OFFICE OF THE NEVADA ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE TRUST TRUSTEE

Le Petomane XXVII, Inc., Not Individually, But Solely as the Nevada Environmental Response Trust Trustee 35 East Wacker Drive - Suite 690 Chicago, Illinois 60601 Tel: (702) 960-4309

October 3, 2023

Dr. Weiquan Dong, P.E. Bureau of Industrial Site Cleanup Nevada Division of Environmental Protection 375 E. Warm Springs Road, Suite 200 Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

RE: Feasibility Study Work Plan for OU-1 and OU-2 Nevada Environmental Response Trust Henderson, Nevada

Dear Dr. Dong:

The Nevada Environmental Response Trust (NERT) is pleased to present the Feasibility Study Work Plan for OU-1 and OU-2 (FS Work Plan), Revision 1 for Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) review. This revised work plan has been prepared to address NDEP's August 3, 2023 comments. As requested, an annotated response to comments is also attached to this letter.

While NERT moved forward with revising the FS Work Plan in response to NDEP's comments, there are a number of issues related to neighboring Olin, Stauffer, Syngenta, and Montrose's (OSSM) plumes which NERT would like to be resolved before full implementation of the FS Work Plan. As explained in more detail in the FS Work Plan, assuming the status quo, and in order to achieve NERT's Remedial Action Objective for Operable Unit 1, NERT's FS will need to address both the dissolved contaminant plume which originated on the OSSM site, as well as the dense nonaqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) currently migrating from the OSSM site. NERT understands that NDEP is in discussions with OSSM regarding the finalization of a Groundwater Remedial Alternative Study which focuses on the dissolved contaminant plume and has requested that OSSM prepare a Remedial Alternative Study related to the DNAPL. While it is the intention of NERT to move forward with the implementation of its FS upon approval of the FS Work Plan, NERT will only be able to prepare the first two sections of the FS Report, or approximately 3 months of work, before costs are incurred related to the OSSM trespass. For example, if NERT is informed that OSSM will not stop its DNAPL from continuing to migrate onto the NERT site, or will not address its DNAPL on the NERT site, NERT's FS will need to evaluate remedial alternatives related to the DNAPL to the extent such remediation is necessary for NERT to achieve its Remedial Action Objective of plume containment and source control. For the purpose of clarity, while NERT understands its obligation to include all site contamination within its FS evaluation, NERT desires to minimize its future cost related to a revision of the FS based on future commitments to be made by others also regulated by NDEP. Accordingly, and assuming NERT begins implementation of the FS Work Plan after approval of the same by NDEP. NERT will look for direction from NDEP in approximately 3 months on how best to proceed.

Office of the Nevada Environmental Response Trust Trustee October 3, 2023

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, feel to contact me at (702) 960-4309 or at steve.clough@nert-trust.com.

Office of the Nevada Environmental Response Trust

Stephen R. Clough

Stephen R. Clough, P.G., CEM Remediation Director CEM Certification Number: 2399, exp. 3/24/25

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NDEP Comment	Response to Comment
Comment 1: The NDEP requires the FS workplan to be consistent with the 1988 EPA Guidance on Conducting Remedial Investigations and Feasibility Studies under CERCLA and with the NCP. If the Trust's plans conflict with the 1988 guidance at any point, they should prioritize adherence to the guidance and NCP.	Pursuant to the 2011 Interim Consent Agreement made and entered into by and between the State of Nevada and the Nevada Environmental Response Trust, "the Parties agree that all response actions conducted, selected and to be implemented under this AOC shall be consistent with the NCP, including but not limited to 40 C.F.R. § 300.430, and, as applicable, the provisions referenced in 40 C.F.R. § 300.700 for private party responses. The parties further agree that all work shall be conducted in order to result in a "CERCLA-quality cleanup" consistent with 40 CFR § 300.700(c)(3)(i)." Further, pursuant to the 2006 Consent Decree between Tronox LLC and the United States and the subsequent 2006 Henderson Consent Decree Substitution and Clarification Agreement, "Each Payment Demand shall include: (iii) an explanation of why each of the Future Response Costs for which reimbursement is requested is both necessary and consistent with the NCP."
Comment 2: The FS cost estimation should have a range of -30% to +50% for evaluating alternatives, but the conceptual design requirements should not mandate a specific level of remedial engineering design for each alternative (e.g., 30% Remedial Design listed in the FS workplan for each alternative). To maintain consistency with the FS guidance and achieve the cost estimation goal, the language in the FS workplan should allow flexibility in developing conceptual designs for various remedial alternatives. Refer to Section 6.2 of the 1988 guidance, which addresses	The references to 30% Remedial Design have been replaced with "conceptual design" in the FS Work Plan for OU-1 and OU-2, Revision 1 (Revised FS Work Plan). Notwithstanding the above revision, the intention of NERT is to prepare the level of design necessary to achieve a -30 percent to +50 percent level of costing accuracy as specified in USEPA's 1988 guidance. The Trust fully acknowledges the EPA guidance cited in NDEP comment 2(a) and 2(b)

NDEP Comment	Response to Comment
the Detailed Analysis of Alternatives (Section 2.7 of the FS workplan) and considers cost as a balancing criterion. The Trust should leverage information from the RI and their numerous studies.	and the FS evaluation will adhere to USPEA's 1988 guidance, as discussed above and noted in the FS Work Plan.
a. As per Section 6.2.1 of the 1988 guidance: "Each alternative should be reviewed to determine if an additional definition is required to apply the evaluation criteria consistently and to develop order-of-magnitude cost estimates (i.e., having a desired accuracy of +50 percent to -30 percent). The information developed to define alternatives at this stage in the RI/FS process may consist of preliminary design calculations, process flow diagrams, sizing of key process components, preliminary site layouts, and a discussion of limitations, assumptions, and uncertainties concerning each alternative."	
b. As per Section 6.2.3.7 of the 1988 guidance: "Accuracy of Cost Estimates. Site characterization and treatability investigation information should permit the user to refine cost estimates for remedial action alternatives. It is important to consider the accuracy of costs developed for alternatives in the FS. Typically, these 'study estimate' costs made during the FS are expected to provide an accuracy of +50 percent to -30 percent and are prepared using data available from the RI. It should be indicated when it is not realistic to achieve this level of accuracy."	

NDEP Comment	Response to Comment
Comment 3: NDEP suggested considering greener remediation and BMP analysis for the study in its letter dated on March 23, 2023. NDEP requests adding a statement indicating that the FS will consider previously selected short- and long-term BMPs for greener cleanups.	The FS Work Plan was prepared to incorporate NDEP's March 23, 2023 comment regarding green and sustainable remediation and best management practices (BMP) as specified in Section 2.7. As NDEP is aware, the initial green remediation and BMP analysis previously performed by NERT was limited to the ongoing groundwater monitoring program and operation of the 2017 iteration of the NERT GWETS. Furthermore, the NDEP-approved 2018 Greener Cleanup Best Management Practice Implementation Work Plan stated: "As previously agreed upon with NDEP and USEPA, the BMP evaluation conducted in 2017 was solely applied to the cleanup phase associated with the operations, maintenance, and monitoring of the existing GWETS (which includes the GWM program). The NERT RI Study Area is currently the subject of an ongoing RI/FS, the results of which will be used to develop and implement a final remedy in the early 2020s. As such, the Trust anticipates conducting the BMP process for subsequent applicable cleanup phases in the future as final remedy is developed and implemented." Should previously selected BMPs be carried through as components of the remedial alternatives that are evaluated in Section 7 of the FS, these
	BMPs will be evaluated against the nine NCP criteria. However, consistent with NDEP's first comment and the Trust's response, the Trust will prioritize adherence to the NCP.
Comment 4: NDEP requests that NERT address the "to-be- considered" (TBC) criteria beyond Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs) in the FS workplan. These TBCs were part of the RI and site risk assessment conducted by NERT.	As previously indicated, the NERT FS evaluation will strictly adhere to USEPA 1988 guidance and be performed consistent with the NCP. However, and for the purpose of clarity, the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated throughout to clarify that TBCs will be considered.

NDEP Comment	Response to Comment
Implementing this comment will require making global changes to the FS workplan.	
Comment 5: The FS work plan's statement in Section 3.1.1 about OSSM's contamination and remediation obligations requires clarification. The FS workplan states that "Based on the January 26, 2023, meeting with OSSM, NDEP, and NERT, it is NERT's understanding that NDEP may not require OSSM to further mitigate or eliminate the continuing trespass of OSSM contamination onto OU-1 and/or remediate the DNAPL currently present within OU-1". NDEP has requested that OSSM submit a Remedial Alternative Selection (RAS) for DNAPL on and off their property including on the NERT site. Therefore, NDEP asks that NERT revises this statement to reflect the NDEP's stand on trespassing DNAPL on the NERT site.	Section 3.1.1 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to present individual subsections representing the trespass contamination from the OSSM site. Additionally, Section 3.1.1.2 recognizes NDEP's request of OSSM to submit a Remedial Alternative Study (RAS) for DNAPL present both on and off of the OSSM property.
Comment 6: Section 2.4 Identification and Screening of Applicable Technologies Page 8 Paragraph 3. For transparency reasons it will be important to clearly explain why a technology was screened out.	Section 2.4 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to state that the tables that document the identification and screening of applicable technologies in the FS Report for OU-1 and OU-2 will clearly explain why a technology was screened out.
Comment 7: Section 2.5, along with Figure 3 of the FS workplan, outlines the development of remedial alternatives related to impacted media, COPCs, and RAO. The inclusion of the alternative titled "OU-1 Groundwater Trespassing Plume Containment" implies that remedial alternatives will evaluate COPCs associated with the OSSM plume and DNAPL, with the selected containment alternative presumed to meet OU-1 RAOs. This may lead to increased groundwater treatment costs. NDEP has asked OSSM to submit GWRAS contingency language (as an addendum to the GWRAS) requiring OSSM to coordinate and cooperate	Acknowledged. NDEP requested NERT to provide its comment on the OSSM Groundwater RAS contingency language and NERT provided its comment on September 13, 2023. To the extent NERT is required to capture or treat contaminants associated with the OSSM plume and to the extent such capture or treatment is required to achieve NERT's Remedial Action Objectives, it is NERT's expectation that OSSM will fund such costs.

NDEP Comment	Response to Comment
with NDEP and NERT in addressing any unavoidable material cost increases resulting from trespass contaminants for which the companies are responsible.	
Comment 8: NDEP requests NERT to revise the FS workplan based on the comments that the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) made directly on the FS workplan texts that were directly emailed to NERT and CC to NDEP and US EPA, as appropriate.	Please see the table beginning on the next page containing NERT's response to FS Work Plan comments received directly from MWD.
Comment 9: NDEP reserves its comments on how the AMPAC and NERT perchlorate plumes further commingle in OU-3 and discharge into the Las Vegas Wash in this FS workplan and will comment on it in the FS Report for OU-3. It is acceptable that the FS Report for OU-1 and OU-2 documents how much additional cost will be incurred to treat AMPAC's perchlorate within OU-2 to support future cost sharing discussions.	Acknowledged.

Metropolitan Water District (MWD) Comment	Response to Comment
Comment 1: TBCs should be considered in developing and evaluating remedial alternatives.	Please see response to NDEP Comment #4.
Comment 2: It would be helpful to provide a brief summary of the updates of the 2014 RI/FS Work Plan based on advancements in the project based on requests and approvals from NDEP made since the time the RI/FS Work Plan was developed.	The updates referenced in the FS Work Plan were modifications of the Phase 2 and Phase 3 RI scopes of work and did not have an impact on the FS process originally described in the 2014 RI/FS Work Plan. Additional text has been added to Section 2 of the Revised FS Work Plan to indicate that the Revised FS Work Plan supersedes Sections 5.3, 6.10, 6.11, and 6.12 of the 2014 RI/FS Work Plan, Revision 2 in its entirety as the Revised Work Plan provides greater detail regarding the FS process.
Comment 3: Please explain what is meant by "Revise as appropriate, document, and screen chemical-specific, action-specific and location- specific ARARs." On what basis and to what extent would ARARs be revised?	Section 2.3 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to clarify the text. The ARARs in the RI Report for OU-1 and OU-2 will be reviewed and to the extent there have been changes in the applicable or relevant regulations since the RI Report for OU-1 and OU-2 was drafted, such as promulgation of a federal MCL for perchlorate, the ARARs will be updated.
Comment 4: GRAs do not identify the technology to be used; instead, they are the remedial actions that "relate to basic methods of protection such as treatment or containment." (USEPA, "The Feasibility Study: Development and Screening of Remedial Alternatives," Nov. 1989). As stated below in Section 2.4, "An exhaustive identification and initial screening of treatment <u>technologies</u> for each impacted media" will be the basis for the fourth section in the FS Report.	Section 2.3 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to clarify the definition of a General Response Action.
Comment 5: The GRA to meet the RAOs/ARARs/TBCs could be identified, for example, as mass reduction (magnitude necessary) or containment (with degree of isolation), and the technology identified would describe	Section 2.3 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to clarify the definition of a General Response Action.

how the GRA would be achieved.	
Comment 6: Should be consistent throughout the work plan whether using "comingling"/"comingled" or "commingling"/"commingled." ("Commingling"/commingled" is more common.)	The Revised FS Work Plan has been updated throughout to consistently use the terms "commingling" / "commingled".
Comment 7: The impacted soil in OU-1 and OU-2 is not limited to the vadose zone.	The language in the FS Work Plan focused on vadose zone soil because the vadose zone soil is a long-term source of contamination to groundwater. For clarity, Section 2.3 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to remove "vadose zone" when describing impacted media associated with OU-1 and OU-2. Please note that remedial action alternatives that will be developed to address groundwater contamination will also address soil contamination below the water table given the high migration potential of the Primary COPCs.
Comment 8: There should be an option for reconsidering at least some of the remedial technology types and process options if something changes in the future, such as if there is an issue with the commingled plumes, other PRPs, and/or funding.	Both the NCP and Section 121 of CERCLA require that remedial actions resulting in hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants remaining at the site to be subject to a five-year review. The purpose of the five- year review is to evaluate the implementation and performance of a remedy and determine if the remedy is or will be protective of human health and the environment. The five-year review process provides the requested mechanism for reconsidering remedial technology types and process options if there are changes in the future. Accordingly, no changes to the FS Work Plan were made resulting from this comment.
Comment 9: Consider using several cost estimate methods, as described in USEPA's 1988 guidance, to support NERT's determination of capital and operations & maintenance costs in the FS Report. Methods from USEPA's 1988 guidance include cost curves, generic unit costs, vendor information, conventional cost-estimating guides, and prior similar estimates as modified by site-specific information.	Consistent with USEPA's 1988 guidance, several cost estimate methods will be used to support the determination of capital and operations & maintenance costs in the FS Report. Accordingly, Section 2.5 of the Revised FS Work Plan includes additional clarifying text and references USEPA 1988 and 2000 guidance.

Comment 10: Suggest expanding to 5 (ranking) options, such as high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, and low, or ranking numerically on a scale from 1 to 5, to allow for more granularity and options.	Section 2.5 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to include the suggested five ranking options to be used during the secondary screening of retained technology types and process options.
Comment 11: What is the basis/authority for preparing 30% Remedial Design during the FS phase? Is this provided for in USEPA's 1988 guidance? The Remedial Design phase usually happens later in the CERCLA cleanup process, after the ROD.	Section 2.7 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to clarify that a conceptual design of the remedial alternatives will be prepared during the FS. The original text indicated "approximately 30% remedial design" as a means to better define "conceptual".
Comment 12: As noted above, why is 30% design required at this stage in the CERCLA process? A conceptual level design of 10% design may be more appropriate at this level of decision making. Also, the cost estimate range (-30% to +50%) is more in line with conceptual level and not 30% design. Another consideration is that preparing a 30% design for all the options would be very expensive.	Please see response to MWD Comment #11.
Comment 13: As stated above, a range of accuracy of -30% to +50% is more consistent with a conceptual level design, not a 30% design.	Please see response to MWD Comment #11.
Comment 14: Please send the Groundwater age dating data and the tracer study results.	NDEP transmitted the DRI reports to the Stakeholders on July 24, 2023.
Comment 15: See comments above30% to +50% level of accuracy is more in line with a conceptual design, not a 30% design.	Please see response to MWD Comment #11
Comment 16: What does this mean? ("At this time, the Trust contemplates that the array of costs from both this FS Report and the future OU-3 FS Report will be evaluated holistically and considered together during the subsequent remedy selection process"). Will the remedy selection process for OU-1 and OU-2 be delayed until the FS Report for OU-3 has been completed?	Section 2.8 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to clarify the Trust's strategy with respect to holistically evaluating the conclusions of both FS reports to ensure prudent decisions are made. As indicated in the Revised FS Work Plan, NERT anticipates a 6-month gap between submittal of the FS Report for OU-3 and finalization of the Proposed Plan for OU-1 and OU-2.

Comment 17: Is there a strategy for addressing commingled plume impacts and minimizing any related delays?	 While a strategy for addressing impacts for commingled plumes and minimizing related delays is outside the scope of the FS Work Plan or FS, NERT remains committed to open, proactive, and collaborative communications with all parties. With specific respect to the trespassing OSSM plume, NERT has already begun discussions with the OSSM parties and NDEP on the matter.
Comment 18: What was discussed at the January 26, 2023 meeting (between OSSM, NDEP and NERT)? Why would NDEP not require OSSM to further mitigate or eliminate the continuing trespass of OSSM contamination onto OU-1 and/or remediate the DNAPL present within OU-1? (Under the terms of the NERT Trust Agreement, NERT can't use its funds to remediate OSSM's contamination.)	Please refer above to NDEP comments 5 and 7 and the associated responses. For additional details regarding the January 26, 2023 meeting, please contact NDEP.
Comment 19: Draft identification and screening results should be provided to the NERT Stakeholders before Section 4 is completed so that the NERT Stakeholders have an opportunity to review the results and provide input in a meaningful way.	Section 4 of the FS Report will largely be comprised of tables identifying and screening the technology types and process options. The intent is to provide these draft screening tables to the Stakeholders as part of the first FS Roundtable. Section 3.2 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to indicate that the roundtables will be completed prior to submittal of the FS Report for OU-1 and OU-2.
Comment 20: Again, before NERT completes Section 8, it should provide the NERT Stakeholders with its draft comparative analysis of the remedial alternatives so that the NERT Stakeholders have an opportunity to review the information and provide input in a meaningful way.	As with the first FS Roundtable, the intent is to provide the draft detailed analysis and comparative analysis tables to the Stakeholders as part of the second FS Roundtable. Section 3.2 of the Revised FS Work Plan has been updated to indicate that the roundtables will be completed prior to submittal of the FS Report for OU-1 and OU-2.
Comment 21: We ask that NDEP, USEPA, and NERT have any such dialogues (concerning FS completion schedule delays) sooner rather than later and work together to resolve any issues and minimize any delays.	NERT remains committed to open, proactive, and collaborative communications with all parties.