancy will be held at the January 20, 2021 NSSAB meeting.

Chair Bonesteel stated that there is an opening for an NSSAB representative on the Low-Level Waste (LLW) Stakeholders Forum for FY 2021. The LLW Stakeholders Forum provides an opportunity to share and discuss information related to the shipment and disposal of waste primarily at the NNSS. Chair Bonesteel added that these meetings are held quarterly and rotate locations between Las Vegas and Pahrump, although the next meeting will be held virtually on February 3, 2021. The NSSAB representative is tasked with attending the meeting on behalf of the NSSAB and providing a written report highlighting the main points from the meeting. For in-person meetings, there is DOE reimbursement available for one NSSAB member to attend each meeting. There was a request for additional information; so a charter will be emailed to the membership. During the meeting, Member Ronald Korner from Las Vegas and Member William DeWitt from Amargosa Valley expressed interest during the meeting with Chair Bonesteel as the backup. The final representatives will be determined at the January 20, 2021 NSSAB meeting.

#### **NSSAB Long-Term Strategy – Work Plan Item #4** (Kelly Snyder, DOE)

- **NSSAB – Work Plan Item #4**
  - From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation for how the NSSAB envisions its future role as the EM Nevada Program mission transitions to completion
    - Including recommendations on the frequency of meetings, number of members, and overall community expectations
  - NSSAB recommendation is due in January 2021
- **Outline**
  - NSSAB Scope for EM Activities
  - Current NSSAB Composition
  - Current NSSAB Meetings
  - NSSAB Key Points
- **NSSAB Scope for EM Activities**
  - Groundwater characterization (Underground Test Area [UGTA]):
    - Frenchman Flat, Yucca Flat, and Rainier Mesa – in closure/long-term monitoring
    - Pahute Mesa – in progress
  - Surface soil contamination/remediation:
    - Completed
  - Facility contamination/remediation (Industrial Sites):
    - Closure completed at 99% of Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (FFACO) sites (1857 of 1870 total)
    - Planned closure of Engine Maintenance Assembly and Disassembly (EMAD) facility by fiscal year (FY) 2027
    - Planned closure of Test Cell C ancillary buildings and structures by FY 2024
  - LLW disposal:

- Final path forward for waste management operations after FY 2030 undetermined at this time
  - Prioritization of EM activities:
    - EM HQ requires NSSAB recommendation annually
  - Post-closure monitoring completed by EM
  - Stakeholder outreach:
    - NSSAB, open houses/events, fact sheets, social media, Operation Clean Desert, displays, articles, website links, etc.
- **Current NSSAB Composition**
  - Strive for 15-20 **voting** members with appointments staggered so at least one-third of Board retained for continuity
    - Current Board consists of 17 members: (1) Amargosa Valley, (1) Boulder City, (1) Dyer, (6) Las Vegas valley, (1) Mesquite, (5) Pahrump, and (2) Tonopah
  - Currently 11 **non-voting** liaison positions (eight (8) 'full' and three (3) 'limited') that represent their parent organizations
- **NSSAB Key Points**
  - EM Nevada Program values NSSAB
  - NSSAB has two (2) purposes:
    - Venue for communicating EM activities to stakeholders
    - Formal mechanism to receive recommendations from the community on EM activities
  - NSSAB can only provide recommendations to DOE EM
  - Availability of work plan items is decreasing due to activities being completed
  - NSSAB structure may need to be modified, i.e. number of meetings, number of members, meeting agenda topics, etc.
- **NSSAB Path Forward**
  - From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation for how the NSSAB envisions its future role as the EM Nevada Program mission transitions to completion
    - Including recommendations on the frequency of meetings, number of members, and overall community expectations
  - NSSAB recommendation is due in January 2021

Based on Board questions, the following clarifications were provided:

- NSSAB members are encouraged to share with their community any knowledge from working on work plan items and any information learned during NSSAB meetings, events, NNSS tours, etc. The EM Nevada Program can provide speakers on EM-related topics, utilizing NSSAB member's connections to target outreach for the most impact in their respective communities.
- The long-term monitoring responsibility of the 70 closed sites was recently transferred to DOE's OLM as there is not an active DOE mission on the TTR, although there is an active U.S. Air Force mission. For closed sites on the NNSS, the EM Nevada Program is responsible for long-term monitoring with a portion of the budget allocated for this purpose for visual inspections, maintenance, fence and sign repairs, flood damage, animal burrows, groundwater use, landfill caps, etc. After EM Nevada Program's mission is complete, it is anticipated that the NNSA/NFO, as the NNSS landlord and signatory to the regulatory

agreement with the State of Nevada, will assume long-term monitoring responsibilities for NNSS closed sites for the foreseeable future.

After questions were addressed, Chair Bonesteel led Board discussion on work plan item #4 with potential recommendations provided by members during the meeting, as follows:

- Recommend that additional ways be considered for outreach to communities, including schools; an example would be to develop a short video presentation available to the public on EM activities on the NNSS and its path to closure.
- **Option 1 on NSSAB Membership:** Recommend that as NSSAB members complete their six (6) years of service, they are not replaced; members that resign and have not termed out should be replaced for the remaining unexpired term(s); revisit in FY 2025 or FY 2026.
- **Option 2 on NSSAB Membership:** The same basic approach as Option 1 above, but with guaranteed representation for geographic areas in proximity to the NNSS.
- Recommend that NSSAB members make their community members aware of EM Nevada Program activities.
- **Option 1 on Meeting Frequency:** Recommend only having NSSAB meetings when there is a work plan item to be considered.
- **Option 2 on Meeting Frequency:** Recommend having six (6) NSSAB meetings a year that can include updates/educational sessions, etc., even when there is no work plan items.
- **Option 3 on Meeting Frequency:** Recommend that NSSAB meetings held quarterly at a minimum.
- Recommend that there is an NSSAB as long as there is radioactive waste transported to and disposed at the NNSS.

Chair Bonesteel requested that NSSAB members carefully consider these and other potential recommendations between now and the next NSSAB meeting. The NSSAB Office will email the above potential recommendations in advance in order for the membership to be prepared to continue discussion and to formulate and finalize a recommendation at the NSSAB meeting on January 20, 2021.

### **EM Nevada Program Strategic Vision Document** *(Frank Bonesteel, NSSAB Chair)*

In preparation for the meeting, the NSSAB was provided a draft EM Nevada Program Strategic Vision Document. Strategic Communications Manager Jesse Sleezer offered background that this is an initiative launched by EM HQ Senior Management intended to integrate the different cleanup strategies and prerogatives at DOE EM sites across the complex. Last year was the first document to be developed and is available on the DOE EM HQ website at <https://www.energy.gov/em/mission/annual-priorities-strategic-vision>. EM HQ made the decision to seek and include stakeholder input in the FY 2021 EM Strategic Vision with input due to HQ by the end of the calendar year. Mr. Sleezer concluded that it was determined that the NSSAB was an appropriate avenue to seek stakeholder input for what is important to the Board and its respective communities.

Chair Bonesteel led Board discussion for input for the FY 2021 EM Nevada Program Strategic Vision Document, as follows:

- Add public information that would specify the type and timeline of news about the EM Nevada Program closure progress and post-cleanup planning; examples of news might include:
  - Value of the cleanup effort to the people of Nevada (air/water quality, income to State over years, people employed, interns, highway and emergency services funding, grants)
  - Periodic news releases and topic schedule
  - Groundwater safety
  - Focus of news to the school systems at kindergarten-college level
  - Interstate-11 shipments of hazardous materials and plans for LLW, if any
  - Interface with local community websites and television channels
  - Various types of handouts and research material available
  - Final completion coverage and documentation via television and other media
  - Environmental accomplishments and awards over the years
  - Aspects of cleanup, such as, safety, transportation, methods of remediation, post EM Nevada Program plans, etc.
  - Alleviate future natural and man-made safety concerns to include earthquake, groundwater contamination, highway transport, etc.
- Add ongoing cover and closure activities at Area 5 RWMC (including Corrective Action Unit 577 Chromium Containing Waste Disposal Cells)
- Include that NSSAB collaborates with EM Nevada Program as an interested stakeholder

Chair Bonesteel thanked the Board for its input as a testament to their interest in EM Nevada Program activities and the mission of the NSSAB. NSSAB's input will be summarized and included in the submission to EM HQ for the FY 2021 EM Nevada Program Strategic Vision Document.

### **Meeting Wrap-Up and Adjournment**

Upcoming calendar of events:

- NSSAB Intergovernmental Liaisons meeting – January 20, 2021 at 3 p.m. – Virtual
- NSSAB Full Board meeting – January 20, 2021 at 4 p.m. – Virtual
- LLW Stakeholders Forum Meeting (invite only) – February 3, 2021 – Virtual

Any questions on the calendar of events, please contact the NSSAB Office at 702-523-0894.

As a closing remark, Chair Bonesteel reminded NSSAB members to review any documents, briefings, reports, etc., provided by the NSSAB Office prior to the meetings in order to be prepared to discuss and deliberate during the meetings.

Member DeWitt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.