



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD

2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300
Arlington, VA 22201-3367

December 11, 2012

Mr. David Huizenga
Senior Advisor for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20510

Dear Mr. Huizenga:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, I want to express its appreciation for your Office's support of the Board's meeting in Idaho Falls, Idaho, on October 16-17, 2012. Mr. Joel Case briefed the Board about work being undertaken to treat the sodium-bearing waste during the site visit to the Idaho National Laboratory. He also discussed treatment of both the sodium-bearing and the calcined waste at the Board's public meeting. Board members found all three presentations quite informative and valuable.

From the information that the Board has received, there appears to be no technical reason to question your Office's decision to manage the sodium-bearing waste (SBW) as transuranic-contaminated waste (TRU), at least at this time. Therefore, given that the Board's mandate under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act limits its review to matters dealing with the management of commercial and defense *high-level radioactive waste (HLW) and spent nuclear fuel (SNF)*, the Board will refrain from commenting on the execution of the plan to process the SBW and does not expect to revisit the Department's management of the SBW. The Board believes that it would be prudent to formalize the classification of this material prior to processing to ensure that it meets the applicable final disposal requirements. The Board notes, however, that should the management decision change, it may become necessary to modify the SBW form so that it can be accepted at a geologic repository for HLW and SNF. In this case, a more detailed knowledge of the properties of the waste form may be required. Please keep the Board informed should that circumstance arise.

As you may know, the Board has had initial interactions with your staff in anticipation of a visit to the Hanford site and a one-day public meeting to be held in a local community. The dates of the visit and meeting are April 15 and 16 respectively. In arranging that meeting, the Board looks forward to continuing the productive and mutually beneficial relationship that it has had over the years with your Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodney C. Ewing". The signature is stylized and includes a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Rodney C. Ewing
Chairman