Over 350 participants attended the first annual DOE National Cleanup Workshop just outside of Washington, D.C. on September 29-30. The Workshop was held in cooperation with ECA and the Energy Facility Contractors Group (EFCOG).

Among the attendees were DOE employees, contractors, regulators, officials from EM sites, local government officials, and other stakeholders. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, kicked off the successful two-

(Continued on page 9)

HANFORD LAND TRANSFER COMPLETED

On Wednesday, September 30, DOE signed over 1,641 acres of Hanford land to the Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC).

TRIDEC made the original written request for 1,341 acres of property in May 2011. Three months later, DOE and TRIDEC agreed to add another 300 acres for a possible solar energy project, bringing the total request to the 1,641 acres. According to a fact-sheet issued by TRIDEC, the request was for a small portion of the 39,000 acres of Hanford land DOE identified for future industrial

(Continued on page 7)

For more information see page 3
Congress returned from its August recess on September 8 to their responsibilities to fund the government, authorize defense spending and DOE national security programs, and raise the debt level this fall. On September 26, House Speaker John Boehner announced he would resign his position effective October 30. While House Republicans jockey to replace him, congressional Democrats continue to press for a renegotiation of spending caps imposed by the Ryan-Murray Agreement two years ago. Various news reports indicate that negotiations are in their nascent stages between the Administration and congressional leadership. Last minute budget agreements have become the norm in the last few years, but this will be a very busy fall nonetheless.

Continuing Resolution Passed

On September 30, the President signed a 10-week continuing resolution (CR) that funds government operations at the fiscal year (FY) 2015 rate until December 11. The CR passed the House by a vote of 277-151; the Senate approved the measure 77-19. The regular appropriations process, which had gotten off to a relatively normal start, stalled in July over Democratic insistence on raising spending caps and an unforeseen, unrelated debate. While spending negotiations have begun, there have thus far been no indications of the direction they are headed.

Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) is reportedly planning to schedule votes on the FY 2016 appropriations bills passed by committee earlier this year. The Senate Appropriations Committee passed all 12 bills before the August recess but none has been able to overcome a filibuster on the floor. Senator McConnell will sort the bills into four thematic ‘minibus’ packages:

- **Infrastructure (S 2129)** – including Agriculture (S 1800), Energy-Water and Transportation-HUD (HR 2577). The Energy-Water title fits in because it funds the Army Corps of Engineers.
- **National Security (S 2130)** – including Defense (HR 2685), Energy-Water, Homeland Security (HR 3128), Military Construction-VA (HR 2029) and State-Foreign Operations (S 1725). Energy-Water applies here because it funds the nation’s nuclear weapons system, as well as nonproliferation efforts.
- **Law Enforcement (S 2131)** – including Commerce-Justice-Science (HR 2578) and Homeland Security.
- **Regulatory Agencies (S 2132)** – including Interior-Environment (S 1645), Labor-HHS-Education (S 1695) and Financial Services (S 1910). The three measures are typically the most contentious of the annual spending bills.

None of the packages is expected to pass but will set up further media battle lines for both parties. On Thursday, October 8, a vote to consider the $35.4 billion bill funding the Energy Department was blocked in the Senate by a 49-47 vote; 60 votes were required to proceed on the matter.


On Tuesday, September 29, House and Senate Armed Services Committee conferees announced they had reached a compromise on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. The House passed the NDAA conference report on Thursday, October 1, by a vote...
MANHATTAN PROJECT UPDATE

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Department of Interior and the Department of Energy officially establishing the Manhattan Project National Historical Park will be signed on Tuesday, November 10. Leaders of the communities that will host the new Park will be invited to the ceremony which will take place in Washington, DC. At a meeting with the ECA’s Manhattan Project Subcommittee, National Park Service (NPS) Associate Director Victor Knox gave stakeholders a sneak peak as to what will be included in the final MOA including a periodic review process to allow for the addition of DOE sites into the Park and a broadened section on partnerships and philanthropy.

Marketing continues to be an issue of interest for localities. NPS has completed the production of Park “passports” that will allow visitors to collect stamps at each site. An October 28 meeting in Richland, WA will also be held to discuss the development of a strategic marketing plan, how to raise money, and working with federal agencies to draw visitors to the new Park.

Moving forward, NPS is hoping to appoint an interim superintendent by the end of the year with the appointment of a permanent lead and site representatives contingent on funding for the remainder of the fiscal year. NPS is also working with the Tri-Cities, Los Alamos, and Oak Ridge to establish a presence in each community. Work on philanthropic organizations and discussions about what support groups would look like are still occurring internally at NPS but the agency hopes to share more developments soon. Local businesses in Oak Ridge and Los Alamos are working to develop an outside funding support base for the Park in their areas.

Finally, NPS has set up a Scholars’ Conference to facilitate the high level discussion of themes and interpretation of the Manhattan Project story. The Conference will take place shortly before the signing ceremony in Washington, DC. ECA will continue to bring you more news on this exciting new Park.

2015 INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING TO TAKE PLACE IN NEW ORLEANS

On November 18-20, ECA, the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), the National Governors Association’s Federal Facilities Task Force (NGA FFTF), the National Conference of State Legislature (NCSL), and the State and Tribal Government Working Group (STGWG) will hold the 14th Combined Intergovernmental Meeting with the U.S. DOE at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The meeting will provide opportunities for increased communication and coordination with DOE among states, tribes, and local communities affected by the ongoing cleanup of the nuclear weapons complex. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from and have discussions with senior officials from EM, other DOE offices, and other relevant federal agencies.

The meeting will feature a variety of presentations and roundtable discussions among state, tribal, local, and federal government representatives on a variety of topics related to the cleanup of the DOE nuclear weapons complex. Participating groups will meet individually on Wednesday morning, November 18, and jointly with DOE for breakout sessions that afternoon. The full plenary meeting will begin Thursday morning, November 19, and conclude midday on Friday, November 20.
COMMUNITIES CONCERNED BY OMNIBUS RISK REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

A recent report by the Omnibus Risk Review Committee raised concerns among a number of local leaders and state officials for its failure to recognize the role of DOE impacted communities in defining risk. Moreover, it fails to acknowledge current gains and lessons learned by communities, including the community’s role in remedy decision-making.

In a recent letter to leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Energy and Water Development, ECA argued that the report marginalizes local government officials by excluding communities from defining risk and partaking in remedy decision-making.

The report, mandated by the current DOE spending bill, is intended to analyze how effectively DOE considers and addresses risk at sites across the nation. Instead of helping to streamline a collaborative process among sites, the report focuses on cutting costs across national DOE cleanup sites by proposing to cut out state and local input on cleanup decisions.

Further, it ignores laws like the Federal Facilities Compliance Act, which requires DOE to work with state and local governments in remedy selection to define risk. The report suggests participation by local government officials in remedy-selection somehow hinders the cleanup process. ECA’s response urges Congressional representatives to ignore such reckless recommendations by the committee.

A similar letter was sent by sites around the Hanford site in Washington, including Richland, Kennewick, Pasco, Benton and Franklin Counties, and the Port of Benton.

“We are offended by a wholesale effort to homogenize the cleanup approach at very different (environmental management) sites across the country.”

“We are offended by a wholesale effort to homogenize the cleanup approach at very different (environmental management) sites across the country,” the letter said.

Hanford Communities criticized the report’s look at waste held in tanks at different sites, including the 56 million gallons of high-level radioactive waste left from chemical processing of irradiated uranium fuel at Hanford to remove plutonium for weapons use.

A letter from the attorneys general of Washington and Oregon said the report wrongly compares the challenges of treating Hanford tank waste with tank waste at Savannah River, S.C., and Oak Ridge, Tenn. Waste in almost every Hanford tank “is unique, requiring a vastly more complex vitrification process than is necessary at other sites,” the letter said.

Although the majority of the Risk Review Committee’s recommendations are flawed, ECA does support a change in the legal definition of high-level radioactive waste. Currently, the classification of waste is defined on its origin rather than the hazard it poses. Changing the classification would create possibilities for waste disposal outside of a deep geologic repository.

The report also notes issues ECA has raised concern about in the past, including the fact that infrastructure systems are rapidly decaying. ECA agrees that DOE site managers, and others in the Department wide-budget process, be given more flexibility to “make budget requests for priority problems” to help ameliorate the deteriorating infrastructure across the weapons complex.
Legislative Update

of 270-156. The Senate passed the measure on Wednesday, October 7, by a vote of 70-27. The vote was nearly identical to the June vote on the Senate version of the NDAA in June which was 71-25.

The President has reiterated his threat to veto the bill over a number of policy concerns, particularly the inclusion of more than $38.3 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds used to sidestep spending caps and pay for programs normally in the Pentagon’s base budget. The Administration and congressional Democrats would prefer to negotiate a change to the mandated caps for defense and non-defense discretionary spending. While the Senate may have the votes to override a veto, the House certainly does not. A number of Senate Democrats who voted for the conference report have not committed to overriding a presidential veto. Negotiations between the Administration and Congress would have to take place later this fall to resolve policy issues should.

The NDAA has been enacted every year since 1961; it has only been vetoed 4 times. The compromise measure authorizes $515 billion in spending for national defense and an additional $89.2 billion for the OCO. The total $611.9 billion is equivalent to the Administration’s total request.

Senator Challenges Moniz on Piketon

Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) pressed Secretary Moniz to commit to using his spending authority to prevent planned layoffs in Piketon during a committee hearing on Tuesday, October 6. Between 325 and 500 jobs involved with the cleanup work of the former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant have been targeted for potential layoffs as early as October 22 if funding conditions do not change. In the CR passed in September, money in the Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund may be allocated to avoid disruption of continuing projects or activities. The CR also gives the Secretary the authority to determine whether the funds will be used or how they will be used. Some believed that would be enough to create a temporary reprieve for endangered jobs, but officials at the lead contractor at the Ohio site – Fluor-BWXT – said they were still waiting for guidance from DOE.

When asked by Senator Portman about the cleanup work, Secretary Moniz refused to give a yes or no answer about whether layoffs would be prevented. He did say, however, that his department was “close” to a plan to head off layoffs.

“I feel very confident that we will get there,” Moniz said. “I need a little more time to finish the plan and notify the contractor. That’s what we are working toward – no involuntary layoffs during the CR for the D&D work.”

House Speaker Resigns

Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) shocked DC when he announced on September 25 that he would resign his leadership position and seat in Congress. He originally intended to resign at the end of October but the Republican House majority has thus far been unable to coalesce around a single replacement candidate. Boehner has said he will stay on until a successor is chosen.

His resignation allowed him to pass a short-term CR that was not supported by the majority of his party.

The House is set to vote on a new Speaker on October 29. Due to disagreements in the Republican conference, there has been some speculation that the date will be postponed. Speaker Boehner will remain in his position should that occur.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriation</th>
<th>FY 2015 Enacted ($)</th>
<th>FY 2016 Request ($)</th>
<th>House FY 2016 Bill ($)</th>
<th>Senate FY 2016 Bill ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Energy</strong></td>
<td>27,916,797,000</td>
<td>30,527,136,000</td>
<td>29,012,069,000</td>
<td>29,303,173,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weapons Activities</strong></td>
<td>8,186,657,000</td>
<td>8,846,948,000</td>
<td>8,713,000,000</td>
<td>8,882,364,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total NNSA Funding</strong></td>
<td>11,407,295,000</td>
<td>12,565,400,000</td>
<td>12,329,000,000</td>
<td>12,263,276,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defense Environmental Cleanup</strong></td>
<td>5,000,000,000</td>
<td>5,055,550,000</td>
<td>5,055,550,000</td>
<td>5,180,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Defense Environmental Cleanup</strong></td>
<td>246,000,000</td>
<td>220,185,000</td>
<td>229,193,000</td>
<td>244,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund</strong></td>
<td>625,000,000</td>
<td>542,289,000</td>
<td>625,000,000</td>
<td>614,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total EM Funding</strong></td>
<td>5,861,017,000</td>
<td>5,818,024,000</td>
<td>5,909,743,000</td>
<td>6,038,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carlsbad/WIPP</strong></td>
<td>320,000,000</td>
<td>243,318,000</td>
<td>285,584,000</td>
<td>243,318,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hanford/Richland</strong></td>
<td>941,000,000</td>
<td>843,837,000</td>
<td>922,711,000</td>
<td>922,590,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Idaho National Laboratory</strong></td>
<td>380,203,000</td>
<td>360,783,000</td>
<td>390,783,000</td>
<td>360,783,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory</strong></td>
<td>1,366,000</td>
<td>1,366,000</td>
<td>1,366,000</td>
<td>1,366,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Los Alamos National Laboratory</strong></td>
<td>185,000,000</td>
<td>188,625,000</td>
<td>180,000,000</td>
<td>188,625,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oak Ridge Reservation</strong></td>
<td>223,050,000</td>
<td>177,353,000</td>
<td>197,953,000</td>
<td>223,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of River Protection</strong></td>
<td>1,212,000,000</td>
<td>1,414,000,000</td>
<td>1,268,000,000</td>
<td>1,414,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nevada NNSA Site</strong></td>
<td>64,851,000</td>
<td>62,385,000</td>
<td>62,385,000</td>
<td>62,385,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purdue</strong></td>
<td>207,215,000</td>
<td>168,652,000</td>
<td>193,652,000</td>
<td>199,925,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portsmouth</strong></td>
<td>214,024,000</td>
<td>165,417,000</td>
<td>213,417,000</td>
<td>165,417,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sandia National Laboratory</strong></td>
<td>2,801,000</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Savannah River Site</strong></td>
<td>1,121,307,000</td>
<td>1,208,421,000</td>
<td>1,191,543,000</td>
<td>1,208,421,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nuclear Energy</strong></td>
<td>833,500,000</td>
<td>907,574,000</td>
<td>936,161,000</td>
<td>950,161,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waste Disposal (Yucca)</strong></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>150,000,000</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legacy Management</strong></td>
<td>171,980,000</td>
<td>167,180,000</td>
<td>167,180,000</td>
<td>167,180,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figures in these charts are based on figures reported by the Office of Budget and Management, Congressional Budget Office, and Senate and House Appropriations Committees. Any discrepancies are based on differences in their accounting methods.*
Hanford Land Transfer Completed on Schedule

development in 1999. The total request accounts for just 0.5% of the total Hanford Site. For the most part, the land remains the same as it was when DOE took it over in the late 1940’s. It was barely utilized and is currently uncontaminated.

Without the actual land transfer, local communities cannot negotiate with private firms for development of the land. For years, DOE promised TRIDEC the land transfer could be completed “within 18-24 months,” according to TRIDEC Vice President Gary Petersen. The City of Richland, Port of Benton, and Benton County have agreed on how to divvy up the land. Since 1998, the three entities have invested $23 million in the development of the land that now has a tax valuation of over $200 million.

TRIDEC has made clear that it “is not in the ‘land’ business” and will not be making any profit through the transfer of the land. It intends to transfer much of the land to its partners by the end of the year and could transfer up to 300 acres directly to a solar project development company with some provisos. Without the legislative mandate included in last year’s NDAA it is unclear when – or if – the land transfer would have taken place.

DR. MONICA REGALBUTO LAYS OUT VISION FOR TENURE AS EM’S NEW ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Dr. Regalbuto recently spoke with EM Update about her new role as head of EM. The following are excerpts from her interview:

1. How would you describe your leadership style and approach for EM?

I’m a high-energy person who is passionate about the EM cleanup mission. I’m focused on working together to build on the accomplishments of the last 25 years while recognizing there is still significant work remaining. I’m also approachable, adaptive to the needs of the organization and mission, and data driven. It’s not uncommon to find me digging into the details of our projects, as data informs decisions.

My goal is to set the vision and direction for the organization and then work to ensure the organization has the tools and wherewithal for success. I see my role somewhat as chief coach for the organization because of my expertise and experience working on the kinds of complex technologies DOE designs, builds, and operates.

I take seriously my responsibility to make decisions that may last well beyond my tenure. The decisions involve how best to accomplish the cleanup mission, invest federal resources, and deal with challenges. In my experience in the petrochemical industry, as a researcher, a manager of researchers at a national laboratory, and as a federal manager in development of advanced nuclear energy systems, I have found that the best decisions are those informed by rigorous analysis and diversity of experience and perspective, in an open and respectful environment, and this is how I would like us to work together in EM.

2. How do you see EM headquarters helping the EM field sites to be successful in carrying out the cleanup mission?

The EM field managers have day-to-day line management responsibility for completion of the cleanup and for ensuring our federal and contractor workforce accomplishes work safely and effectively. The role of headquarters, as a strategic service organization, is to lead the planning, policy, budget formulation and execution processes, and to provide empowerment, support and oversight for accomplishing the EM mission. I would like to see decisions pushed to the level closest to the work being done as much as possible.

Organizational structure and communication are key to mission success in this large, complex organization with sites disbursed across the nation. I want to make sure our roles and responsibilities,
Dr. Monica Regalbuto Lays Out Vision for Tenure as EM’s New Assistant Secretary

authorities, and accountabilities are understood and in place at the right organizational levels to support our mission. We have great people at headquarters and the field, and we can do a lot to enable everyone’s success. I will continue to focus on how headquarters can support the field and work together to successfully realize accomplishments.

Establishing multidisciplinary teams to evaluate and solve these problems is effective, particularly when addressing some of our most difficult technical, policy or budget challenges. As chief coach, I believe in the blended team approach in a flat organization — not hierarchical. I rely on my players. I trust them, empower them, and want to see the best in them.

The team approach has served us well with our path today for the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit at the Idaho Site. It also serves us well as we tackle the tough job of preparing for resumption of waste emplacement operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). I look forward to the reopening of WIPP.

3. What have you learned from trips to EM’s field sites and past experiences outside EM that will help you lead the EM program?

In my federal career, I have spent as much time in the field as I can, working with the field management on some of the key technical challenges. To fully understand the cleanup mission, we must go to the field sites to see firsthand the successes and the difficulties. I’ve done this at WIPP, at Idaho, Hanford, Oak Ridge, Savannah River, West Valley, and other sites.

I’ve spent considerable time in my career working at chemical or nuclear facilities. It’s given me a perspective of the challenges of building, commissioning, starting up, and operating complex chemical-nuclear facilities. I have the utmost respect for our federal and contractor workforce for what they do every day to support accomplishing this mission safely and securely.

Also, I believe it’s helpful for me to manage positions I have worked in myself, to the greatest extent possible. That experience goes a long way and enables me to appreciate and recognize the work that is being done in the field.

4. What does EM need to do differently in order to better develop new and innovative clean up technologies? What is the one new technology you wished EM had today?

I would like to better leverage technology development to reduce the time and life-cycle costs of our cleanup. For many of our sites, we have decades to go, and we have a modest amount of funding for technology development. I fully support the Secretary of Energy’s Advisory Board recommendation to invest more in it.

I will use every opportunity to leverage technologies. If NASA could put Rovers on Mars, we should be able to put robots into the WIPP facility. I wish we had that capability to support the investigation into the cause of the radiological release in February 2014, and our recovery efforts. They have proved invaluable in the removal of waste from our tank farms, too.

Robotics have an important role in monitoring and detecting abnormal conditions, and in conducting cleanup operations and reducing the potential for human exposure to hazardous conditions. Almost every mission area could benefit from greater access to robots. I’ve started an initiative to partner with the National Science Foundation and universities to accelerate our fundamental research in robotics science and technology. I think there is much enthusiasm across our complex to expand our capabilities in this area.

We are also developing a test bed concept where those who have technologies in development can

(Continued from page 7)

(Continued on page 10)
day workshop by emphasizing the need for collaboration in addressing the remaining challenges in the cleanup program.

“We all need to work together,” said Moniz. “This collaboration and cooperation really is critical to our mission.”

The Secretary provided a snapshot of what the program currently looks like within the overall theme of the cleanup mission. The Environmental Management Office, established in 1989, undertook the mission of cleaning 107 sites over 3,000 square miles. Today, 16 sites remain with less than 300 square miles. Secretary Moniz highlighted the successes of EM’s program across DOE’s sites, including the demolition of the K-31 building at Oak Ridge and the recent closure of the seventh underground waste tank at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

Participants had the opportunity to listen to a variety of senior DOE officials, including recently confirmed Assistant Secretary Monica Regalbuto, who discussed her vision for EM over the next two years.

“EM is focused on an aggressive yet achievable cleanup schedule that recognizes the unavoidable technical challenges and budget realities,” said Regalbuto. “While some projects will extend decades, cleanup progress is being made right now, and we have a set of significant accomplishments coming up on the horizon that will help us position EM for the future.”

Assistant Secretary Regalbuto took the opportunity to recognize the cleanup projects EM anticipates to complete in the near future, including cleanup along

(Continued from page 1)

Secretary Moniz Keynotes Inaugural DOE National Cleanup Workshop

(Continued on page 10)
test them in an environment that closely models their application. We offer unique capabilities for the test beds with our inventory of nuclear materials, expertise of our contractors, and valuable resources at DOE’s national laboratories, particularly EM’s Savannah River National Laboratory.

5. What is one of the big challenges you see facing EM?

We are responsible for making sure the people, the physical infrastructure, and the worker and facility safety management systems support the mission. I want to ensure we properly invest in operations and infrastructure to support safe mission accomplishment. Another priority is to continue to work closely with the National Nuclear Security Administration and the offices of Science and Nuclear Energy to ensure we maintain key capabilities that serve the Department’s broader needs.

We also need to continue developing our workforce. I was fortunate to have mentors who gave me opportunities to learn and to grow. EM needs to prepare, recruit and develop our next generation of scientists and engineers to carry this work forward in the years ahead.

(Continued from page 8)

Dr. Monica Regalbuto Lays Out Vision for Tenure as EM’s New Assistant Secretary

Secretary Moniz Keynotes Inaugural DOE National Cleanup Workshop

Hanford’s River Corridor, SRS construction of the Salt Waste Processing Facility, and demolition of Oak Ridge’s former uranium enrichment process buildings.

Other notable speakers included Representatives Mike Simpson (R-ID), Chairman of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, and Chuck Fleischmann (R-Tenn.), Chairman of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus.

Both congressmen discussed their roles in educating their colleagues in the House on the importance of DOE’s cleanup program, reassuring attendees of their commitment in representing communities in their districts impacted by DOE. Representative Simpson provided an update to attendees about ongoing budget and government funding challenges.

Informative panels and roundtable discussions ranging from charting EM’s successes in the next few years to resuming operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Program (WIPP) were also included as part of the Workshop.

Council Member Dick Doss of Carlsbad, NM discussed the city’s support for reopening WIPP, stressing the importance of open communications at local town hall meetings. Acting Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Frank Marcinowski and Nuclear Waste Partnership Project Manager Phil Breidenbach both agreed that significant progress has been made on corrective action plans (CAP) required by the DOE Accident Investigation Board (AIB).

“WIPP is getting healthier” Breidenbach said. “The nuclear safety culture is improving and we have an unrelenting focus on values, expectations, and standards.”

Many of the panels and discussions led to productive meetings among participants. ECA looks forward to cooperating with DOE for next year’s workshop. For more information regarding the 2015 workshop, including a copy of the agenda, power point presentations, and a full participation list, please visit our updated workshop website at www.cleanupworkshop.com.
Gary Petersen: Proposals on MOX and WIPP Compound an Uncertain Path for Hanford’s Nuclear Waste

Hanford nuclear waste is truly a mixed bag (high-level, low-level, transuranic, greater-than-Class C). This includes medical wastes from hospitals, spent commercial fuel from Columbia Generating Station, and 124 Navy reactor cores from submarines and cruise missiles.

Hanford cleanup is technically challenging, yet cleanup has been moving ahead. However, nuclear waste is currently stuck at Hanford. Is Hanford an “interim storage” site without ever being declared so? In a word, “yes!”

One example of DOE’s ever changing signals and direction on final disposition of nuclear waste has to do with the large quantity of plutonium Hanford has already shipped to Savannah River.

The current option for disposing of our nation’s plutonium is to use a special facility to mix quantities of plutonium with other nuclear fuel to make mixed-oxide (mox) fuel that can be used in civilian reactors to produce power while using up the plutonium.

A 2000 international agreement with Russia identified this method for disposing the inventory of plutonium. By early 2007 the decision was made to construct a mox fuel plant at the Savannah River Site (SRS), in South Carolina. Construction is 70 percent complete, and some $4.5 billion has been spent.

After 15 years on the current path, DOE-Headquarters is now considering major/arbitrary changes to the final disposition of MOX, and stopping construction the mox facility at SRS!

DOE’s new path is considering ‘downblending’ (diluting) the weapons grade plutonium and adding it to waste going to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico. DOE reports shutting down the SRS mox plant could cost a billion dollars.

WIPP is a massive underground repository built for permanent storage of transuranic waste (clothing, tools, and other materials contaminated with plutonium and other radionuclides). WIPP operations were suspended in 2014 by a fire and a small radiation release. WIPP remains closed, and there is no firm date for reopening.

Nevertheless DOE officials are talking about adding tons of downblended weapons-grade plutonium to the storage mix at WIPP. Doing this, according to one expert, would exceed WIPP’s capacity by 48 percent and would contain eight times the allowable radionuclide content (curies). Attempting to add downblended mox to WIPP raises a host of legal, regulatory and political questions; and disrupts current plans to move even the transuranic waste from Hanford once WIPP reopens.

Various consultant reports have compared the costs of completing the SRS mox plant with downblending mox for burial at WIPP, but the results are inconclusive on which option is less costly. What is clear, however, is that using mox as a fuel for nuclear power plants was studied and approved by the National Academy of Sciences in 1995, and it was embraced by the Clinton, Bush and (until recently) Obama administrations.

The Savannah River mox project was America’s response to the nonproliferation agreement with Russia (the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement) that was signed in 2000 and updated in 2010. Both countries committed to eliminating 34 metric tons of surplus weapons-grade plutonium by conversion to mox. 34 metric tons is enough to support 17,000 nuclear weapons!

Reversing course with the downblending/WIPP option is risky, given the problems that have shutdown WIPP and could result in further delays and additional costs. Terminating the SRS mox facility also raises the specter that Hanford plutonium already shipped to Savannah River for processing could be returned. South Carolina could well say, “We don’t want Hanford’s heavy metal (Continued on page 12)
Gary Petersen: Proposals on MOX and WIPP compound an uncertain path for Hanford’s nuclear waste

plutonium if there is no mox facility; ship it back to them!”

The real risk is that by changing course at this point, Hanford could once again be left holding the bag. With a new administration in just 16 months, a ‘new’ DOE could decide that ‘downblending’ of plutonium and disposal in WIPP is also not the best option, leaving us with no pathway for Hanford’s plutonium.

So “yes,” Hanford continues to be an Undeclared Interim Storage site, which cancelling mox only compounds. Also, “no,” we don’t want the plutonium coming back to Hanford.

The best course for Hanford is to complete the mox facility at Savannah River.

---

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{tri-cities-hanford-site.png}
\caption{TRI-CITIES HANFORD SITE 1,641 ACRES LAND TRANSFER}
\end{figure}

\textbf{WHY TRIDEC?}

- TRIDEC was one of eight sites across the U.S. identified in 1994 by the U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE), as a Community Reuse Organization (CRO). CRO’s can accept property from the U.S. DOE sites such as desks/computers/portable buildings and sell them. Profits from the sales can then be used as incentive funds to attract new businesses to the community. TRIDEC was identified in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2015 as the CRO recipient of the 1,641 acres. Congressman Doc Hastings wrote this language into the NDAA.

- TRIDEC is not in the “land” business. TRIDEC does not intend to make any profit through the transfer of the 1,641 acres and if there is no ‘ready’ business interested in the land, TRIDEC will transfer the land to the City of Richland, Port of Benton and Benton County at what it cost TRIDEC to acquire no later than Dec. 31, 2015. The City of Richland, Port of Benton and Benton County have agreed on which organization will get what portion of land.

- TRIDEC has two potential companies that are interested in developing a solar project or projects between 10 MWe and 100 MWe in the next two or three years. With agreement from our development partners, TRIDEC could transfer up to 300 acres of the 1,641 acre property directly to a solar project developer, with understanding that if such project is not underway by 2018, the land would revert back to TRIDEC.

- 1,641 acres of Hanford is less than 0.5% of the total Hanford Site.

- TRIDEC and our partners, The City of Richland, Port of Benton, and Benton County began the land transfer request in early 2010.

- The written request, a 10 CFR 770 request was made on May 11, 2011 for 1,341 acres of property directly north of Hor Rapids Road. Three months later U.S. Department of Energy and TRIDEC agreed to add another 300 acres for a possible solar energy project, bringing the total request to 1,641 acres. This request was for a small portion of the 39,000 acres of Hanford land identified by the U.S. DOE in the 1999 Comprehensive Land Use Plan for future industrial development.
In late September, Texas Representative Mike Conaway filed **H.R. 3643**, the Interim Consolidated Storage Act of 2015. The bill would amend the **Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982** to authorize the Secretary of Energy to enter into contracts for the storage of certain high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, take title to certain high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, and make certain expenditures from the Nuclear Waste Fund.

The language of the bill remains unchanged from the draft that was made public by *E&EN Daily* earlier this year (see ECA’s June Bulletin). Specific provisions to note include:

- Priority for storage will be given to high-level waste and spent nuclear fuel located on sites without an operating nuclear reactor.
- For funding, the Secretary is authorized to use appropriations from the Nuclear Waste Fund, but the amount is limited to the cumulative interest generated by the Nuclear Waste Fund each fiscal year, beginning in fiscal year 2016.
- No forced settlement provision is included. The bill states that, “the Secretary will not require a person to settle claims against the United States for breach of a contract for the disposal of high-level waste or spent nuclear fuel as a condition precedent of entering into or modifying a contract” for the waste to go to an interim storage facility. This had been an issue for some in the commercial nuclear industry when it was originally proposed in the Senate’s Nuclear Waste Administration Act of 2013.

The Act has 15 co-sponsors, many representing districts in Texas. Four co-sponsors have decommissioned plants in their districts, including Representative Darrell Issa who represents the district in California where the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station is located. *According* to Issa, “The bill would neither replace Yucca Mountain – which remains our best bet for a permanent nuclear waste storage facility – nor would it take from Yucca Mountain’s funding, taking only from the interest that has accrued to the Nuclear Waste Fund.”

Representative Conaway represents Texas’ 11th Congressional district that includes Andrews County, the area where Waste Control Specialists (WCS) has proposed a consolidated interim used fuel storage project. Community leaders in Andrews applauded the bill stating, “WCS has told us that if the legislation passes and the Department of Energy can timely transport the waste, WCS plans to be licensed, constructed and receiving spent nuclear fuel by the end of 2020.

“WCS has told us that if the legislation passes and the Department of Energy can timely transport the waste, WCS plans to be licensed, constructed and receiving spent nuclear fuel by the end of 2020.”

Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance and Holtec International have also announced plans to pursue a separate consolidated interim storage project nearby in southeastern New Mexico.
HEARING ON NRC OVERSIGHT FocusES ON IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

At its recent October hearing on Oversight of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee focused mainly on three topics:

1. Status of increasing the efficiency of the NRC in light of budget cuts, a backlog in licensing actions, and a smaller workload.
2. NRC timeline for implementing regulations developed in the wake of the March 2011 Fukushima Daiichi incident.
3. NRC approach to licensing new nuclear technologies in the future.

In responding to questions from senators about these issues, the four current NRC Commissioners: Chairman Stephen Burns and Commissioners Kristine Svinicki, William Ostendorff and Jeffrey Baran referred numerous times to the agency’s “Project Aim 2020” initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to provide:

- Recommendations for improving the current and projected performance.
- Concrete and specific projections of the workload for the agency five years out.
- Recommendations for agency resource levels and workforce staffing.

The commissioners stated that under the initiative, the agency is looking to increase efficiencies by downsizing the NRC workforce – while maintaining necessary expertise – and realigning their mission. This will better reflect that fact that there are fewer license applications for new nuclear power plants, fewer anticipated reactor designs for approval on the docket, and a greater focus on license renewals and decommissioning.

California Senator Barbara Boxer’s questions focused on new safety regulations identified post-Fukushima and the agency’s slow place for implementation. Both Chairman Baran and Commissioner Ostendorff recognized this is a priority for the NRC, stating that an implementation plan should be completed by the end of the month, and implementation should be completed they by the end of 2016.

Rhode Island Senator Sheldon Whitehouse expressed his concern that as the nuclear reactor fleet gets smaller, the country is losing low-carbon energy supply. His questions focused on the NRC’s preparedness to evaluate and license future nuclear technologies including advanced reactors and small modular reactors (SMRs). Chairman Baran responded that he expects the first application for a small modular reactor late in 2016. He added that the agency is working with DOE to look at what the different safety issues may be and to consider how to shift the existing regulatory framework for these new technologies. Maryland Senator Ben Cardin focused on the NRC’s high skilled but aging workforce, asking how the agency plans to recruit young people. Chairman Burns agreed there is a “generational shift” but responded that NRC has a “robust entry-level program for technical staff.” He added that they have the tools they need to find recruits and maintain expertise, but they need to work on the communication piece.

Also mentioned at the hearing, Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Jim Inhofe said he wants to have Jessie Roberson, the Administration’s nominee to fill the vacant seat on the Commission, come before the Committee by the Thanksgiving recess. Roberson was nominated this summer. She previously served as Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at DOE from 2001 to 2004.

To sign up for the ECA news updates please visit our website: www.energyca.org
INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORTS

Nuclear Nonproliferation: DOE Made Progress to Secure Vulnerable Nuclear Materials Worldwide

A report released to the public on August 28 discusses the implementation of security enhancements and management weaknesses at the Y-12 National Security Complex (Y-12). In June 2004, the Inspector General recommended the DOE develop a comprehensive framework for managing and integrating personnel security and access control systems at Y-12. In response, NNSA indicated that it intended to implement the Argus security system to provide integrated access and physical security controls at Y-12. To help meet its security goals, Y-12 focused its planned Security Improvements Project (SIP) on replacing its aged and obsolete security system with Argus. The project was completed in 2013 at a cost of more than $50 million. This report found that the SIP achieved all baseline requirements but was not scoped or funded to address all Argus implementation issues at Y-12. As a result, while Y-12’s physical security system has been upgraded it had not met NNSA’s mandate to develop and implement a comprehensive method for managing and integrating the site’s security and access control systems. The Inspector General found a number of challenges have contributed to identified system issues, including management weaknesses and a lack of effective communication and cooperation between operations personnel and project managers.

Allegations Regarding Management of Highly Enriched Uranium

A September 1 report details an investigation after the Inspector General received allegations that special nuclear material (SNM) at the Y-12 National Security Complex – specifically that in January 2014, highly enriched uranium samples were discovered in the pocket of coveralls located on a laundry truck that set off an alarm as the truck attempted to exit a protected area. The report substantiates allegations related to the safe handling of SNM, internal controls for the tracking and handling of SNM samples, SNM detection procedures, and SNM alarm response processes. However, Y-12 federal and contractor officials conducted internal investigations concerning the incident and generally implemented corrective actions to address most of the issues outlined in the allegations. The Inspector General still found that corrective actions regarding a safety violation that occurred during the discovery of the uranium samples and the untimely notification of the Plant Shift Superintendent Office had not been completed. Y-12 officials agreed to implement corrective actions for both issues.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORTS

Security Improvements at the Y-12 National Security Complex

A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that the Department of Energy (DOE) achieved goals for two of its four key activities under President Obama’s initiative to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials. The President announced his initiative in 2009 with the intent of securing materials that could be stolen by terrorists and used to construct a nuclear device within 4 years.

From April 2009 through December 2013, GAO found that DOE exceeded its goal for removing or disposing of 1,201 kilograms of highly enriched uranium (HEU) or plutonium by more than 400 kilograms, and it exceeded its goal of downblending to produce lower concentrations of uranium by an additional 2,200 kilograms.

However, GAO also found that DOE missed its goal for providing physical protection upgrades at 43 buildings by 11 buildings and missed its goal of converting 34 foreign reactors to more proliferation-resistant LEU by 11 reactors.

Political challenges are said to have been the cause for delay by DOE, including access to key sites. Moreover, technical concerns such as delays in the development of LEU replacement fuels for certain high-performing nuclear reactors also complicated DOE’s efforts to achieve these goals.
CONTRACTS

Los Alamos Awarded Legacy Cleanup Bridge Contract

On September 23, DOE announced the award of a bridge contract for legacy cleanup activities at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The contract went to Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS), a venture formed by the University of California, Bechtel, Babcock & Wilcox Technical Services, and URS Energy and Construction. LANS has performed cleanup activities at LANL since 2006. This bridge contract is being issued as part of the EM’s efforts to transition legacy cleanup activities at LANL and will help facilities completion of short—term work with little disruption. The contract will have a maximum value of nearly $310 million with a one-year base period and two six-month options.

Los Alamos Post-FY16 Legacy Cleanup Acquisition Strategy Announced

On October 2, the Environmental Management Consolidated Business center announced its intention to begin a competitive solicitation procurement process for cleanup at LANL. The announcement followed shortly after the announcement of the bridge contract was awarded.

The solicitation is expected to include requirements for a “significant portion” of the work to be accomplished by small businesses and will include cost-reimbursable and firm fixed price components with a five year performance period. More information will be released here.

Contract Awarded for West Valley Demonstration Project

On September 3, Neptune and Company, Inc. was awarded the contract to assist DOE in the performance of analysis to support the Phase 2 Decision making alternative for the West Valley Demonstration Project and Western New York Nuclear Service Center. This is a Time-and-Material contract with an approximate value of $4,300,000 with a base period of three years and one two-year option. Two proposals were received in response to the solicitation. The contractor will perform sensitivity analysis, transition existing components of a deterministic performance assessment to a probabilistic modeling platform, prepare a long term probabilistic performance assessment, and aid in the preparation of the Supplemental Environmental Impact statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upcoming Contract Expirations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUF6 Conversion Operations (Jan. 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Ridge ETTP (July 2016; can be extended for four years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada National Security Site (Sept 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moab (Sept. 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS (Sept. 2016; can be extended 22 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth (March 2016; can be extended for five years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanford waste tanks (Sept. 2016; two-year extension possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2017</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS waste tanks (June 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paducah (July 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIPP M&amp;O (Sept. 2017; five-year extension possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos National Laboratory (Sept. 2017; more award terms possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandia National Laboratories (April 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2018 and Beyond</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanford Central Plateau (Sept. 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Livermore (Sept. 2018; more award terms possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Valley (April 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y-12/Pantex (June 2019; up to five more years possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanford Mission Support (Sept. 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Waste Processing Facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2015 Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week of October 19</td>
<td>NDAA Conference bill submitted to the President; it is expected to be vetoed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Confirmation Hearing for Victoria Wasmer to be DOE Under Secretary and John Kotek to be NE Assistant Secretary. More information <a href="#">here</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 21</td>
<td>National Laboratory Day on Capitol Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>Commission to Review the Effectiveness of the National Energy Laboratories public <a href="#">conference call</a>, RSVP by October 22 via <a href="#">email</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 30</td>
<td><strong>National Day of Remembrance for Nuclear Weapons Program Workers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Signing of Manhattan Project National Historical Park Memorandum of Agreement between DOE and DOI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18-20</td>
<td><strong>DOE Intergovernmental Meeting—for registration information contact <a href="#">Ivana Brancaccio</a>.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Continuing Resolution Expires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 14</td>
<td>75th Anniversary of the discovery of Plutonium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**ECA Articles**

Devon Hill, Program Manager  
Ivana Brancaccio, Program Manager  
Kara Colton, Director of Nuclear Energy Programs

**Layout and Design**

Sharon M. Worley, Administrative Assistant

---

**ECA Bulletin**

1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: 202.828.2423  
Fax: 202.828.2488  
Email: bulletin@energyca.org

All Rights Reserved © 2015 by the Energy Communities Alliance. No portion is to be reproduced without credit and written notification to the Energy Communities Alliance. The Energy Communities Alliance Bulletin is published monthly via a printed and electronic version. If you would like to subscribe to the Energy Communities Alliance Bulletin, please send your name and address to the address above or fax it to us at 202-828-2488 or email Bulletin@energyca.org

*Thank you to the Department of Energy’s Environmental Management Office for its support of the ECA Bulletin through cooperative agreement No. DE—EM002400*