



Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB)

Full Board Meeting Molasky Corporate Center Las Vegas, NV

4:00 p.m. – June 18, 2025

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

Members Absent: Anntoinette Rivera

Liaisons Present: Chris Andres and Meghan Lyle (State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection [NDEP], Richard Arnold (Consolidated Group of Tribes and Organizations [CGTO]), Andrew Bennett (Clark County), Frank Bonesteel, Patrick Lazenby, and Scott Lewis (Nye County Emergency Management [NCEM]), Bruce Jabbour (Nye County Commission), John Klenke (Nye County Natural Resources and Federal Facilities Office [NRFFO]), 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): Caesar Alfaro, John Daniels, John Hogue, Scott Tarbox

Government Contractors: **Navarro Research and Engineering, Inc. (Navarro):** Irene Farnham, Jeff Jarry, Kevin Knapp, Dona Murphy, Glenn Puit, Barbara Ulmer
Desert Research Institute (DRI): Chuck Russell

Member of the Public Signed In: Linda Booker, Atomic Legacy Home Health, Las Vegas

Open Meeting/Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Mark Hilton welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance, particularly given the warm temperatures. Vice-Chair Kevin Trainor moved to approve the draft agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Liaison Updates

Clark County (*Andrew Bennett*)

Liaison Andrew Bennett, Director of the Office of Traffic Safety, noted that he manages the county's Nuclear Waste Division. He noted that the Nevada Legislature just completed its 120-day session, and the only nuclear-related item was Senate Joint Resolution 7, which Clark County supported. This resolution reaffirmed the state's position against the storage of nuclear radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain. Liaison Bennett noted that his office tracks and monitors waste shipments going through Clark County and continues studying traffic patterns on State Route 160. He concluded that the county is following federal Supreme Court cases released today.

CGTO (*Richard Arnold*)

Liaison Richard Arnold reported that the National Transportation Stakeholders Forum (NTSF) recently held its annual meeting in Las Vegas. During the plenary session, Robert Boehlecke provided an overview of the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) and EM activities at the NNSS that was well received by those in attendance. There were attendees, including Tribal representatives, from across the United States. Attendees were given the choice to tour the NNSS or the Atomic Museum. During the NNSS tour, attendees visited the Area 5 Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC). Tour attendees were impressed with the progress of the remediation of corrective action sites. During the NTSF, the Tribal Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee met to discuss transportation and emergency management activities. EM HQ staff shared resources, including the DOE Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program, and Federal Emergency Management Agency shared information on Hazardous Agent Mitigation and Medical Emergency Response. This conference is an opportunity for the Tribes to build capacity and learn about transportation activities across the Complex. Liaison Arnold commented that he is involved in the State and Tribal Government Working Group (STGWG) that is supported by EM HQs. He reported that STGWG meetings are currently on hold awaiting funding and authorization to proceed. Liaison Arnold continued that the CGTO meets with NNSA/NFO, along with the EM Nevada Program, for updates and one item of discussion is the transition of EM closed sites on the NNSS after the EM Nevada Program's mission is complete. Liaison Arnold concluded that last week the Tribal Planning Committee met to remain engaged and up to date on any NNSS activities.

Lincoln County Commission (*Janine Woodworth*)

Liaison Janine Woodworth had nothing new to report.

Nye County Commission (*Bruce Jabbour*)

Liaison Bruce Jabbour summarized information included in the June 16th Senate Reconciliation Bill regarding the sale of at least 2 million acres of U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land

Management land in 11 western states over the next five years. This information was presented yesterday to the Nye County Commissioners during its Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting.

In response, two Board members objected to opinions offered.

NCEM (*Scott Lewis*)

Liaison Scott Lewis reported that with the cooperation of citizens, the Nye County BOCC, and Assemblyman Gregory Hafen, AB69 was passed by the Nevada Legislature. This bill was sustained without sunset for all fire departments, both career and volunteer, within Nye County to continue receiving funding under the public safety and usage tax. This is the only sustainable revenue source and one of the most vital support systems offered to citizens and the fire departments to allow for the conduct of operations in the most rural areas in Nevada. He commented that there are shipments of 2.5 million pounds of lithium-ion transported through the rural areas of Nye County. As these shipments continue, NCEM is better prepared with the use of a F500 fire suppressant and more detailed information will be included in an educational session later in tonight's agenda. Liaison Lewis concluded that NCEM will host the next Low-Level Waste Stakeholders Forum (LLWSF) meeting on August 13 and the Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting on August 7.

NCNRFFO (*John Klenke*)

Liaison John Klenke shared a map that included locations for the 20 wells that were sampled under the 2024 Nye County Tritium Sampling and Monitoring Program (TSaMP). The objective of TSaMP is to verify through independent methods that tritium has not been detected moving off the NNSS and onto publicly accessible or private lands downgradient of areas formerly used for nuclear weapons testing. In 2024, TSaMP marked its tenth year with next year being the last year of the grant. Nye County is currently in discussions with DOE officials to discuss a possible grant extension. He noted that this grant also includes funding for Nye County representatives to participate in preemptive reviews of ongoing hydrologic studies and modeling efforts to advance former underground nuclear test areas to closure on the NNSS as required by federal and state environmental laws. Liaison Klenke explained that these samples are analyzed for tritium by a radiation safety engineering firm in Chandler, AZ, and the minimum detection concentration for the samples is 335 picocuries/liter, which is approximately 1.7 percent of the Safe Water Drinking Act limit of 20,000 picocuries/liter. All samples were no detects or below the lower limit. Article featured in Pahrump Valley Times on June 11, 2025, can be accessed [here](#).

NDEP (*Christine Andres*)

Liaison Christine Andres, Bureau of Federal Facilities Chief, stated that her office has received the draft Closure Report for Test Cell C for review. Under the Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (FFACO), NDEP staff oversees the post-closure monitoring conducted by the DOE Office of Legacy Management at the Central Nevada Test Area, the Tonopah Test Range, and Project Shoal in northern Nevada. NDEP also has waste management oversight and regulation at the NNSS and is provided with the opportunity to observe facility evaluations conducted by the Radioactive Waste Acceptance Program (RWAP) as it gives NDEP staff a good perspective of the different waste streams coming to the NNSS for disposal. Liaison Andres announced that she will be retiring in two weeks, and her waste management expert has also given her notice. These positions were posted on Friday on the state's website, so NSSAB members/liaisons may interact with new NDEP staff in the future.

NNSA/NFO Update (*John Daniels, NNSA/NFO*)

In response to an NSSAB member's question, Mr. John Daniels, NNSA/NFO Federal Public Affairs Officer, commented that the previous Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm launched an initiative to provide DOE land to private industry to produce clean energy, such as solar, wind, and/or small modular reactors. The NNSS was one of the locations that was selected for this initiative. About a year ago, the NNSA/NFO selected a contractor and were in the planning stages to install solar power in Area 22 in the southeast corner of the NNSS. With the new Administration, the project is on hold, although current Secretary of Energy Chris Wright is interested in maintaining these projects. Mr. Daniels committed to providing updates on this item at future NSSAB meetings.

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

DDFO Robert Boehlecke provided updates on the following topics:

- **Industrial Sites:** The Industrial Sites team has completed the demolition of the largest ancillary structure remaining at the Engine Maintenance, Assembly and Disassembly (EMAD) Facility on the NNSS. The trainshed was brought down safely and securely. The accomplishment was featured in the latest edition of the EM Update newsletter that can be accessed [here](#). At Test Cell C, size reduction of Dewars 1 and 2 continues.
- **Underground Test Area (UGTA):** The UGTA team has commenced drilling at Pahute Mesa. The wells being drilled are up to 3,200 feet below ground surface. This will facilitate new data collection and testing and analysis of groundwater. Crews are drilling on a 24/7 schedule. Wells to be completed will allow pumping of targeted aquifers using electric submersible pumps, rod pumps, or bailers. These wells will provide for aquifer testing to assess hydraulic continuity and for groundwater sampling for radionuclides and other analytes. [Frenchman Flat](#) was the first groundwater corrective action area to reach closure in 2016. The [Yucca Flat](#) groundwater region was brought to closure in 2020. The same year, the [Rainier Mesa and Shoshone Mountain](#) groundwater corrective action areas reached closure ahead of schedule.
- **Drive-Through Portal:** The EM Nevada Program is getting closer to a full installation of its drive-through real-time radiography (RTR) portal unit that will expand the radioactive waste verification capabilities at the NNSS. The unit will allow larger items to be screened at Area 5 RWMC. Currently, the NNSS has one RTR unit at the Area 5 RWMC that takes x-ray images of waste packages to scan for prohibited items, such as liquids, batteries, or electronics. The biggest limiting factor with the current RTR unit is size restrictions, so the new drive-through portal unit will greatly expand the capacity. The scanner can penetrate up to 305 millimeters of steel. The system will use one operating mode, "cargo only," which detects the gap between cab and trailer, ensuring the driver has passed through before initiating the x-ray source at full power. Drivers will maintain a speed of 2-10 mph. The drive-through portal unit is the result of an additional \$15 million in funding allocated by Congress to the EM Nevada Program. The Mission Support and Test Services, LLC (MSTS) contractor has built a new access road for trucks to reach the area and are installing two trailers to house a control room, equipment, and extra office space. Walkways, power lines, and other necessary infrastructure will also be added. MSTS plans to expand the storage pad behind the existing RTR building so more containers can be staged to support RTR operations. The new RTR portal system is anticipated to be functional later this year.

- **NTSF:** In May 2025, the EM Nevada Program was involved in the NTSF. DDFO Boehlecke participated in a panel, providing information on the basics of low-level waste transportation and disposal operations. Navarro's strategic communications team helped facilitate a tour at the NNSS with nearly 60 people attending.
- **EM Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) National Chairs Meeting:** The EM Nevada Program successfully hosted an all-virtual EM SSAB National Chairs meeting in April 2025. This meeting had a good turnout that included a lot of productive discussions between SSAB leadership and EM senior leaders.
- **LLWSF and Waste Generator Workshop (WGW):** The EM Nevada Program hosted the LLWSF and WGW in May 2025. The objective of the WGW is to provide waste generators that ship waste to the NNSS with updates and pertinent information. During the WGW, longtime federal employee, Jhon Carilli, announced his retirement. Also recently retired was Bill Wilborn who was instrumental in moving the UGTA activity forward. The EM Nevada Program is thankful for their decades of service and support to the NSSAB and will be missed.

Development of an Outline for a Communication Plan for the Transition of EM Sites on the NNSS – Work Plan Item #3 *(Tiffany Gamero, DOE)*

- **NSSAB – Work Plan Item #3**
 - From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation on specific topics to be included in the final Site Communication Plan for transition and how and to whom it should be communicated
 - NSSAB recommendation is due tonight or in September 2025
 - The EM Nevada Program's long-term monitoring/stewardship responsibilities for corrective action sites (CASs) are expected to transition in 2030. In preparation for this transition, a Communications Plan will be prepared
- **Transition Communication Plan Contents**
 - Purpose
 - Background
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Stakeholders
 - Communication Tools
 - Key Messages
- **Purpose**
 - High-level summary section that will include information on:
 - CASs with land-use restrictions and post-closure monitoring requirements.
 - Need for transition to a long-term steward upon completion of the EM Nevada Mission.
- **Background**
 - This section will describe the regulatory drivers:
 - The FFACO is a regulatory agreement signed by DOE, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the state of Nevada in 1996 and specifies requirements for identifying and addressing sites impacted by DOE nuclear-related activities in Nevada.

- **Roles and Responsibilities**
 - Primary DOE contacts will be identified in this section and transition roles and responsibilities specified.
- **Stakeholders**
 - Plan will include a list of key stakeholders who will be provided updates on the transition process:
 - EM Nevada Program Intergovernmental Liaisons
 - Communities surrounding the NNSS
 - NSSAB
 - LLWSF Representatives
 - Nevada Congressional Delegation
- **Communication Tools**
 - Mechanisms for keeping stakeholders informed will be identified in the plan and include:
 - Briefings
 - EM Press Releases
 - EM Update News Articles
 - Fact Sheets
 - Public Notices
 - Social Media Posts
 - YouTube Videos
- **Key Messages**
 - This section includes a list of the key messages that will be communicated to stakeholders:
 - The EM Nevada Program completed environmental corrective actions at sites on the NNSS and Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR).
 - The EM Nevada Program will transfer long-term stewardship responsibility for NNSS sites to NNSA/NFO. *
 - The FFACO sites will remain restricted from public access.

*Transfer to NNSA/NFO is assumed at this time but is subject to change

In response to Board questions, the following clarifications were provided:

- The EM Nevada Program is currently working on the Communications Plan outline and the topics to be included in the plan.
- The EM Nevada Program expects to complete the closure of FFACO sites by fiscal year (FY) 2030 and then transition these sites to the eventual DOE long-term steward.
- Closed FFACO sites that are not under the current operation of DOE are transitioned to the DOE Office of Legacy Management (OLM) to conduct long-term monitoring and reporting. An example of a transfer of stewardship responsibility to OLM is the Tonopah Test Range (TTR) on the NTTR as it is not DOE, but U.S. Air Force (USAF) controlled land. Stewardship responsibility for all 70 FFACO closed sites on the TTR, including the records, were transferred to the OLM. Closed FFACO sites located on the NNSS will transition to the NNSS landlord.
- The main differences between the transition of FFACO closed sites on the TTR and the planned transition for FFACO closed sites on the NNSS are the EM Nevada Program mission will be complete, the USAF will have a smaller role as a stakeholder, and the larger number of sites on the NNSS.
- The EM Nevada Program will use the Communication Plan to communicate and reassure the public that DOE is retaining its responsibility and requirements for post-closure

inspections and reporting for closed FFACO sites on the NNSS. It is a transfer from one DOE entity to another. The NSSAB will continue to be included in updates to the transition and the EM Nevada Program plans to be proactive and conduct more communications on the transition for communities near the NNSS prior to the transition. After the transition, NDEP will continue to be involved under the regulatory requirements under the FFACO.

- The EM Nevada Program maintains a database of records that is accessible by the FFACO signatories. FFACO documentation, including closure reports, is available to the public at the Nuclear Testing Archive Public Virtual Reading Room: <https://nnss.gov/nuclear-testing-archive/>
- The final Communications Plan will be used internally to guide the EM Nevada Program staff on key messages.

Chair Hilton led Board discussion on work plan item #3 with the following proposed recommendations provided by members during the meeting on specific topics to be included in the final Communication Plan for site transition and how and to whom it should be communicated. These proposed recommendations also include items of interest that the NSSAB felt are important to communicate with the public during the transition.

- Under the Purpose section, include categories describing the types of restrictions and post-closure monitoring requirements (*G. Elgort*)
- Under the Background section, provide background on the history of U.S. Department of Energy legacy nuclear testing activities on the NNSS (*G. Elgort*)
- Under the Stakeholders section, provide a method to determine which communities that will be given additional communications regarding the transition (E.g., Communities adjacent to the NNSS? Communities in California/Utah?) (*G. Elgort*)
- Under the Communication Tools section, include links to the Nuclear Testing Archive Public Virtual Reading Room and for other important documents, such as the NNSS Environmental Report (*G. Elgort*)
- Address in the scope: 1) a definition of stewardship, 2) migration for both groundwater and dust, and 3) what the transition to a future steward encompasses and what does it not include (*L. Olson-Arzaga*)
- Provide before and after visuals of FFACO closed sites to demonstrate progress at NNSS (*R. Blackstock*)
- Explore using an interactive texting/response system (*T. Odegard*)
- Celebrate the successes of completing the cleanup mission on the NNSS (*T. Fisher*)
- Communicate adequate information to the public and where they can access more if interested (*T. Fisher*)
- Limit the use of jargon and acronyms (*T. Fisher*)

After careful consideration and lengthy discussions, Member Gary Elgort made a motion to defer the proposed above recommendations for Navarro's strategic communications team to wordsmith and then bring forward for further Board discussion and action during the next Full Board meeting on September 10, 2025. NSSAB members are asked to ponder these proposed recommendations and consider any additional recommendations prior to the meeting. Ms. Gamero thanked the NSSAB for the discussion regarding work plan item #3 as it will be valuable in developing the final Communications Plan.

Educational Session: F500 Fire Suppressant (*Scott Lewis, NCEM Liaison*)

Chief Scott Lewis provided an educational session on the F500 encapsulating agent (EA) and the firefighting trailer training. The presentation also included information on the lithium-ion battery fire on U.S. 95 in September 2024. NCEM purchased two F500 EA firefighting trailers and one pallet of F500 EA with an Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG) grant in FY 2021. DDFO Boehlecke explained that the EPWG grant is funded by the DOE EM Nevada Program based on \$.50 per cubic foot of classified, low-level (LLW), and mixed MLLW disposed of at the NNSS. More than \$16.6 million has been distributed through the State of Nevada Division of Emergency Management to Clark, Elko, Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine counties since FY 2000. Chief Lewis answered Board questions and Chair Hilton thanked him for his presentation. For more information, EM Update Article, *EM Nevada Enhances Emergency Response with Grant Funding*, and video on Nye County F-500 training can be accessed [here](#).

Liaison Andrew Bennett presented Liaison Chris Andres with a proclamation from the Clark County BOCC naming July 7, 2025, as Chris Andres day. The NSSAB provided a cake to thank Liaison Andres for her support and wished her well on her retirement.

Other NSSAB Business (*Mark Hilton, Chair*)

EM SSAB National Chairs Meeting

In April 2025, Chair Hilton and Vice-Chair Trainor represented the NSSAB during the EM SSAB National Chairs Meeting hosted by the EM Nevada Program via a virtual format. Chair Hilton presented the NSSAB's round robin to EM HQ Senior Leadership highlighting accomplishments and key topics of importance to the NSSAB. Chair Hilton and Vice-Chair Trainor recapped the meeting for the Board. Meeting agenda, round robin, minutes, and presentations from the meeting can be accessed [here](#).

Notification of Chair/Vice-Chair Elections for FY 2026

Chair Hilton announced that elections will be held for the NSSAB Chair and Vice-Chair positions during the September 10th Full Board meeting. A list outlining the responsibilities for both positions was provided to the Board, and members were encouraged to consider running for a leadership position. Interested members are asked to notify the NSSAB Office by September 1, 2025, to be placed on the ballot.

Update on LLWSF Meeting

Member Lisa Blandi shared items of interest from her attendance at the LLWSF held on May 7, 2025, in Las Vegas.

Follow-up on National Academies' Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board

Chair Hilton was invited to participate in a webinar hosted by the National Academies' Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board and communicated items of interest to the NSSAB.

Meeting Wrap-Up and Adjournment

Upcoming calendar of events:

- NSSAB Pahute Mesa Groundwater Tour at the NNSS – July 9, 2025
- LLW Stakeholders Forum – Pahurmp (invite only) (Member Lisa Blandi to attend and represent the NSSAB) – August 13, 2025
- NSSAB Liaison Intergovernmental meeting – Molasky Corporate Center, Las Vegas, NV at 3 p.m. (Chair Mark Hilton and Vice-Chair Kevin Trainor to attend) – September 10, 2025
- NSSAB Full Board meeting – Molasky Corporate Center, Las Vegas, NV at 4 p.m. – September 10, 2025

After Chair Hilton's closing remarks, Vice-Chair Trainor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.