



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

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GOVERNOR PRESSES ENERGY DEPARTMENT NOT TO LET SEQUESTRATION IMPACT INL CLEANUP

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter called on the U.S. Department of Energy today not to let the federal government's budget problems delay court-required cleanup work at the Idaho National Laboratory, reaffirming that "safety and the environment are non-negotiable terms for the State of Idaho."

"Recognizing that there will be some fiscal impact to the INL as a result of the sequestration or other holdbacks, I strongly urge the DOE to continue meeting the cleanup milestones pursuant to Idaho's 1995 Settlement Agreement," Governor Otter wrote in a letter to Deputy Energy Secretary Daniel Poneman. "Of particular importance to the state is the continued and sustained progress on the exhumation of buried waste. I cannot adequately underscore the importance of meeting these particular goals."

The Governor wrote in response to a March 5 letter from Poneman outlining possible impacts to the INL as a result of sequestration. He also met recently in Washington, D.C., with two other senior Energy Department officials about the INL's status, including its cleanup and research missions. Working closely and collaboratively with the DOE to maximize the assets and missions of the eastern Idaho complex was among the key recommendations in the final report from Governor Otter's Leadership in Nuclear Energy (LINE) Commission.

"INL is a significant asset and Idaho is prepared to exercise leadership to ensure the Lab remains the nation's flagship nuclear research facility," the Governor wrote Poneman. "I strongly believe that in times of sustained reductions in discretionary spending, the federal government can and should consolidate its nuclear work in Idaho. To this end, the state would welcome an ongoing and continued dialogue with DOE to ensure these assets are put to their highest and best use."

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