



Department of Energy

Idaho Operations Office
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July 9, 2002

Mr. Dean Nygard, Site Remediation Manager
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
1410 North Hilton
Boise, Idaho 83706-1255

Mr. Wayne Pierre, Team Leader
Environmental Cleanup Office
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98101

SUBJECT: INEEL - Operable Unit 10-08 – Request for Concurrence with Deferring Two FFA/CO Milestones (EM-ER-02-110)

REFERENCE: "Environmental Management Performance Management Plan for Accelerating Cleanup of the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory," DOE/ID-1106, Predecisional Draft Revision 0, June 2002

Dear Mr. Nygard and Mr. Pierre:

Operable Unit (OU) 10-08 has two remaining FFA/CO milestones. They are:

- (1) January 31, 2004 Submit Draft OU 10-08 RI/FS to IDEQ and EPA
- (2) October 29, 2004 Submit Draft OU 10-08 ROD to IDEQ and EPA

The purpose of this letter is to request your concurrence with deferring these two milestones for the reasons presented below.

As you know, OU 10-08 concerns the portion of the Snake River Plain Aquifer (SRPA) that underlies the INEEL. The INEEL CERCLA strategy has been to make the OU 10-08 ROD the final decision document to be prepared under the terms of the FFA/CO. For the following two reasons, it now appears prudent to recommend that the two milestones above be deferred:

- (1) The recent Pit 9 dispute resolution has deferred the OU 7-13/14 ROD signature date into FY-07 (i.e., December 2006), and
- (2) Such a deferral is consistent with the strategy contained in the reference document.

The proposed deferral of OU 10-08 milestone dates is presented below:

- (1) March 2008 Submit Draft OU 10-08 RI/FS to IDEQ and EPA
- (2) December 2008 Submit Draft OU 10-08 ROD to IDEQ and EPA

Deferral creates four benefits:

(1) Deferral minimizes the possibility that the residual risk to the SRPA from the Subsurface Disposal Area (SDA) might be overestimated.

(2) Even though the duration of the OU 10-08 RI/FS characterization activities will be extended, no increase in the total cost of characterization, other than that due to escalation, is expected. In addition, the data collected during the characterization activities may well benefit the fulfillment of other INEEL agreements and, therefore, create offsetting cost savings.

(3) Deferral will avoid the need to create a new operable unit to resolve any new issues that could emerge if the OU 10-08 ROD were signed before the prematurely (i.e., before the OU 7-13/14 ROD). Therefore, deferring the two milestones eliminates the likelihood of needing to create a new operable unit.

(4) Deferral will avoid the need to complete two, expensive groundwater-modeling tasks (i.e., the first to support preparation of the OU 7-13/14 ROD, and the second to be performed after the OU 7-13/14 ROD to verify that the assumptions used in the OU 10-08 ROD adequately encompassed the risks described in the OU 7-13/14 ROD).

On the other hand, deferral carries with it the risk that more conservative environmental standards could be promulgated during the deferral period. Currently, it is assumed that the OU 10-08 ROD will not require additional remediation of the SRPA. This assumption is based upon:

- (1) Current drinking water standards remaining in effect, and
- (2) The INEEL remaining under federal government control for the long term.

If you have any questions concerning this submittal, please call either Glenn Nelson at (208) 526-0077 or me at (208) 526-4392.

Sincerely,



Kathleen E. Hain, Manager
Environmental Restoration Program

cc: R. Poeton, EPA, Region 10, (M/S ECL-113)
G. Winter, IDDEQ-Boise, Technical Services (Geosciences)