



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

DEC 16 2005

OFFICE OF
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr. M. Granger Morgan
Chair, EPA Science Advisory Board
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Morgan:

Thank you very much for the Science Advisory Board's (SAB) May 23, 2005, review of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Contaminated Sites and RCRA Multi-Year Plans, EPA-SAB-05-009, *An Advisory of the Contaminated Sites and RCRA Multi-Year Plan Advisory Panel of the EPA Science Advisory Board*.

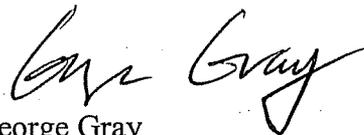
I am pleased that the Panel found that the research plans generally meet the needs of the Agency's land protection and restoration program and are scientifically sound. We also appreciate the Panel's endorsement of our intention to merge these two plans. The Panel's recommendations regarding clarity in the revised plan and allocation of resources to anticipatory research are being evaluated and implemented to the extent possible.

The new National Program Director (NPD) and the Land Research Coordination Team, are currently using the recommendations in the advisory report about clarity and linkage as they craft the merged multi-year plan. In particular, they are focusing on articulating long-term goals and supporting documentation that more clearly link the research program to the Agency's Strategic Plan and that more directly respond to the Office of Management and Budget's Program Assessment and Rating Tool and R&D investment criteria. The new plan structure will address these issues at the long-term goal and annual performance goal levels, while underlying sections will retain the media or problem-based focus important to the research clients. We appreciate the Panel's offer to consult with us on the proposed new long-term goals; however, we may not be able to schedule a consultation within the time constraints of preparing for a program review in December. The NPD will discuss options with the Panel's Designated Federal Official.

The Land Research Coordination Team agrees with the Panel's recommendation to allocate a certain amount of resources to forward-looking research. They are exploring ways to do this as they merge and update the plan. This process includes consultation with the program office and regional clients, and is consistent with the Panel's recommendation to institute "continuous re-scoping" for emerging research topics.

The EPA team that participated in the review found the Panel members to be very knowledgeable and fully engaged in helping them refine the research program and better articulate the plan. Please extend my appreciation to Dr. McFarland and the Panel members for their fine work.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Gray". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

George Gray
Assistant Administrator