OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

MANAGED BY UT-BATTELLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

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February 23, 2005

Dr. Robert J. Bodnar
Department of Geosciences
University Distinguished Professor and C. C. Garvin Professor of Geochemistry
Virginia Tech
4053 Derring Hall
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Dear Dr. Bodnar:

Letter of Support for the Conceptual Design for DUSEL at Kimballton, Virginia

I am enthusiastic about the potential for collaborative research that could be accomplished at the proposed DUSEL at Kimballton, Virginia. I look forward to helping to put together teams from across the United States and other countries to address geoscience research that can be done only at such a facility. The repeating sequences of highly competent sedimentary formations offer a DUSEL with truly unique research capabilities. I foresee major discoveries in biogeochemical processes, but more than that I see opportunities to address challenges that are critical to the energy independence of the United States. Sequestration of CO_2 in geologic formations is the most promising of all sequestration options for reliably storing amounts of CO_2 that can begin to slow the accumulation of CO_2 in the atmosphere. Current field-scale R&D is focused on demonstrations at "sites of convenience" such as enhanced oil recovery operations, depleted oil and gas fields, or brines in areas of prior exploitation. No studies are being conducted where specific processes are being tested at multiple scales under tightly controlled or monitored conditions. Opportunities for research in the layered formations at the Kimballton site are well aligned with research priorities for CO_2 sequestration in geologic formations as described in DOE R&D plans. In particular, cross-cutting research needs in process understanding, monitoring methods and technology, and pilot field-scale studies are well suited for the Kimballton site.

I look forward to a DUSEL located in Kimballton, Virginia, that will allow multidisciplinary teams to tackle some of the most interesting and important geoscience questions facing us today.

Sincerely,

Gary K. Jacobs, Director
Environmental Sciences Division

GKJ:ajh