



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

DEC 1 2006

THE ADMINISTRATOR

M. Granger Morgan, Ph.D.  
Chair, Science Advisory Board  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Morgan:

Thank you very much for the Science Advisory Board's August 22, 2006, review of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Draft Guidance on Environmental Models and its Models Knowledge Base (EPA-SAB-06-009). The Board's thoughtful and insightful recommendations will help the Agency meet the ongoing challenge to improve the quality and transparency with which it uses models to make decisions. This challenge is critical – transparent models crystallize sound analyses into sound policies.

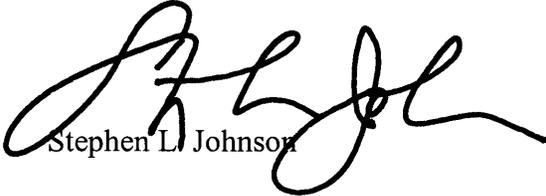
With leadership from its Council for Regulatory Environmental Modeling, EPA's Science Policy Council, chaired by Dr. George Gray, is fully committed to responding to the Board's review by accomplishing the following complementary activities within one year:

- ***Deliver a Final Guidance Document on Environmental Models.*** EPA will consider comments from the Board, recommendations from the National Research Council, and insights gleaned from the formal public comment period in order to finalize its guidance document.
- ***Deliver a Refined Version of the Models Knowledge Base, along with a Strategic Vision and Plan for its Improvement.*** In the short term, EPA will provide more complete information on environmental models in the Knowledge Base. Additionally, EPA will explore and will report on longer-term options for EPA and other institutions to manage, to share, and to integrate environmental models and data more efficiently.
- ***Support Intra-Agency Modeling Coordination and Integrated Modeling.*** EPA will implement a series of activities to continue providing a venue for intra-agency coordination on modeling issues. To kick off these activities, the CREM will organize a workshop in January 2007 to discuss how best to integrate models across media and across disciplines in order to treat the environment as an integrated whole.

- ***Incorporate Uncertainty in Model-based Decision Making.*** As the Board noted, the complex nature of data and modeling uncertainties needs to be carefully communicated to decision makers. EPA will develop a strategy to research approaches for treating and communicating uncertainties in both model development and model use.

Again, my thanks for the service that the Science Advisory Board has provided in helping to ensure that the best available science – formalized and codified within a model – continues to inform Agency decisions.

Sincerely,



Stephen L. Johnson

cc: Dr. Thomas L. Theiss  
Chair, Regulatory Environmental Modeling Guidance Review Panel