



Department of Energy

Oak Ridge Office
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831

September 22, 2011

Mr. Ron Murphree, Chair
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board
Post Office Box 2001
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831

Dear Mr. Murphree:

RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER DATED JUNE 9, 2011, RECOMMENDATION 202: RECOMMENDATION ON SALT REMOVAL AT THE MOLTEN SALT REACTOR EXPERIMENT

Thank you for your recommendation concerning Salt Removal at the Molten Salt Reactor Experiment (MSRE). As you are aware, recent studies concerning this material recommend continued storage at the MSRE facility while other higher priority cleanup measures on the Oak Ridge Reservation are implemented. Nonetheless, relatively low cost planning activities are underway to support the eventual final disposition of this material. Responses to specific recommendations in your letter are as follows:

Recommendation: Begin an effort to find a path of disposal for the salt and determine the time limits under which that path, or paths, will be available.

Response: Past evaluations have assumed that the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP) will be used for ultimate disposition of the MSRE salts. Recent discussions with the DOE Carlsbad Field Office indicate that WIPP will be available as long as needed or at least until 2033. On-site storage is expected to be feasible for at least 50 years.

Recommendation: Begin an effort to understand pipe plugging and other problems that were experienced in previous salt removal efforts. The Department should work with qualified personnel to determine the problems.

Response: While an effort to completely understand the cause of pipe plugging is not planned, a review of documents prepared by retirees/former operators and designers of the MSRE was undertaken to better understand possible causes. Ways to address plugging and other problems experienced in previous salt removal efforts, as well as other removal approaches, will be evaluated when preparing the MSRE Remediation Strategy Plan, scheduled for completion in Fiscal Year 2012.

Recommendation: Select an alternative for salt disposal which leads to a path for disposal and has a very high chance of success, based upon the above evaluations.

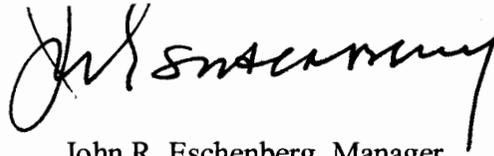
R. Murphree

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EXPERIMENT**

Response: This will also be developed as part of the MSRE Remediation Strategy Plan.



John R. Eschenberg, Manager
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cc:

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