

Bower to head WVDP effort for DOE; hearing date on plan to demolish buildings changed

The new director of the West Valley Demonstration Project isn't necessarily a new face at the facility.

The federal Department of Energy has announced that Bryan C. Bower has been named as the new WVDP Director, after having served most recently as the project's acting director.

In all, Bower has spent more than a decade at the site in several different capacities.

His background includes a number of assignments for the DOE, including Performance Assessment Manager for the department's Office of Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Program in Germantown, Maryland; Waste Operations Manager for the DOE WIPP project office in Carlsbad, New Mexico; component test engineer with the 6585th test group at Holloman Air Force base in New Mexico; and as a physics laboratory instructor New Mexico State University in Alamogordo.

Bower served for five years in the United States Air Force, where he achieved the rank of Captain. He

holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Nuclear Engineering from Penn State University.

According to the department, Bower's principal focus "will be on guiding DOE's on-site effort to develop reasonable alternatives for meeting the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's radiological decommissioning criteria to enable eventual site closure."

To that end, one of Bower's first official tasks will be tackling the DOE's recently released Environmental Assessment which calls for the decontamination and demolition of 42 buildings at the site in the next four years.

Most anticipated, however, will be a final Decommissioning Environmental Impact statement, currently being developed, which will be released at a later date.

A public hearing on the recent EA, originally scheduled for Wednesday, July 12, has been rescheduled for Wednesday, July 19, the DOE has also announced.

Also extended was the deadline

for public comment on the plan. The original 14-day comment period has been extended to July 29.

The meeting will start at 7 p.m. at the Ashford Office Complex on Route 219.

To register to speak at the meeting, or to request a copy of the draft environmental assessment, call 942-2152. The document is also available online at www.wv.doe.gov.

The report has already drawn some significant questions from the New York State Energy Research and Development, which oversees the site for the state, which actually owns the land.

NYSERDA officials indicated last week the report "appears to lack a thoughtful consideration of the consequences of removing certain facilities."

Bower's appointment was effective July 9. The WVDP is part of the DOE's Office of Environmental Management organization. He reports to Cynthia Anderson, Director, of the DOE's Office of Site Support and Small Projects.