

**From:** BRC [CommissionDFO@Nuclear.Energy.Gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2010 11:45 PM  
**To:** (eyatsko1@comcast.net); (correspondence@blueribboncommission.net)  
**Subject:** FW: EBR-II should remain an historical site and good reseach facilities should not be destroyed

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From: Ben n Valerie Cowan[SMTP:BNVCOWAN@MSN.COM]

Sent: Monday, July 12, 2010 11:41:55 PM

To: BRC

Subject: EBR-II should remain an historical site and good reseach facilities should not be destroyed

Auto forwarded by a Rule

I reviewed some of your Blue Ribbon Committee comments today and wondered if there is something you might reconsider concerning the destruction of good facilities and a historical site such as EBR-II.

Research space is needed now while we still have good space available, not 3 or 4 years down the road. EBR-II has performed very well for our Nation's nuclear energy research and has earned a place in our country's history books and provided the technology for the beginning of the nuclear energy renaissance and DOE now wants to destroy it. This does not make sense and it is going to cost us, the tax payers 15.4 million dollars.

I am submitting the following information in hopes that some one will be concerned enough to stop such fraud, waste, and abuse of tax payers hard earned money. I have worked 36 years for the laboratory and am proud of the accomplishments EBR-II and the Fuel Cycle Facility has accomplished.

Thank you for any time and effort to properly resolve this issue.

Ben F. Cowan

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Ben n Valerie Cowan](#)

**To:** [Mike.Simpson](#)

**Cc:** [senator crapo](#) ; [The.Secretary](#) ; [Governor Otter](#) ; [GAO](#) ; [fraudnet](#)

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 06, 2010 8:55 PM

**Subject:** EBR-II Historical Facility

Mr. Simpson,

I am grateful that you responded, but the response is not what was expected, nor is the response an appropriate answer to the citizens to whom you are representing.

I have responded to your email by separating your statements and adding my comments. I have also added a current email request to the Governor of Idaho, DOE-ID, INL Director of Internal Audits, and DOE-EM. This is a lengthy document but necessary in trying to preserve an historical facility and preventing the destruction of good useable research facilities.

Ben F. Cowan

June 25, 2010

Mr. Ben F. Cowan  
4380 E 300 N  
Rigby, Idaho 83442-5509

Dear Ben:

Thank you for contacting me regarding EBR-II and other research facilities at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your concerns.

**Mr. Simpson, even though you appreciate the opportunity to respond to my concern, it is not an appropriate answer to the very serious matter concerning tax payers money and the waste, fraud, and abuse of not only tax funds but gross mismanagement of our resources and ability to perform the much needed nuclear energy research now not three years from now. and that is if another facility can be built for such purpose.**

Like you, I believe there are many facilities at the INL that are valuable and worth preserving.

**No there are none other like EBR-II, it was the reactor that began the nuclear energy renaissance period in our history, now you can be one name in our history books that allowed the destruction of such a valued site in such a scientific era.**

Such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis during which many different factors are taken into consideration.

**Do you understand the consequences of such decision? Do you even care that this is going to cost the tax paying citizens \$14,400,000.00 (\$14.4 Million Dollars) at a time that the citizens are undergoing financial hardships (home foreclosures, loss of retirement, loss of jobs, etc.) Do you understand that this is going to generate unnecessary radioactive waste and cause high dose exposures to some contract workers? Currently the cost is \$60,000.00 a year to maintain the historical building safely until a better solution could be achieved.**

Over the past few years, I have worked with the INL and the Department of Energy to successfully preserve facilities of value for historical or research purposes.

**I have worked for the Laboratory for 36 years and I know of no other facility with the history and historical rating as the EBR-II reactor except for EBR-I and that was before my 36 years at the site.**

At the same time, there are facilities that were unable to be preserved for numerous reasons, including prohibitive costs.

**Please explain the reasons and any prohibitive costs. I believe persistence has saved the Sodium Process Facility because now it is going to be cleaned up and turned back over to the Laboratory for further utilization. There is a conflict in what the INL internal investigations have provided and what DOE has provided. DOE-ID states that DOE-NE still owns the SPF and the SPF will not be destroyed. I have the documents to prove my statements.**

I appreciate hearing from you regarding the value of EBR-II

**I appreciate your responding to this concern, because it really does indicate how you are a Politian for the government and ignore the citizens who pay your salary. You are a representative of the people, elected by the people, and are to act in behalf of or for the people. I would appreciate any information**

**that justifies the destruction of the historical class EBR-II facilities and why it is your opinion that it should be carried out.**

and your support for continuing its use as a research reactor.

**If the reactor core could be restored (one welded-in dummy subassembly removed) then it would be available to be upgraded with new electrical switch gear, lines and gauges. It could be restarted and used as a burner of spent fuel rather than burying the good reactor fuel. During the process of burning the spent fuel, further research could be done in the recycling and utilization of unwanted and hazardous nuclear material.**

While I regret that this facility was not able to be preserved for further research use,

**Explain to the citizens why the facility was not preserved. Explain to the citizens why they have to come up with \$14,400,000.00 now to tear it down when it is costing them only \$60,000.00 a year to safely maintain it.**

I will keep your thoughts in mind as decisions regarding future use of INL facilities are made.

**I can realize the citizens concern over the present politicians and the misrepresentation of the people. There is a possibility that this issue may come back to haunt you at re-election time.**

Once again, thank you for taking time to contact me with your concerns.

**I wish I could thank you for your effort, but it appears you are not really concerned about the history of Idaho and the Idahoans that have affected the whole world not just this great nation in nuclear energy.**

The thoughts and opinions of Idahoans are important to me as your Representative in the United States Congress.

**Then why are you not stepping forward and addressing this issue before it is too late. Present some facts that will convince the Idahoans that their historical achievements benefitting the world is not worth saving and acknowledging.**

I also encourage you to visit my website at [www.simpson.house.gov](http://www.simpson.house.gov) to sign up for my e-newsletter and to read more about my views on a variety of issues.

**No thanks.**

Sincerely,  
Mike Simpson  
Member of Congress

----- Forwarded by Ben F Cowan/COWABF/CC01/INEEL/US on 06/30/2010 01:58 PM -----

**Ben F Cowan/COWABF/CC01/INEEL/US**

06/30/2010 01:58 PM To Frederick G Pieper/PIEPFG/CC01/INEEL/US

cc shawrm@id.doe.gov, cooperjr@id.doe.gov, buggerbp@id.doe.gov, joycelk@id.doe.gov, joseph.campbell@icp.doe.gov, carterac@id.doe.gov,

gallegra@id.doe.gov, perryjn@id.doe.gov

Subject Fw: The Sodium Process Facility (SPF) Footprint Reduction and EBR-II Historical Site

Fred,

In my pursuit of being World Class and trying to become the pre-eminent nuclear energy Laboratory, I need to address some concerns and try to resolve any confusion in the Laboratory's overview of their definitions and

goals to become such a Lab.

I am going to state in my own words what information I was provided. If I error in the statements, I would appreciate any comments in correction.

1. The Sodium Processing Facility (MFC-799) was built for a certain purpose which was to process the EBR-II primary and secondary sodium.
2. Building MFC-799 was not built for laboratory research.
3. Building MFC-799 has moderate levels of contamination.
4. Building MFC-799 is currently being used for storage.
5. Substantial modifications would be needed to convert to a laboratory.
6. The size of MFC-799 would not make the best out of a number of possible options or outcomes.
7. It would take approximately \$8 million to convert to a laboratory.

### **Conclusive decisions.**

1. Unable to substantiate that it would be economically feasible to convert from production and storage space into a laboratory.
2. Interviews and documentation supported the destruction of the MFC-799 building.
3. Destruction was supported by analysis.
4. Destruction was supported by management consideration.
5. The mission of MFC-799 had ended.
6. Reasonable good external structure condition but not as a laboratory.
7. Ten-Year Site Plan addresses the expansion of additional lab space, at a more reasonable cost.
8. Needing more laboratory space has not impacted ability to meet mission requirements.
9. Management seems to be focusing on new construction.

### **The following information was also submitted to me.**

The facility was transferred to EM last summer and is now owned by them.

The facility was transferred to EM because it had no ongoing mission.

The transaction was approved by the DOE Asst. Secretary for Environmental Management and the Asst. Secretary for Nuclear Energy.

Does this mean SPF is going to be demolished or not?

I am submitting the following email for your review. Seems like conflicting information concerning the Sodium Process Facility MFC-799. Would any one please make the official decision so this pursuit could stop or continue.

Thanks for any time and effort on these issues of concern.

Sincerely,

Ben F. Cowan

----- Forwarded by Ben F Cowan/COWABF/CC01/INEEL/US on 06/30/2010 01:43 PM -----  
"Ben n Valerie Cowan" <bnvcowan@msn.com>

06/30/2010 05:20 AM To "Bernard.Cowan" <Bernard.Cowan@inl.gov>

cc

Subject Fw: The Sodium Process Facility (SPF) Footprint Reduction and EBR-II Historical Site

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [perryjn@id.doe.gov](mailto:perryjn@id.doe.gov)

**To:** [bnvcowan@msn.com](mailto:bnvcowan@msn.com)

**Cc:** [shawrm@id.doe.gov](mailto:shawrm@id.doe.gov) ; [cooperjr@id.doe.gov](mailto:cooperjr@id.doe.gov) ; [buggerbp@id.doe.gov](mailto:buggerbp@id.doe.gov) ; [joycelk@id.doe.gov](mailto:joycelk@id.doe.gov) ; [joseph.campbell@icp.doe.gov](mailto:joseph.campbell@icp.doe.gov) ; [carterac@id.doe.gov](mailto:carterac@id.doe.gov) ; [gallegra@id.doe.gov](mailto:gallegra@id.doe.gov)

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 29, 2010 4:06 PM

**Subject:** RE: The Sodium Process Facility (SPF) Footprint Reduction and EBR-II Historical Site

Ben,

Thanks for agreeing to participate as a part of the development of the historical display. We have more work to do but I feel we are off to a good start in putting together a display that will convey to the public the importance of the EBR-II facility and it's history.

With regard to your letter to Cynthia Anderson and the issues that you raised in that letter, a formal response has been developed and it is currently being reviewed by the NE and EM programs.

Regarding SPF - at this point the SPF facility is an NE facility. It has not been turned over to the EM program nor is it currently included on the list of facilities for decommissioning and dismantlement.

Regarding the EBR-II facility - We have provided the formal response to your comments as a part of the EBR-II Action Memorandum. We recognize that you disagree with the decision to demolish the facility, but that decision was made in conjunction with all three agencies (State of Idaho, EPA, and DOE) who are signators on the Action Memorandum and in consideration of all of the factors (cost, footprint reduction, ongoing surveillance and maintenance costs, facility mission impacts, facility usage issues) that need to be considered as a part of a decision to D&D a facility. A more complete explanation regarding the EBR-II facility will also be provided in the formal response to your letter to Cynthia Anderson.

If you have any further questions, please call me at (208) 526-4570.

Thanks,

Jeff

**From:** Ben n Valerie Cowan [mailto:[bnvcowan@msn.com](mailto:bnvcowan@msn.com)]

**Sent:** Monday, June 28, 2010 8:06 PM

**To:** Anna Carter; Joyce, Lauren K; Gallegos, Robert A; Perry, Jeffrey N

**Subject:** Fw: The Sodium Process Facility (SPF) Footprint Reduction and EBR-II Historical Site

First let me say I did have an enjoyable time with the group and felt like if the final end state was to be a display at EBR-I, then it needs to be the best... but I do not believe this decision is the best for anybody but maybe the legal counsel of BEA, INL wanting to look like a university, and the contractor CWI. This end result will be permanent for the citizens of Idaho and this nation for centuries and many generations to come.

I was hoping to get some information back on the questions I asked during the tour, but I believe time is of the essences... I can't sit back and wait until it is too late.

If you have anymore information on the matters of concern... I would very much appreciate a logical explanation as to why SPF has to be demolished and why EBR-II reactor containment dome can't remain instead of the large concrete scab... which will mark the environmental landscape... and be an example of how DOE cleans up their hazardous sites.

I have heard an unofficial statement that SPF is to be cleaned up and turned back over to the laboratory for further nuclear energy research... but unless an official statement is released, I must still pursue the government to reconsider the destructive choices.

Sincerely,

Ben F. Cowan

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Ben n Valerie Cowan](mailto:Ben n Valerie Cowan)

**To:** [Governor@gov.state.id.us](mailto:Governor@gov.state.id.us)

**Sent:** Saturday, June 19, 2010 7:25 AM

**Subject:** The Sodium Process Facility (SPF) Footprint Reduction and EBR-II Historical Site

The Honorable Governor Otter,

I did not have your email address when the first submission was sent out. Please see what you can do about this waste, fraud, and abuse of not only Idaho's but the rest of this Nation's tax payer's hard earned money.

One addition... I am on the Focus Group to historically display and document the history of EBR-II. As a concerned citizen for the state of Idaho, I have toured the EBR-I historical site and found out that it is lacking the proper funding for maintenance and upkeep to preserve our heritage. Can you review the matter and possibly provide some state aid to assist showing tourists what the great state of Idaho has done for this Nation and the world as a whole, or persuade the Federal Government to remedy the situation?

I appreciate any time and effort you spent on these matters of concern.

Sincerely,

Ben F. Cowan

**The following is what was sent out Friday, June 18 2010.**

Ms Cynthia Anderson,

Can you please define footprint reduction and how it relates to the RCRA permitted or EPA list of nuclear facilities?

The Sodium Process Facility (SPF) at the Materials and Fuels Complex (MFC) located at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) is one such facility. I worked in this facility during the completion of the primary and secondary sodium coolant processing for the EBR-II Reactor. The SPF is a good facility and was listed as one of the good facilities in the 2008 Ten Year Site Plan until the year 2013. If you do not have such a Ten Year Site Plan, I can provide you with one. The SPF can be utilized for further nuclear energy research now, not 3 to 4 years in the future when or if a new facility can be built and occupied.

How would you like to explain to the public that your area of responsibility is causing delays in providing the desperately needed nuclear energy research that can sustain their country with an abundance of energy for centuries to come, an energy that does not pollute the atmosphere causing global warming.

The citizens need that now, not in the foreseeable future. They are experiencing loss of work, destruction of the environment through the BP oil spill, Trillions of dollars taken from them for what is called stimulus funding, which now is being used to destroy good needed facilities just to turn around and ask the people for more money to build another facility to do the same thing, only they will have to wait on current and future research until the new building is approved and completed.

I have been given the excuse that DOE-EM and the contractor CWI must demolish the facilities (according to contract) to reduce the footprint of the hazardous building. I hope this was not the intent because this identifies waste, fraud, and abuse of tax payers money.

I would think that removing the sodium piping, tanks, and components would eliminate the hazards of the facility allowing the facility to be turned back to the purpose of nuclear energy research. I work in the actual research projects and find many delays in utilizing equipment based on scheduling of other project needs. I have witnessed discussions concerning lack of research space. I have seen equipment loss or sent to other labs because of no space.

Removing the hazards should remove the facility and it's footprint from the RCRA and EPA list of hazardous facilities not the physical destruction.

**Now to the next topic, destruction of EBR-II.**

I made public comment on this issue which can be read in such document. I was invited to be on the focus group committee and develop a display to properly recognize EBR-II for it's contributions to the United States and the World.

I voted for Option #2 which would maintain EBR-II in the safe condition it is now in with routine surveillance and upkeep (about \$60,000.00 a year).

Figures taken from **Section 7.3 Costs of Alternative**

Alternative 2 D&D cost \$ 0.00  
Alternative 3 D&D cost \$15,400,000.00  
Alternative 4 D&D cost \$45,400,000.00

Alternative 2 Surveillance and maintenance cost \$62,500.00 (approx. \$60,000.00 - figure used in paragraph 3)  
Alternative 3 Surveillance and maintenance cost \$60,000.00 (why was this figure not given the same attention as Alternative 2)  
Alternative 4 Surveillance and maintenance cost \$0.00

At a time of crises for the public (the citizens, the tax payers, our families, friends, and neighbors), it seems the government would be more responsible in mandating more use of the their tax funds.

Why can't these actions wait for more stability and economic recovery for the people?

Alternative 2 would allow quicker stability and faster recovery while not adding to the hazardous waste streams during this period of devastation for many families. Don't hit them while they are down... at least help pick them up first, then if it is to be done, do it in the proper manner and as a necessity, not as a convenience for the contractor or the Department of Energy in order to be relieved of the liability clauses. No wonder the public are up in arms about the government and the political corruption. How much more are the people going to put up with before they start trying to reform the government... impeaching current politicians and seeking resignations for those who are responsible for such corrupt actions.

The INL contractor should also allow EBR-II to remain and be the historical structure it is... not just to get it out of the way in their plans to become more of a university type research campus. Any laboratory can display photos and small relics, but I would assume a world class status is different than the rest by the actual walk through display to the many tours, including other countries, that visit.

**Focus group committee tour and discussion items.**

If the EBR-II is to be grouted with concrete to the floor level, why demolish the dome and equipment inside?

The Dome structure was built to withstand earth quakes (which it did in the early 80's) bomb blasts and light airplane crashes... it could still be preserved as an historical structure... and toured on a more restrictive basis until the day the MFC is no longer a nuclear energy research lab.

The Dome would be a better protection than the concrete cap proposed and could still be an icon for the desert as citizens pass on the high way.

The Reactor Control Room could be preserved while the rest of the building could be utilized for office space and research projects.

I would appreciate any comments on these issues of concern.

I have already contacted politicians for assistance and will continue the effort as a history of their involvement so they will be held accountable at the polls.

Sincerely,

Ben F. Cowan