



Department of Energy
Savannah River Operations Office
P.O. Box A
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

JAN 04 2007

Ms. Karen Patterson, Chair
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board
1103 Conger Drive
Aiken, South Carolina 29803

Dear Ms. Patterson:

SUBJECT: Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Recommendation Number 240 –
Savannah River Ecology Laboratory Funding Reductions (Your letter,
11/15/06)

Thank you for your recommendation on the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) Funding Reductions approved by the CAB on November 14, 2006. My responses to the three parts of Recommendation #240 are as follows.

Part 1 – DOE-EM sign the Cooperative Agreement to provide FY 2007 funding for SREL at no less than the \$4.5 million level and provide a minimum base level of at least \$4.5 million for subsequent out-years in accordance with the pending Cooperative Agreement.

The University of Georgia Research Foundation (UGARF) and the Department of Energy (DOE) entered into a new five-year cooperative agreement for SREL on December 8, 2006. The new performance period began on December 1, 2006.

Funding for the cooperative agreement in FY 2007 will come from a variety of sources including Environmental Management (EM), the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the University of Georgia, other Federal agencies, and yet to be identified sources. Included in the FY 2007 DOE funding is \$1,000,000 to be used for SREL infrastructure support. For future years, SREL research will depend on the need, merit, and funding availability as determined through direct discussions with DOE line organizations at the Savannah River Site (SRS) and elsewhere in the DOE-complex. Funding levels for future years have not been determined. Our expectation is that SREL will acquire funding sufficient to conduct the research necessary to provide an independent evaluation of the ecological effects of SRS operations and to apply ecological science to help meet DOE project-specific needs.

Part 2 – DOE-EM investigate the possibility of permanently establishing the funding for SREL under the authorization of the SRS landlord and the possibility of spreading the SREL funding across resources within the DOE-complex similar to technology development funding. DOE-EM provide a report on the findings of the investigation to the SRS CAB by March 22, 2007.

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As described in our answer to Part 1, future SREL funding will be based more upon direct DOE line organization support, coupled with funding from other sources. SREL will be seeking work for other agencies and organizations so it can become more self sufficient similar to the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL). Due to the self sufficient funding needs, the possibility of permanently establishing funding for SREL under the authorization of the SRS landlord is not necessary. Therefore, preparation of a funding alternative report is not being prepared.

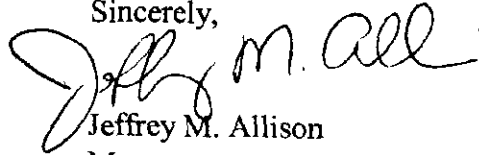
This process is analogous to how DOE supports SRNL. Funding for SRNL is not identified as a line item in the DOE-SR budget. Instead, SRNL receives its funding from different DOE line organizations to support project requirements. SRNL funding is also obtained through work performed for other agencies and organizations.

Part 3 – Before any future budget cuts are made to the SREL budget, DOE-SR must notify the SRS CAB as soon as they are aware of any impending budget cuts.

DOE will keep you apprised of ongoing SREL research, education and outreach activities. SREL funding will be a consideration in future budget presentations as committed to you in our Recommendation #238 response.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or Ben Gould of my staff at (803) 952-9323.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Allison
Manager

OESH-07-0041