

# *Long-Term Stewardship Public Involvement Report for Fiscal Year 2003*



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# **Long-Term Stewardship Public Involvement Report for Fiscal Year 2003**

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## **ABSTRACT**

From March through July of 2003, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Bechtel BWXT Idaho, LLC (BBWI) personnel conducted several public meetings with stakeholders and government officials in the communities surrounding the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). The meetings centered on topics related to long-term stewardship. The communities involved included Fort Hall, Rexburg, Idaho Falls, and Arco, which are Idaho communities, as well as the community of Jackson, Wyoming.

This report includes a brief background of long-term stewardship public involvement, a DOE presentation, an implementation plan public comment period, and stakeholder questions and comments. Ten stakeholder organizations invited DOE and BBWI personnel to present a brief overview of the INEEL long-term stewardship program and the long-term stewardship implementation plan. Two organizations communicated concerns through conference calls. These meetings provided an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions and supply feedback. The INEEL long-term stewardship program plans to report annually to stakeholders and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, obtain their ideas for achieving the strategic objectives, and incorporate that information into stewardship management planning. Additionally, the long-term stewardship program will coordinate its stakeholder involvement activities with other Idaho Completion Project programs.

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# Long-Term Stewardship Public Involvement Report for Fiscal Year 2003

## 1. INTRODUCTION

To protect the public and the environment long after cleanup is completed, the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) established the long-term stewardship (LTS) program in 2001. The *INEEL Long-Term Stewardship Strategic Plan* (DOE-ID 2002a) and the *INEEL Long-Term Stewardship Implementation Plan* (DOE-ID 2003) define the LTS program. The Strategic Plan contains INEEL long-term stewardship goals, objectives, and mission and vision statements, while the Implementation Plan describes current and future activities that support objectives in the Strategic Plan.

The INEEL wrote the *Long-Term Stewardship Public Involvement Plan* in 2001 (INEEL 2001), outlining how stakeholder groups and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes would help define the LTS program and be involved in developing the Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan. One goal of the Strategic Plan is to help stakeholders and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes understand and be involved in long-term stewardship. To support this goal, the INEEL developed two strategic objectives: (1) identify appropriate levels of stakeholder and tribal involvement in INEEL long-term stewardship decisions and actions, and (2) maintain close relationships and communication with programs, agencies, stakeholders, and members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to ensure that the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) consistently understands and considers their long-term stewardship concerns.

In 2002, the Citizens Advisory Board, citizen activist groups, city and county officials, agencies, and members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes participated in the development of the Strategic Plan by reviewing and commenting on a draft of the plan. Their comments were incorporated into the final plan and were used as a basis for the development of the Implementation Plan. In 2003, these groups reviewed draft copies of the Implementation Plan and some provided comments, which were incorporated into the final Implementation Plan (DOE-ID 2003).

## 2. FISCAL YEAR 2003 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

From March through July of 2003, DOE and Bechtel BWXT Idaho, LLC (BBWI) personnel conducted several public meetings with stakeholders and government officials in the communities surrounding the INEEL. These communities included the Idaho cities of Fort Hall, Rexburg, Idaho Falls, and Arco, in addition to Jackson, Wyoming. This report includes a brief background of LTS public involvement, the DOE presentation, the Implementation Plan public comment period, and stakeholder questions and comments.

Long-Term Stewardship personnel contacted the following 22 local and regional stakeholders to determine their interest in learning more about the INEEL LTS program (refer to Appendix A for more detail about these groups):

- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
- Citizens Advisory Board and its subcommittee

- Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) groups in Rexburg, Gooding, Twin Falls, and Pocatello
- Association of Idaho Cities
- INEEL State Oversight
- Butte County commissioners
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Coalition 21
- City councils in the Idaho cities of Arco, Ketchum, Rigby, Twin Falls, Pocatello, Hailey, Idaho Falls, Rexburg, and in Jackson, Wyoming
- Snake River Alliance
- Keep Yellowstone Nuclear Free.

Ten stakeholder organizations invited DOE and BBWI personnel to present a brief overview of the INEEL LTS program and the LTS Implementation Plan. Two organizations communicated concerns through conference calls. These meetings provided a good opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions and supply feedback. For example, the public and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes were invited to review a draft of the INEEL LTS Implementation Plan and provide feedback.

### **3. PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER OUTREACH MATERIALS**

The LTS program presentation included a number of historical pictures of the INEEL, a brief summary of the strategic objectives, and an introduction to sections of the LTS Implementation Plan (DOE-ID 2003). Copies of the slides used in many of the presentations are presented in Appendix B. A brochure (see Appendix C) that summarizes the LTS program, defines many of the most common LTS terms, and lists additional LTS resources was handed out to participants.

Stakeholders who requested a hard copy were mailed a draft of the Implementation Plan one week ahead of schedule on July 7, 2003; the plan was also posted on the Internet on July 7. A press release notified the public that the plan was available for review. The public then had until August 15, 2003, to review and comment on the plan. Relatively few stakeholders provided comments in the allotted time.

### **4. CHANGES TO LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM, BASED ON STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS**

The INEEL LTS program was modified in response to comments from the public, tribal governments, and INEEL employees.

Before the first draft of the Strategic Plan was written, INEEL LTS personnel researched documents recording local and national public comments about long-term stewardship to extract the concerns of stakeholders and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. These comments were used to develop proposed vision and mission statements and the implementing objectives. The INEEL LTS personnel then consulted other DOE sites with long-term stewardship activities, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the

INEEL Citizens Advisory Board, federal and state agencies, regulatory organizations, environmental advocacy groups, a local Resource Conservation and Development Council, and local municipal governments. As a result of these consultations, personnel revised many of the objectives and the vision and mission statements before issuing the Strategic Plan (DOE-ID 2002a) for formal public comment.

Local stakeholders and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes expressed concerns about management of INEEL land after DOE finishes its mission. Because DOE plans to continue using the INEEL as a national multipurpose laboratory, DOE intends to retain management of the INEEL lands as currently configured. Before INEEL makes any final land-use decisions, DOE will consult stakeholders and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to ensure that their concerns are considered. In addition, DOE has an Agreement in Principle with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, establishing the protocols and expectations for interaction about the INEEL. The DOE will continue to abide by that agreement when making land-use decisions for the INEEL.

## **5. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT OBSERVATIONS**

INEEL officials met with interested groups, took part in telephone conference calls, and received written comments. Meetings effectively informed stakeholders about LTS activities, but the audience numbers were relatively low. Small group discussions were, however, a good venue for stakeholders to ask questions. Appendix D summarizes comments and questions.

Advertisements published in local newspapers in advance of meetings with community leaders or civic organizations did not appear to increase public attendance. Personal contact with clearly interested parties has been shown to be more effective, so advertisements may be dropped in the future.

Interestingly, most stakeholders did not comment on the implementation plan; however, all stakeholder comments received were incorporated into the final LTS Implementation Plan (DOE-ID 2003). A list of the public comments on the draft LTS Implementation Plan is included in Appendix E.

## **6. LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP PATH FORWARD**

The 2002 announcement by DOE to change INEEL's landlord responsibility from Environmental Management (EM) to the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science, and Technology (NE) brought questions from stakeholders and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes about stewardship responsibility. The current DOE assumption is that EM will continue to fund and manage stewardship activities until the Idaho Completion Project finishes remediation activities. Once the EM mission is complete, NE as the site landlord is expected to assume remaining long-term stewardship responsibility. Postponing the transfer to NE until remediation is complete would allow time to (1) establish a plan and operating baseline for long-term stewardship activities, (2) determine and reprogram resources and budget required for those activities, and (3) reach final agreement between EM and NE on the path forward for conducting long-term stewardship activities.

Given the lengthy time frames and the issues of risk that long-term stewardship must address, uncertainty is inevitably an important element in the decision-making process. The LTS program plans to report annually to stakeholders and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, obtain their ideas for achieving the strategic objectives, and incorporate that information into stewardship management planning. The LTS program will primarily target those groups that have expressed an interest in staying involved. Additionally, the LTS program will coordinate its stakeholder involvement activities with other Idaho Completion Project programs.



## 7. REFERENCES

- DOE-ID, 2002a, *INEEL Long-Term Stewardship Strategic Plan*, DOE/ID-11008, Revision 0, U.S. Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office, September 2002.
- DOE-ID, 2002b, *Environmental Management Performance Management Plan for Accelerating Cleanup of the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory*, DOE/ID-1106, Revision 0, U.S. Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office, July 2002.
- DOE-ID, 2003, *INEEL Long-Term Stewardship Implementation Plan*, DOE/ID-11084, Revision 0, U.S. Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office, September 2003.
- INEEL, 2001, *Long-Term Stewardship Public Involvement Plan*, INEEL/EXT-01-01445, Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory, October 2001.