



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

December 7, 2015

Ms. Donna Hruska
Chair
Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board
232 Energy Way
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89030

Dear Ms. Hruska:

Thank you for your September 16, 2015, letter regarding Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB) recommendations on transportation. On behalf of the Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management Office of Waste Management and the Nevada Field Office (NFO), I appreciate the NSSAB's interest in improving the transportation of low-level waste (LLW) within the state of Nevada. Below are the Board's recommendations and corresponding responses from the Office of Waste Management and the NFO:

- **NSSAB Recommendation:** DOE HQ and the NFO should pursue partnering with local governments in Nevada to create safe havens in Nevada communities along LLW transportation routes to the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS), in particular Pahrump, for carriers who transport LLW shipments to the NNSS.

DOE Response: DOE cannot endorse nor create a safe haven parking lot in Pahrump or other communities as such an endorsement may be viewed as preferential treatment toward those communities and toward the particular businesses that might benefit from proximity to the safe haven. Additionally, there is no current regulatory requirement for safe haven parking areas. However, should a community wish to establish its own safe haven parking area, DOE and the NFO will advise drivers that the option is available to them. DOE will continue to communicate with state and local government and stakeholders on future transportation and parking observations/suggestions.

- **NSSAB Recommendation:** DOE HQ and the NFO should review the existing Nevada transportation routes in regard to road conditions and explore ways to help obtain additional funding for safeguards and improvements to ensure the ultimate safety for shipping of LLW to the NNSS.

DOE Response: DOE funding is Congressionally-mandated for spending on specific activities. Environmental Management funding for the NFO is designated for waste management and clean-up activities, not for off-site infrastructure or road projects. However, we are aware that the State of Nevada is undertaking State-funded improvements to some road segments on Highway 160.

- **NSSAB Recommendation:** DOE HQ should continue to support/fund Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program training for emergency



responders from communities near and/or on LLW transportation routes throughout the country.

DOE Response: This recommendation has been implemented. DOE's Office of Packaging and Transportation manages the Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program (TEPP), and will continue to support and fund the program. In calendar year 2015, TEPP provided local training to over 400 first responders and hospital personnel in the communities surrounding NNSS.

- NSSAB Recommendation: DOE HQ and the NFO should explore ways to increase funding for rural emergency preparedness support, in addition to the \$0.50 a cubic foot grant.

DOE Response: DOE will continue to provide support for rural emergency preparedness through the TEPP program and through the current grant with the State of Nevada. This grant agreement has provided more than \$12.5 million in emergency services support during the past 15 years. We invite the NSSAB to provide details on any resources that rural emergency responders may currently be lacking, so that we can further discuss solutions to any shortfalls.

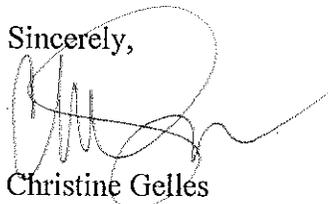
- NSSAB Recommendation: The NFO should reestablish the Transportation Working Group, or similar forum for Nevada stakeholders, which was an avenue that allowed for multiple entities, organizations, and others to address local concerns regarding necessary improvements to transportation infrastructure along LLW shipment routes.

DOE Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The NFO has committed to restarting the Transportation Working Group, to include scheduling a meeting in 2016.

The Office of Waste Management and the NFO look forward to further discussion and collaboration on transportation of LLW in Nevada. Transportation remains an important component of the NSSAB work plan, and I encourage the NSSAB to continue working efforts in support of the fiscal year 2016 work plan.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. Robert Boehlecke, Operations Manager for Environmental Management, Nevada Field Office, at (702) 295-2099.

Sincerely,



Christine Gelles
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Waste Management