



## ***Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB)***

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### **Full Board Meeting Molasky Corporate Center Las Vegas, Nevada**

**4:00 p.m. – June 17, 2026**

**Members Present:** Erik Anderson, Robert Blackstock, Lisa Blandi, John Cole, Gary Elgort, Thomas Fisher, Pamela Handor, Mark Hilton (Chair), Tammi Odegard, Lori Olson-Arzaga, Kevin Trainor, Eddie Williams (Vice-Chair)

**Members Absent:** Joycelyn Austin-Mabe, Anntoinette Rivera, Brandon Schmidt

**Liaisons Present:** Richard Arnold (Consolidated Group of Tribes and Organizations [CGTO]), Andrew Bennett (Clark County), Kelsey Bynum (U.S. National Park Service), Frank Bonesteel (Nye County Emergency Management [NCEM]), Meghan Lyle (State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection [NDEP]), John Klenke (Nye County Natural Resources and Federal Facilities Office [NRFFO]), Fred Perez, Esmeralda County Commission

**Liaisons Absent:** Bruce Jabbour (Nye County Commission), Janine Woodworth (Lincoln County Commission)

**U.S. Department of Energy (DOE):** **Environmental Management (EM) Nevada Program:** Robert Boehlecke (Deputy Designated Federal Officer [DDFO]), Tiffany Gamero, John Myers  
**National Nuclear Security Administration/Nevada Field Office (NNSA/NFO):** John Daniels, Paul Hogue

**Government Contractors:** **Navarro Research and Engineering, Inc. (Navarro):** Tim deBues, Brian Haight, Kevin Knapp, Dona Murphy, Barbara Ulmer

**Members of Public and Media:** Erin Culver, David Swale

### **Open Meeting/Chair's Opening Remarks**

Chair Mark Hilton welcomed and thanked the members, liaisons, and staff for attending the meeting. He noted that he did not attend the NSSAB tour as he was invited to a meeting with staff from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Office of Inspector General (OIG) on that same day. The DNFSB OIG staff were interested in the interactions and relationships between the various EM boards across the country and offered their support. Member Kevin Trainor moved to approve the draft agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **Public Comment**

The following public comment was provided in writing by Scott Elliott from Reno, NV: I am hoping that this email will suffice for a submission for public comment at the next meeting. I'm not sure if this is within NSSAB purview or not, but I would hope that they could advocate for the re-start of the monthly public tours at the NNSS. I was scheduled to go on one when the tours were temporarily canceled during a government shutdown, and it now appears that they are an ongoing budget casualty. I'm simply hoping something can be done to allow that program to continue; perhaps nominal visitor fees could help offset the program?

## **Liaison Updates**

### **Clark County** (*Andrew Bennett*)

Liaison Andrew Bennett, Director of the Offices of Traffic Safety and Nuclear Waste, shared that the county continues to appreciate the ongoing partnership and conversation with DOE colleagues. He stated that his office continues to keep Commissioner April Becker informed on items related to the nuclear realm. Liaison Bennett continued that there will be a new commissioner this election cycle as Commissioner Justin Jones is not running for reelection.

### **CGTO** (*Richard Arnold*)

Liaison Richard Arnold noted that the annual Tribal Update Meeting was held in April 2026 in partnership with NNSA/NFO and the EM Nevada Program. This meeting is an opportunity for the 16 culturally affiliated tribes of the CGTO to share thoughts and perspectives. One of the past recommendations that resulted from this meeting is the establishment of the Tribal Revegetation Project from 2017 to 2020, which was also a recommendation made by the NSSAB. Under this project, the Tribal Revegetation Committee (TRC) partnered with ecologists and subject matter experts from the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) to add Tribal ecological knowledge to scientific knowledge. This resulted in a high success rate on numerous test plots in an effort to effectively revegetate the 92-Acre Area of the Area 5 Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC). Liaison Arnold commented that the TRC will be visiting the Area 5 RWMC in October 2026 to close the project and share final perspectives.

Liaison Arnold continued that he will be attending the National Transportation Stakeholders Forum (NTSF) in Austin, TX, from June 23-25, 2026. He will also participate in the Tribal Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee's annual meeting on June 22, 2026, that focuses on updates and briefings on various DOE waste shipments. Liaison Arnold will attend the DOE National Cleanup Workshop in Arlington, VA, from September 14-16, 2026. He concluded that during the NTSF he will be meeting with staff from the Government Accountability Office regarding Tribal perspectives on EM Headquarters and its interaction with stakeholders.

### **Esmeralda County Commission** (*Fred Perez*)

Liaison Fred Perez updated that Esmeralda County staff are looking forward to the tour of the NNSS next week. He commented that their long-time administrative assistant for the Esmeralda County Board of Commissioners, Maureen Glennen, recently resigned her position.

### **NCEM** (*Frank Bonesteel*)

Liaison Frank Bonesteel had nothing new to report.

### **NRFFO** (*John Klenke*)

Liaison John Klenke had nothing new to report.

### **NDEP** (*Meghan Lyle*)

Liaison Meghan Lyle, Bureau of Federal Facilities Chief, reported that her staff recently observed activities at the Engine Maintenance, Assembly and Disassembly (EMAD) Facility and Pahute Mesa groundwater corrective action area. Her staff have also been involved with post-closure inspections and observed waste activities at the Area 5 RWMC. NDEP staff accompanied staff from the Office of Legacy Management for post-closure inspections at closed Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (FFACO) sites on the Tonopah Test Range. Liaison Lyle concluded that they are currently in the process of scheduling annual inspections for permitted sites on the NNSS.

### **NPS** (*Kelsey Bynum*)

Liaison Kelsey Bynum updated that Death Valley National Park reached its first night that the temperature did not go below 100 degrees on June 8, 2026. She continued that the spring 2025 counts for the devils hole pupfish were significantly impacted by several earthquakes over the winter with critically low number of about 30 fish. This year the population is starting to thrive again, and the count is about 88 pupfish. Liaison Bynum concluded that the NPS appreciates being a part of these regional environmental conversations.

### **NNSA/NFO Update** (*John Daniels and Paul Hogue, NNSA/NFO*)

Mr. John Daniels, Federal Public Affairs Officer, and Paul Hogue, Deputy Assistant Manager for Environmental Safety and Health, stated that the NNSA/NFO continues to provide support to the EM Nevada Program and to NDEP.

### **U.S. DOE Update** (*Robert Boehlecke, DOE*)

DDFO Robert Boehlecke provided updates on the following topics:

- **Underground Test Area (UGTA):** UGTA began well development and testing of the new wells in May 2026. The education session later this evening will provide more information.
- **Waste-Related Activities:** The next Low-Level Waste (LLW) Stakeholders Forum meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2026, in Pahrump, NV. Jared Franco with the State of Nevada Office of Emergency Management will be the guest speaker presenting on the Emergency Preparedness Working Group grant. Generators have been notified that I-40/I-15 waste shipment routes (connecting to CA-127 and NV-160) are restricted June 10–July 11, 2026, due to increased traffic expected for the 2026 World Cup and limited emergency response and law enforcement services along the routes.
- **FFACO:** A Transition Working Group meeting was held in May 2026 to discuss the draft communications plan and other transition planning items. This is a long-term collaboration to ensure that the EM Nevada Program is fully prepared for the transition in 2028. Of note, the recommendation provided by the NSSAB is referenced in the draft materials reviewed by the Working Group.
- **Strategic Updates:** The EM Nevada Program provided an overview briefing for DOE's Office of Legacy Management staff earlier this month. In addition, an update on EM Nevada Program activities was provided to the Desert Research Institute (DRI) Community

Environmental Monitors this week. DDFO Boehlecke will attend the EM HQ Intergovernmental meeting in Arlington, VA, next week. The NNSA/NFO is hosting an NNSS tour for local government officials next week. The EM Nevada Program is anticipating a visit by Mr. Timothy Walsh, Assistant Secretary (EM-1), in the coming months.

- **EMAD Facility:** Significant progress has been made to demolish the EMAD Cold Bay strategically so that the Hot Bay remains intact for potential reuse. This approach supports the Department's objective to transform liabilities into opportunities. While no new mission has been identified yet, the facility has a unique reinforced concrete Hot Bay is considered a national asset.
- **May the Science Be With You:** At the beginning of May 2026, Navarro participated in the DRI-hosted event held in conjunction with the Las Vegas Science and Technology Festival. Approximately 1,000 people of all ages attended the Star Wars themed event and there was a lot of interest in the interactive EM Nevada Program groundwater demonstration.
- **Waste Management Symposia (WMS)** – Navarro Projects Director, Troy Thomson, and DDFO Boehlecke shared information on EM Nevada Program's success at the WMS in early March 2026. While DDFO Boehlecke participated in a panel on Crosscutting Policies and Programs and an Energy Facility Contractors Group roundtable session, Mr. Thomson briefed a large crowd on the use of innovative water jet technology to safely and efficiently segment large cryogenic dewars at Test Cell C. That presentation resulted in another site reaching out to further discuss the technology for potential use at its site.
- **Recognition of Member Gary Elgort** – DDFO Boehlecke and Ms. Tiffany Gamero recognized Member Elgort for his six years of service on the NSSAB from October 2020 – September 2026, during which he provided his perspectives on behalf of the community of Mesquite, NV. During his tenure, Member Elgort traveled to the NNSS in 2022 to observe post-closure monitoring, generator sites in 2023 and 2024 to observe Radioactive Waste Acceptance Program (RWAP) facility evaluations, and he attended the Devils Hole Workshop in 2023 and 2024. In May 2024, Member Elgort also observed real time radiography (RTR) activities at the NNSS. Following his participation in these activities, he provided great reports and his insights led to many NSSAB recommendations. During the break, a cake and coffee were enjoyed by the Board in his honor.

### **Other NSSAB Business** (*Mark Hilton, Chair*)

### **EM Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Spring National Chairs Meeting**

Chair Hilton and Vice-Chair Eddie Williams provided an update on the EM SSAB Spring National Chairs Meeting that was held in April 2026, hosted by the Hanford Site in Pasco, WA. A tour of the Hanford Site was conducted on the first day that included the Manhattan Project National Historic Park that is part of the NPS. The meeting included update briefings and the round robins from each of the eight EM advisory boards presenting topics to Mr. Joel Bradburne, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (EM-2), that highlighted the boards' top interest/concerns and accomplishments. The meeting materials and PowerPoint slides are available [here](#).

Chair Hilton explained that the chairs and vice-chairs from each of the SSABs developed a draft recommendation for support for DOE-EM Reuse and Recycling Community of Practice. A copy of the draft recommendation letter was provided to the NSSAB in advance for review. Chair Hilton

explained that the language in the draft recommendation letter could not be changed. After discussion, Member Trainor made a motion that the NSSAB approve the draft recommendation. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The NSSAB Office will inform the EM SSAB Office that the motion passed, and Chair Hilton's signature will be included on the letter when submitted to Mr. Timothy Walsh (EM-1) for his consideration.

Vice-Chair Williams provided an update on the NSSAB annual tour of the NNSS on April 15, 2026. Tour stops included the EMAD Facility, Area 5 RWMC that included the new drive-through truck portal, and the U.S. Geological Survey Core Library. Vice-Chair Williams noted that NNSS tours provide information that support NSSAB members in making valuable recommendations to the EM Nevada Program.

**Educational Session: Well Development and Testing (WDT) at Pahute Mesa** *(Tim deBues and Brian Haight, Navarro)*

Tim deBues, UGTA Senior Modeler, and Brian Haight, UGTA Integration Manager, provided the NSSAB with an educational session on WDT at Pahute Mesa. The NSSAB thanked the presenters for the information and availability to answer Board questions.

**Meeting Wrap-Up and Adjournment**

After Chair Hilton's closing remarks, Member Trainor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.