

Environmental Advocacy for the proper clean-up of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory and similar legacy nuclear and aerospace sites nationwide.

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

July 9, 2008

Senator Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
Washington DC, 20510

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington DC, 20510

Representative Elton Gallegly
House of Representatives
Washington, DC, 20515

Representative Henry Waxman
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL)

Dear Senators and Representatives,

We write to you today in strong support of requests presented to you by the Natural Resources Defense Council and Committee to Bridge the Gap to ensure that USEPA be able to lead the necessary radiation soil survey promised to the surrounding communities through your efforts in HR2764.

An EPA led characterization survey and clean-up of the radioactive contamination left behind at the site, using true and proper EPA Agricultural Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs) as the basis for detection limits for determining clean-up has been promised. We agree that more explicit congressional direction is necessary including future specific funding allocation directives to be sure that proper characterization and remediation is ultimately accomplished. We have been waiting for real action for decades, while the toxins from this highly polluted facility continues to impact the surrounding communities that have grown closer and closer to the site above. This action must include characterization of ALL chemical and radiological contaminants of concern to the most protective level based on health-risk assessment standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The radioactive contamination should be characterized for the entire site as ETEC operations included Area I in addition to Area IV, and the drainage of effluent toxins were discharged to ponds leading to Areas II and III. The aerial dispersion from the SRE Nuclear accident in 1959 (which is argued to be the worst nuclear accident on U.S. soil) in addition to decades of burning of hazardous wastes in astronomical quantities, has impacted the surrounding hillsides and communities and all directions and therefore cannot be limited to the 290 acre portion identified as ETEC or Area IV.

We are greatly concerned that these monies (97% of funds have gone elsewhere) have been disproportionately used for programs unrelated to the SSFL cleanup activities envisioned by congressional staff as HR2764 was drafted. Clearly, the intended purpose for these earmarked funds through HR2764 was to complete the long awaited survey as well as other remedial activities at the SSFL and this has simply been ignored by DOE despite long and continued communicated concern from the public that EPA be given leading authority because of past handling of the issues.

We respectfully urge you to please require that EPA have sole authority over radiation clean-up of the site including full site-characterization of all areas (Areas I, II, III, and IV and all related buffer-zones and drainages and associated undeveloped land). For an effective clean-up, we must have a scientifically sound and thorough soil survey of the entire site so that the most protective measures can be taken while dealing with these toxins for both the workers and the surrounding communities. We need the right expertise and we need to be able to start believing in the answers being given and for that reason, we need to work with USEPA Region 9 AND the EPA Radiation and Indoor Environments National Laboratory in Las Vegas to help lead the way as the leading source of knowledge and experience of this site.

Sincere thanks for your consideration and continued commitment to insure proper funding is allocated for each year needed, until clean-up has been completed. At the very least, the commitment to funding should be equal to the commitment that led to these nuclear programs in the first place because as a country, we need to finish what we start.

We remain engaged and committed to the proper and complete clean-up of this site according to the most protective EPA standards as well as other legacy sites nationwide and will do our utmost to provide accurate research to continue to protect public health. Our research and focus will remain on forward thinking for responsible clean-up of the site using the best science has to offer with regard to detection limits of radionuclides and the best remedial technologies designed to protect public health. Please feel free to contact us for any questions or further information.

Respectfully,

[originally signed]

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[originally signed]

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