

## Southwest District Office

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Bob Taft, Governor  
Maureen O'Connor, Lt. Governor  
Christopher Jones, Director

March 21, 2002

Mr. Steve McCracken  
US Department of Energy  
Fernald Environmental Management Project  
PO Box 538705  
Cincinnati OH 45239-8705

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Dear Mr. McCracken:

Ohio EPA is writing you to express our support for U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) efforts to improve and accelerate cleanups within the Environmental Management program. The Top-to-Bottom Review stresses the opportunities for efficiency improvements within the cleanup program. We believe the Fernald site provides an excellent example of how a clear focus on closure, flexibility, and a good working relationship between DOE, regulators and stakeholders can result in cost savings and acceleration of cleanup.

The Fernald site is poised to achieve significant cleanup acceleration through additional funding from the *Expedited Cleanup Account*. Following are a few of the many opportunities for acceleration that would be provided by additional funding:

- Purchase of additional rail cars for waste transport to disposal sites.
- Acceleration of building Decontamination and Decommissioning.
- Acceleration of construction of the Silos remediation facility to mitigate operating schedule risks.
- Accelerate waste disposition.

Additionally, Fernald has demonstrated success in utilizing funding from the Office of Science and Technology to accelerate and improve cleanup through innovative technologies and technical assistance. Many of those technologies have subsequently been utilized by other DOE sites as improvements. Ohio EPA has been supportive of this relationship between EM-50 and Fernald and hopes to see it continue.

Achieving closure by 2006 will be very challenging. DOE and its contractors bear a tremendous responsibility to manage these large construction/remediation projects in a safe, protective and efficient manner. The accelerated project is going to require even

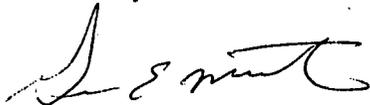
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closer coordination with all stakeholders and regulators.

Ohio EPA has demonstrated the willingness and ability to work with DOE to prioritize work, reduce risks, implement change and produce results. We are committed to working with DOE to achieve a protective cleanup of the Fernald site in an efficient and timely manner. Ohio EPA would also like to reiterate the importance of DOE establishing a credible and appropriate long term stewardship program to achieving successful closure of the Fernald site. With DOE Headquarter's support for the Fernald project and additional funding through the *Expedited Cleanup Account*, we believe both schedule acceleration and risk reduction are achievable at Fernald.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (937) 285-6357.

Sincerely,



Graham E. Mitchell, Chief  
Office of Federal Facilities Oversight  
Ohio EPA

cc: Jim Saric, U.S. EPA  
Terry Hagen, FDF