

ETEBA Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2024

Inside This Issue

Letter From the Executive Director - Elizabeth Harm	2
ETEBA News & Updates	3
Spotlight: 2024 New Mexico Federal Business Opportunities Forum	5
Members Speak: Why ETEBA?	7
New Guidance Calls on Agencies to Provide Small Businesses With More Access to Multiple Award Contracts - Alexander Gorelik and Barbara A. Duncombe	9
Safety Share: PPE And Comfort - Robert Brounstein	11
Member Highlights	13

Photo: Santa Fe city center in the evening, New Mexico USA

Letter From The Executive Director

Our first quarterly newsletter of the year! We hope you will take the time to read the articles and announcements that our team works so hard to put together to share with our members and affiliates each quarter. This is one of the many tools we use to reach everyone. In addition to this publication, we also issue a weekly update to our membership, are active on LinkedIn, and regularly send email blasts with upcoming events and updates. Each of these tools is an important communication tool for ETEBA.


In December of 2023, our board of directors met for our annual evaluation of the current year and planning for the new year. I would like to share some of our key accomplishments from 2023...it was a year of far surpassing goals.

- ▶ ETEBA ended 2023 with 225 members. This exceeded our goal by fifteen members. Each year we account for a percentage of members not to return based upon companies closing or merging.
- ▶ We successfully hosted three major events in 2023. The BOTC, New Mexico Federal Business Opportunities Forum and Savannah River Federal Business Opportunities Forum. Each of these events exceeded goals set the previous year by the board. We increased attendance costs for non-members in 2023 while keeping the rate the same for members. This is another benefit to being a member of ETEBA.
- ▶ In 2023 we launched a new look! We redesigned our logo, website, and tradeshow exhibits. In addition, we invested in a new member services software intended to make our members' networking experience stronger.
- ▶ We grew our ETEBA presence through attending, exhibiting, and presenting at more conferences in 2023. Through this participation, we extended our reach and established many new connections. A strategic partnership was established with SAME in addition to strengthening the other already strong formal agreements.

It is safe to say that ETEBA had its strongest year ever in 2023! By exceeding all of our goals, we are able to do more for our members (which is our priority). This allows us to move into 2024 with stronger goals and an enthusiasm to continue serving our membership. Below I highlight just a few of our 2024 goals:

- ▶ **MEMBERSHIP:** Focus on continued membership growth with a goal of growing to 250 members. Our ETEBA Membership Committee is already hard at work reaching out to potential members. You can support ETEBA right along with our committee. If you know of a company who would benefit from joining, please reach out to them (or send us their information). Through growing OUR membership, we are growing YOUR network!
- ▶ **ANNUAL EVENTS:** Continue hosting industry leading events. The dates have been set for the BOTC (October 29-31), the NM Federal Business Opportunities Forum (April 24), and the SR Federal Business Opportunities Forum (July 11). Our goal is to exceed all numbers and expectations once again this year. We will keep registration and sponsorship rates the same! See you there?
- ▶ **BRAND RECOGNITION:** Increase national presence through attendance at conferences and tradeshow in 2024. We will be attending and exhibiting at Waste Management, DOE Small Business, SAME, and Bridging Partnerships and many other conferences. We look forward to representing ETEBA and each of our members.

We are grateful for our loyal ETEBA members and look forward to continuing to grow in 2024. As always, I am here to support you each in any way. Please just reach out. And I look forward to seeing you as we begin the busy (and sometimes hectic) travel season.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth Harm
Executive Director
ETEBA

ETEBA News & Updates



- **2024 NEW MEXICO FEDERAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FORUM**
April 23 - 24, 2024
Buffalo Thunder Resort
Santa Fe, New Mexico
- **2024 SAVANNAH RIVER FEDERAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FORUM**
July 10 - 11, 2024
Crowne Plaza
North Augusta, South Carolina
- **2024 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES & TECHNICAL CONFERENCE**
October 29 - 31, 2024
Knoxville Convention Center
Knoxville, Tennessee

ETEBA elections took place in December, and we have two new members of the ETEBA Board of Directors this year. Allow them to introduce themselves:



“

I am honored to serve on the ETEBA Board of Directors, where I aim to bring strategic and creative insight that will continue to benefit this wonderful organization. ETEBA has been an invaluable resource for Spectra Tech and through this group, we have gained connections and partnerships that have influenced our company’s growth and success. Spectra Tech is proud to be a member of ETEBA and is excited for all that is to come in 2024!

Katie Cunningham, Spectra Tech, Inc.



“

Merrick has been an ETEBA member and supporting ETEBA events for many years. I’m honored to have been elected to the Board of Directors. I’m looking forward to contributing to such a great organization. ETEBA continues to show how valuable it is to the DOE community. I’m proud to now be a larger contributor to its growth and success.

Tony Wampler, Merrick & Company

To view the full 2024 Board of Directors, [click here](#).

ETEBA has welcomed 9 new companies into our membership since our last newsletter. Click a logo to visit their website and be sure to give the people who represent these companies a warm welcome when you see them at a future ETEBA event.

 Edgewater Federal Solutions, Inc.	 Inert Corporation	 Paragon Energy Solutions
 Protection Strategies Incorporated	 Riemke Professional Solutions	 Stanley Consultants
 Testament Group Testament Group, LLC	 Ultra Energy	 WBL Solutions

Spotlight: 2024 New Mexico Federal Business Opportunities Forum



2024 NEW MEXICO FEDERAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FORUM

Buffalo Thunder Resort, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Golf - April 23 • Forum - April 24

Register today at ETEBA.org/newmexicoforum

- Event Info
- Draft Agenda
- Sponsor
- Attend

The 2024 New Mexico Federal Business Opportunities Forum will be hosted on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at the Buffalo Thunder Resort in beautiful Santa Fe, New Mexico. The program will provide participants with an opportunity to learn about the latest upcoming federal opportunities and projects in the New Mexico region and beyond. Elevate your business prospects while engaging with leadership and networking with potential business partners at this can't-miss event.

If you are interested in participating in the April 23rd networking golf outing, please contact Lauren Amos at Lauren.Amos@catawbacorps.com.

Wondering why you should make this event a priority? We interviewed the people who are planning (and attending) the forum so they could share with you why they make it a priority to attend year after year.

What is the reason a company should attend this forum?

Mike Wade, Forum Chairman, Advanced Technologies and Laboratories International, Inc.:

The NM Forum is a great opportunity for companies to engage directly with decision makers and representatives from Dept of Energy labs based in and around New Mexico, including Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratory. It's also a great venue for networking with large and small companies in attendance at the Forum.

How was New Mexico chosen for this forum?

Mike: NM was chosen several years ago when companies that were part of the LANL M&O wanted ETEBA to be a part of the New Mexico business environment and help companies, small and large, network in the area. The NM Forum has expanded in recent years to include NREL in CO and INL in ID.

What makes this event a must-attend?

Sarah Bigger, Wilson & Company, Inc.: ETEBA NM Federal Business Opportunities Forum is the ONLY conference in New Mexico that brings together NNSA, Sandia National Laboratories, and Los Alamos National Laboratory. More incredible for this year is the addition of NREL, INL, Pantex, and WIPP to the program. If your company wants to do business in the DOE Complex in New Mexico, this is a must attend event!

What makes this event special?

John Davis, Curtiss-Wright: Like all of the ETEBA events, the location always provides the added benefit of being able to schedule meetings directly with site contacts. This, along with the regional focus and intimate setting, creates immense value in attending ETEBA NM and the other ETEBA events.

Why does your company find it important to sponsor this event? What is the benefit?

John: When I'm trying to decide which events to sponsor, I try to see the return-on-investment. ETEBA NM offers the perfect amount of visibility, number of attendees, and affordability. Of course, I believe it is also important to support the associations that give back to our individual companies and our industry.

What is it that you hope you will take away from attending this event?

Lauren Amos, Catawba Corporations: Every time I attend an ETEBA event, I learn more and more about the industry. It's tough to be completely knowledgeable on all of the projects at all of the sites but with ETEBA, I get more exposure to these critical projects. No matter the location, north, west, east, or south, ETEBA keeps you in the know.

Why do you believe this event is important to the industry?

Jessica Morales, Enercon: This event is the pinnacle of what these conferences should look like. ETEBA NM encompasses a great day of learning the current status at the DOE Complexes, project and financial forecasts, and opportunities to network with the right companies and site representatives that encourages successful outcomes.

Why does Enercon find it important to sponsor this event?

Jessica: Enercon sponsors this event because we have seen time and time again that our company has benefited from the information and the interactions. We support ETEBA and their methodology of putting the right message out there with the right people speaking and the right audience listening.

Why does your company return year after year to this event?

Jessica: We have become more successful as an organization from our attendance. We have found partnerships and collaborative teams that have created win-win opportunities for us and our clients.

We hope you will join us in Santa Fe this April for the 2024 New Mexico Federal Business Opportunities Forum. In addition to a full forum filled with important information, we will host a golf outing and an opening reception in the exhibit hall. See you in April!

Members Speak: Why ETEBA?

Why are you a member of ETEBA?

Since joining in 2023, ETEBA has been a great conduit to network and meet others in the industry. I also hope to personally become more active in the organization to support future functions. As a full engineering and design firm with federal experience, ETEBA will also allow me to showcase my firms specialty practices and work related to Microgrids, Cyber, UAS, Cost Engineering, Master Planning, EV, Solar, and Resiliency and Sustainably.



Miller-Remick-Michael Baker International, a joint venture of two ETEBA Members

What is it that makes this organization so important to you and your company?

While my company supports a large amount Defense contacts, I hope to leverage the experience and partnerships we have in support of DOE opportunities. I know it's not exactly the same, but I'd say the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) organization is to the Defense Construction industry similar to what ETEBA is to the DOE Construction Industry. ETEBA will only help in fostering partnerships and having insight from industry leaders all in one place.

What have you gained from being a part of ETEBA?

It has provided my firm exposure and the opportunity for branding recognition especially with our Small Business Joint Venture firms.

Do you have a direct success story you would be willing for us to share with other potential members?

But for ETEBA, it would be difficult to get access to certain individuals at the Laboratory. ETEBA provides a forum to meet and greet others without the hassle to get on a DOE installation.

— **Kevin J. Owens**, Vice President, Michael Baker International

Why are you a member of ETEBA?

As a small business with an interest in growing our book of work in the government sector, we at Global Fire Protection Group, felt that ETEBA would provide an avenue to meet that goal. We were encouraged to join ETEBA as a great way to network and to learn about government opportunities.



What is it that makes this organization so important to you and your company?

The opportunity to grow our networking community has been the most important thing that ETEBA brings to Global FPG. We are a company that offers services exclusively in fire and life safety engineering, consulting, and design; our niche, while very important, is a very small part of most projects. It became evident early on that we would need to find teaming partners in order to grow in the government sector.

What have you gained from being a part of ETEBA?

Through ETEBA we have established new relationships with other small businesses, medium-sized businesses, and Prime contractors. Those connections have led to teaming agreements, subcontracts, and other opportunities to grow our business in the government sector. Additionally, we have learned a lot through the Forums and BOTC about upcoming projects, best practices, and important legislation.

Do you have a direct success story you would be willing for us to share with other potential members?

When attending my first BOTC in 2022, there was a scavenger hunt of sorts to encourage attendees to visit the exhibitor booths. You stop by an exhibitor booth, present your blank card, and get a stamp on their square. When the card is full, you enter it into a prize drawing. Being excessively competitive, I was drawn in immediately. I stopped by the HydroGeoLogic, Inc. booth to get a stamp and we talked about our companies. I didn't think there would be any synergy between our company, Global FPG, that provides fire and life safety engineering and HGL, with expertise in hydrogeology and groundwater. However, as we discussed our companies in more detail, we learned that we each offered services related to PFAS. They provide expertise in cleanup and remediation, and we provide expertise in the survey, engineering, and design of replacement fire suppression systems that used PFAS to extinguish fires. As a result of that conversation our companies entered into a teaming agreement, and we look forward to working together on upcoming PFAS projects! But for ETEBA...I would never have stopped at the HGL booth, and we would not be engaged in this partnership. Oh - I got all the stamps and won the grand prize, too!

— **Karen Bradbury**, Sales Representative/Consultant, GLOBAL Fire Protection Group, LLC

New Guidance Calls on Agencies to Provide Small Businesses With More Access to Multiple Award Contracts

Alexander Gorelik and Barbara A. Duncombe, Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP

On January 25, 2024, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), the Small Business Administration (SBA), and the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council (FAR Council) released [a set of recommendations](#) to guide agencies in increasing the number of multiple-award contracts (which are, generally, contracts that the government awards to more than one vendor for the same service or supply) set-aside for small businesses. The memorandum outlining those recommendations indicated that the SBA and the FAR Council are already working on the rulemaking that will formalize those suggestions. Agencies were encouraged to adopt the recommendations even before that rulemaking process was complete.

The guidance provided some details on how agencies are to implement those recommendations:

► **Apply the SBA's "Rule of Two" to Contract Orders More Broadly**

The most noteworthy portion of this guidance is the direction for agencies to set aside any orders over the micro-purchase threshold (MPT), which is currently set at \$10,000, for small business contract holders when the contracting officer determines that there is a reasonable expectation of obtaining offers from two or more small businesses under the multiple-award contract that are competitive in terms of market prices, quality, and delivery. While the guidance excludes any situations where an order cites an exception to competition, to fair opportunity, or to agency procedures for the exceptions, it directs contracting officers to document their basis for following an alternative approach and to provide a copy of that documentation to the small business specialist for any order beyond the MPT, even in cases where the multiple-award contracts have only one small business contract holder or none.

In other words, the guidance seeks to expand how often agencies apply the policy usually referenced as the SBA's "Rule of Two," which agencies apply in certain cases. The direction is especially significant because, in recent years, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), has [taken the view](#) that agencies do not have to apply the "Rule of Two" in all instances involving multiple-award contracts.

► **Maximize Orders to Small Businesses under the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT) to the Maximum Extent Practicable**

The guidance expresses some concern that a significant portion of orders under SAT, currently set at \$250,000, does not go to small businesses. Now, it directs agency contract teams to work with their small business directors to identify and ensure that small businesses receive exclusive set-aside opportunities for re-compete of any orders under SAT where market research shows that the small businesses could perform the order.

► **Engage Agency Small Business Specialists Earlier in the Acquisition Planning for Multiple Award Contract Strategies**

In line with the approach that some have encouraged at least as far back as OFPP's [February 18, 1999 Memorandum](#) on the Best Practices for Multiple Award Task and Delivery Order Contracting, the new guidance reinforces the need for agencies to consider obtaining small business awardees for the multiple-award contract earlier in the acquisition process.

► **Consider On-Ramps When Developing the Acquisition Strategy**

Agencies must now also explicitly address the use of on-ramps, which allow for small and large businesses to be added during the performance period for long-term contracts¹, as part of the acquisition plan.

► **Encouraging the Use of Best-in-Class (BIC) Contracts**

The guidance touts the benefits of BIC contracts, which are "enterprise multiple-award contracts that meet a rigorous set of criteria," as defined by Office of Management and Budget (OMB).² They include use of category and performance management strategies and small business best practices. The BIC status is reviewed annually and calls on agencies seeking that designation to "demonstrate a commitment to small business considerations by developing and executing a plan to maintain or increase small business participation whenever possible," through the above-mentioned recommendations.

Final Thoughts

Although this guidance puts additional emphasis on getting small businesses more involved in multiple-award contracts, and sets out at least one major policy update, small business contractors will have to wait to see how closely the agencies choose to follow this guidance. Despite encouragement for agencies to take early action on these recommendations, it still may take some time before agencies actually put these recommendations in action. Until then, small businesses should emphasize this guidance in their efforts to have agencies set aside more multiple-award contracts with an eye towards small business involvement.

¹ Per FAR 19.301-2(a), these are any contracts that are more than five years in duration, including options.

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Safety Share: PPE And Comfort

By Robert Brounstein, Director, Safety and Health at TerranearPMC

Here's a question that I think everyone who has worked in the field can relate. Have you ever put on some ear plugs or gloves or a respirator and upon first wearing it, you acknowledge that the fit wasn't so great? As a matter of fact, the specific piece of PPE was a little uncomfortable? Not to say you were in pain, but after thinking about it, you believe that another choice would have been better. But you tell yourself:

"Hey, I can live with this discomfort for a few hours."

Well, after some time – much less than a few hours – quite possibly after only 15 minutes; that initial uncomfortable feeling now turns into a throbbing ache. Nevertheless, you decide to shrug it off and 'take the pain.' After all, how bad can it possibly get?

Next thing, a half hour has passed, and that ache has increased to a feeling of agonizing torture. Still you tell yourself that you can wait till the next break. At that time, you'll remove the PPE and exchange it for another pair. Something that will be comfortable.

True, most of us that have encountered this type of scenario. 'Tough it out' until you can remove those ear plugs or respirator that is causing you unbearable pain ("take the pain!" as Tom Berenger playing Sergeant Barnes in Platoon commands a soldier who was shot). And the whole time you are working, all you can think about is getting out of the work area and removing your PPE! And now we have created an accident precursor due to a lack of focus on the task-at-hand.

Anyone who has ever had such as experience as wearing poorly fitted PPE will certainly agree that a lack of comfort is one of the most disruptive things that can impact work. Typical objections to wearing PPE include the following:

- It's too hot
- It's itchy
- It's too big or too small
- It doesn't breathe
- It takes too long to put on

There are times when a person may allow him/herself to believe that no matter how uncomfortable they may be – even to the point of pain – they can manage. And unfortunately, that is not always the case. For instance, under high heat conditions, workers might pull off their PPE before it is safe to do so.

Safety shoes NEED to be comfortable. If there was ever a responsibility that was placed squarely on the employee, it is the purchase of comfortable safety shoes/boots. While many organizations have a monetary limit for reimbursement for safety shoes, that limit typically covers the cost for a reasonable purchase. And should you need a pair of safety shoes that falls outside that limit, to ensure appropriate comfort (or another factor such as needing electrical protection) through proper justification, it is not out-of-the question for that request to be accepted. Wearing a pair of uncomfortable safety shoes every day can be treacherous.

When it comes to poor fitting gloves, there is the increased risk due to not being able to properly handle items causing damage to the piece of equipment/material as it drops, thereby causing a potential injury should the object be sharp and/or heavy. Of course, it is not just a workplace injury that may result but the inability to perform a work task due to a lack of proper grip. Take for instance, when your work task involves delicate or intricate handling. The result would be the possibility that the task would not be able to be performed.

It is important to note that objections to PPE aren't just persons being picky, there is a real concern of tasks being difficult to allow to be conducted safely and productively. Objections can also be a significant indicator of how likely employees are to wear their PPE. Meanwhile there is a responsibility to ensure regulations are followed. When workers don't wear their PPE, they're putting themselves at risk. They need to be able to wear their safety equipment correctly and consistently throughout the length of the job or shift.

Comfort can be affected by characteristics of the PPE, such as the fabric's material or size, or environmental factors, like excessive heat. Trying to maximize comfort by lowering protective capabilities below safety requirements is never an option. Still, there are certain things available to increase comfort and enforce PPE use without minimizing safety. These include providing a selection of PPE, such as a variety of ear plugs and muffs, gloves, coveralls, and safety glasses. When it comes to respirators, the employee has the responsibility to ensure that comfort is a major factor. After all, as initially presented, a respirator that is merely uncomfortable at first, in a relatively short time, will be painful. And removing a respirator in a designated respirator use area can result in several severe consequences; most notably being an exposure to an airborne contaminant as well as causing an entire project to be out-of-regulatory compliance. Both cases can result in a STOP WORK and placing a project in jeopardy.

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone."

- Neale Donald Walsch (American Author)

Member Highlights



Alliant Corporation Celebrating Recent Contract Awards

Alliant Corporation is celebrating several recent contract awards.

- ▶ A \$2M IDIQ Cost Engineering Contract within the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division for the USACE Huntington District.
- ▶ An MSA with BMW Manufacturing for Construction Safety Oversight support.
- ▶ Alliant was among the firms awarded a \$12M contract for RSI EnTech, LLC for UCOR Environmental Technical Services.

CALL FOR HIGHLIGHTS

Submit your member highlights for the next issue of the ETEBA Newsletter! Submissions should include a title, high resolution company logo, and supporting graphics when appropriate. Emphasize relevancy for our industry/markets, and be limited to 500 words.

Member highlights may include:

- ▶ News of Big Wins
- ▶ Significant Project Success Stories
- ▶ Notable Accomplishments of Individual Staff
- ▶ Significant Contributions to the Industry
- ▶ Awards, Recognitions and/or Inventions
- ▶ Acquisitions/Merger News
- ▶ Key Publications/Presentations
- ▶ Academic & Research Contributions

Please keep in mind this is a great opportunity for sharing your company's capabilities and experience; however, we seek, and all want to read, objectively-written materials which avoid sales/self-promotional language.

Please send your input to hannah@eteba.org no later than **May 17th** to allow time for review and a back-and-forth exchange if necessary. Please also include a high resolution company logo, your company's web address, and primary contact information.

Thank you for your support and contribution to the ETEBA Quarterly Newsletter!



New Addition to the Drummond Carpenter, PLLC Team!

We are pleased to announce that Olivia Bustillo has joined the Drummond Carpenter team! Olivia is a Staff Engineer and reports to our Orlando, Florida office while serving our clients across the US. She has a undergraduate and graduate degrees in environmental engineering from Florida International University (FIU). While at the University, she conducted research with the U.S Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management (LM) and Environmental Management (EM) as a DOE Fellow for four years. Her work with DOE focused on studying the mechanisms behind the uranium-hydroxyapatite interaction to determine the stability and longevity of uranium removal in groundwater. While this research was centered around the Old Rifle, CO site, she also worked with DOE EM site in Moab, UT to assess the compatibility of this technology given its unique groundwater and sediment chemistry. Working with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory scientists, she was able to alter the hydroxyapatite recipe to minimize reagents, materials, and time invested, while achieving effective uranium removal. Throughout her Fellowship with DOE, Ms. Bustillo performed disposal cell inspections, surface water and groundwater sampling activities, conducted tracer tests, and was involved in various stakeholder meetings with tribal communities as well as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Her highly proficient work was instrumental in advancing DOE's remediation research endeavors. She has been recognized for her contributions to the industry through FIU's Applied Research Center as the Fellow of the Year, an honor bestowed upon a Fellow with an outstanding performance and exceptional accomplishments. Additionally, she was awarded ASME Best Poster/Paper Award at the Waste Management 2023 Conference for her Paper "Interaction of Hydroxyapatite and Uranium in Groundwater at the Old Rifle Site to Facilitate Site Remediation", among other recognitions. She has advanced her professional development by participating in several panels at various conferences, holds memberships in numerous professional societies, and was invited to be an International Catalyst Community Member for the United Kingdom Nuclear Institutes' Young Generation Network. She has also engaged in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Coordination Group for Uranium Legacy Sites (CGULS) workshop with government representatives from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Since joining Drummond Carpenter, Ms. Bustillo has exhibited her expertise in the field by contributing to many technically challenging projects and producing exceptional results for our clients across the United States. We are excited for Olivia to contribute to the growth of our remediation and nuclear services practices with her impressive technical capabilities and commitment to her profession and career.



Member Highlights



HGL Awarded NASA ID/IQ Contract

HGL is proud to announce our selection to provide environmental restoration and compliance services at NASA centers, facilities, and other agency assets. This work aligns with HGL's mission of restoring the environment to beneficial use for our clients and communities and ultimately will help NASA achieve its mission to “explore the unknown in air and space, innovate for the benefit of humanity, and inspire the world through discovery.”

As one of five contract awardees, work will be competitively awarded to provide support for environmental compliance activities including technical consultation, environmental sampling, and investigations of contaminants that may have been released to the environment, as well as human health and ecological risk assessments. The contract also supports sustainability; pollution prevention; recycling; remediation and long-term management of affected air, soil, groundwater, and surface water; audits and inspections; hazardous materials management; spill cleanup; and more.

We are excited about these new opportunities to restore natural resources and provide ongoing stewardship of the environment to benefit present and future generations. Our team including partners from BB&E Consulting Engineers & Professionals, Herndon Solutions Group (HSG), APTIM, CORE Engineering & Construction Inc., NOREAS Inc., and MSA stands ready.

The NASA Environmental Restoration and Compliance Contract is an indefinite-delivery (ID)/indefinite-quantity (IQ) fixed-price contract not to exceed \$375 million. The performance period goes through January 30, 2029.

HGL Publishes Work on PFOA Plume Delineation

HGL's modeling group recently published work to delineate a perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) plume using PlumeSeeker™ in a special issue of the National Ground Water Association's journal Groundwater. Dr. Metin Ozbek (HGL) is the lead author of the paper; co-authors include Nat Voorhies (HGL), Lucas Howard (University of Colorado Boulder), Ryan Swanson (HGL), and Tad Fox (HGL).

The research paper, entitled “Delineation of a PFOA Plume and Assessment of Data Gaps in its Conceptual Site Model Using PlumeSeeker™,” demonstrates the application of HGL's PlumeSeeker™ technology at the Lakehurst site at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JBMDL) in New Jersey, to support plume delineation and identify data gaps associated with the source release and groundwater-surface water interactions. The JBMDL Lakehurst application showed that the cost of delineating the migration pathway of a PFOA plume can be minimized by requiring only nine new sampling locations in addition to samples from two existing wells for achieving a 70 percent reduction in plume uncertainty.

Ozbek, M., Voorhies, N., Howard, L., Swanson, R., Fox, T., 2023. Delineation of a PFOA Plume and Assessment of Data Gaps in its Conceptual Site Model Using PlumeSeeker™. Groundwater: <http://doi.org/10.1111/gwat.13373>.



HukariAscendent CEO Changes in 2023

HukariAscendent, Inc. (HukariAscendent) is excited to share our recent changes in CEO leadership and celebrate multiple milestones in the process.

Our esteemed colleague Ken Hukari, former CEO/Founder of Hukari Technical Services, Inc, then later CEO of the now merged HukariAscendent announced his retirement and recently we celebrated his career and his retirement. Ken started Hukari Technical Services Inc. in 1999 out of his home basement. In 2012, Hukari Technical Services Inc merged with Ascendent Engineering, creating the HukariAscendent company as it is today.

Patrice McEahern replaces Ken as Chief Executive Officer and President of HukariAscendent. Patrice joined HukariAscendent as President in 2021 after a long career providing leadership, management, and engineering in the nuclear industry, focused on the Department of Energy Environmental Management, Office of Science and National Nuclear Security Administration. Patrice began her career in commercial nuclear facilities and is well positioned to service the complete portfolio.

Patrice is recognized nationally and internationally for innovative approaches to safe and cost-effective nuclear regulatory compliance. She has been instrumental in the development of timely and cost-effective strategies to improve mission performance, increase productivity and reduce accidents and injuries for facilities across the DOE complex, including Oak Ridge, Hanford, Idaho, and Rocky Flats.

HukariAscendent will continue the company's well-established mission as a proven, financially stable company, employing experienced technical professionals throughout the Department of Energy (DOE) complex and Commercial Clean Energy Industry.

HukariAscendent starts its 25th year of service now operating as a Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB) with offices in TN, CO, WA, ID, OH, NM, and SC.

HukariAscendent cherishes the relationships we have with existing customers and teaming partners and is excited to explore new opportunities with both old and new associates.

Member Highlights



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND KAIROS POWER EXECUTE NOVEL PERFORMANCE-BASED, FIXED-PRICE MILESTONE CONTRACT TO ENABLE INVESTMENT IN ADVANCED REACTOR DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – February 21, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Kairos Power have signed a Technology Investment Agreement to implement an Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program (ARDP) risk reduction award, for which the company was selected in Dec. 2020, to support the design, construction, and commissioning of the Hermes demonstration reactor in Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Under the agreement, DOE will provide up to \$303 million to Kairos Power using a performance-based, fixed-price milestone approach, wherein the company will receive fixed payments upon demonstrating the achievement of significant project milestones.

The contracting method has been used by the Department of Defense and follows the significant precedent in NASA's successful Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) program. It has proven to be a flexible and effective model to support the development and demonstration of complex technologies through federal partnerships with commercial companies.

"With the use of fixed-price milestone payments, this innovative contract provides real benefits to both Kairos Power and DOE to ensure the successful completion of the Hermes reactor. It allows us to remain focused on achieving the most important goals of the project while retaining agility and flexibility to move quickly as we learn key lessons through our iterative development approach," said **Mike Laufer, Kairos Power co-founder and CEO**.

"Kairos Power applauds DOE for pursuing this novel approach to public-private partnerships," Laufer continued. "This agreement incentivizes efficiency, drives performance, and establishes credibility to deliver."

"The Hermes reactor is an important step toward realizing advanced nuclear energy's role in ushering forward the nation's clean energy transition," said **Dr. Kathryn Huff, Assistant Secretary, Office of Nuclear Energy**. "Partnerships like this one play a significant role in making advanced nuclear technology commercially competitive."

This investment by DOE will complement Kairos Power's substantial private investment in the Hermes project and supporting infrastructure. Since being selected for the [ARDP award](#), Kairos Power has made steady progress on its pathway to demonstration, standing up extensive testing and manufacturing infrastructure to deliver the [Engineering Test Unit series](#) and advancing its [fuel](#) and [molten salt coolant](#) workstreams.

In December 2023, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued a [construction permit](#) to Kairos Power for the Hermes demonstration reactor. Hermes will demonstrate the company's ability to deliver clean, safe, and affordable nuclear heat and represents a critical step on Kairos Power's iterative pathway to commercializing its advanced reactor technology.



Engineers and Consultants

Mesa Associates, Inc. Makes Strategic Acquisition of NuSTREEM, Strengthening and Expanding Hydropower Business Offerings

Mesa Associates, Inc. (Mesa), a woman minority-owned full-service multi-discipline engineering, procurement, and construction management firm headquartered in Madison, Alabama, has acquired the assets of Connecticut-based NuSTREEM, LLC.



"The acquisition of NuSTREEM provides Mesa with a new product line and a pathway into the small hydropower generating market," says Mesa Senior Vice President, Tim Ramsey. "We will offer our clients a complete solution by drawing upon all of Mesa's expertise in the design and engineering of hydropower generation and power transmission and delivery. As an added benefit, Mesa will be able to utilize its sister company, Mesa Technologies, Inc., to manufacture and assemble the units. As a result, we now offer an innovative and modular generating unit and all the support to implement the unit or units into the client's system, all under the control of the Mesa family of companies."

NuSTREEM believed that growth in the US small hydropower sector would rely on modular and intelligent generation equipment and innovative deployment platforms. Building on that insight, NuSTREEM developed turbine technology combined with advanced control technology and an inventive standardized project deployment application. This extremely efficient machine can generate clean energy from a renewable resource with minimal environmental impact.

The NuSTREEM journey began by putting the technology to work near their Connecticut headquarters and manufacturing facility at Kirby Mill in 2014. With the installation of the turbines, the facility has been 100% powered by clean, renewable, and reliable generation from hydropower. The technologies are rugged and adaptable, making them well suited for many site applications. In addition, the units' modularity and ease of installation not only open up sites for new small hydropower projects but can also be used at existing sites to reduce outages and increase the efficiency and output of the facility.

Mesa has provided engineering services to the utility industry since 1988 and is dedicated to bringing solution-centered projects from conception through implementation and operation. Since day one, we have been committed to being a valued and trusted partner to our employees, vendors, and clients. This commitment to our clients has resulted in providing over \$180M of engineering services to 13 of the top 15 utilities across the United States.

Mesa is committed to clean, renewable power generation, a continuation of NuSTREEM's commitment to the environment, and through this acquisition, can offer a small generating unit that minimizes the impact on the environment from its installation, operation, and generation. The units can replace diesel-powered generators used for plant startup, provide a source for plant battery or grid-based BESS configurations, and provide a continuous flow of water to support or maintain minimum stream flow requirements.

The current hydro unit can handle water heads ranging from 10 to 40 feet. Mesa intends to enhance this low-head design further and develop a new design for applications up to 150 feet of head. Mesa will provide small-generating solutions for our client's needs by having two options.

Member Highlights



Perma-Fix Announces Two USACE Contracts

Perma-Fix Environmental Services, Inc. (NASDAQ: PESI), a leading small business provider of nuclear and mixed waste management services, announces new contracts broadening its nuclear services division, which provides project management, environmental remediation, and radiation protection (through health physics staff, technology, and instrumentation) across the United States.

Perma-Fix, as part of its joint venture Enviro-Fix Solutions with ECC, was awarded a \$13.4M contract for environmental remediation at the Former Harshaw Chemical Company FUSRAP Site in Cleveland, Ohio. This extensive, three-year project involves the comprehensive removal of contaminated soil and debris from Operable Units 1 and 2 at the site. Scheduled to commence in summer/fall 2024, the remedial action will encompass various critical activities, including sampling and laboratory analyses, water and wastewater management, industrial hygiene and health monitoring, and contamination control measures. The project also involves excavation, transportation, and off-site disposal of contaminated materials. Following the completion of these steps, Enviro-Fix Solutions will conduct confirmation sampling and final status surveys to ensure thorough remediation of the area. The project concludes with restoration of the excavated areas.

In addition, Perma-Fix is currently leading a \$4.5M prime contract at Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) performing commercial demolition services for the Coca Test Stands. These test stands, built between 1954 and 1957, were used by NASA as engine mounts for hundreds of field tests for the Saturn Apollo Program, which ultimately landed a man on the moon in July 1969. The work includes demolition of existing surface and subsurface structures, abatement/removal of asbestos containing materials and other regulated materials, disconnecting and capping of utilities, complete removal of utilities, disposal of all debris materials, and restoration of the site, which is located in California's Simi Valley.



View looking South over Coca Area, Santa Susana Field Laboratory (photo courtesy of National Park Service).

About Perma-Fix Environmental Services

Perma-Fix Environmental Services, Inc. is an environmental services company and leading provider of nuclear and mixed waste management services. The company's nuclear services division provides environmental cleanup and remediation, waste management, decontamination and decommissioning, and radiological protection services to federal agencies and commercial firms. The company's nuclear waste services division includes management and treatment of radioactive and mixed waste for hospitals, research labs and institutions, federal agencies, and the commercial nuclear industry. The company operates four nuclear waste treatment facilities and provides nuclear services at DOE, DOD, and commercial facilities nationwide. For additional information, visit www.perma-fix.com.



Pinnacle Announce Two New Hires

Pinnacle Specialty Group, Inc. would like to welcome Cindy Wilson and Sheila Petersen to our team:

Cindy Wilson, Director of Business Development and Recruitment Specialist

Cindy offers over 30 years of experience in developing employment strategies, sourcing, qualifying, assessing, and closing top candidate talent for professional services and is adept at creating and maintaining strong proactive relationships with diverse clients, executives, and staff. She has developed relationships and managed marketing strategies for business development, staffing and human resources throughout the United States, with an industry focus on Department of Energy, Engineering, Water Wastewater, Environmental, Information Technology, Construction Inspection and Utilities.

Sheila Petersen, Director of Recruitment, Operations, & Social Media

Sheila is a talent acquisition professional who offers over 30 years of experience in managing, leading, and developing teams to execute business and employment strategies, including recruiting plans and processes. In addition to being a seasoned professional in the industry, she began her career at technical start-up companies holding leadership positions in Finance and Customer Relations. She worked for a global IT company for over 12 years where she was heavily involved in developing Diversity, Inclusion, Disability, Military, and University hiring programs. Sheila's experience across many market segments has given her a broad understanding of business operations which enables her to provide Pinnacle Specialty Group with strategic and focused leadership.

To learn more about Pinnacle Specialty Group, Inc. please visit www.psg.us.com.



Member Highlights



Creation of Heal Group Strengthens TFE and Other Subsidiaries

NORTH AUGUSTA, S.C. (Jan.12, 2024) – TFE, Inc. (TFE) and its president, Mr. Douglas Heal, are proud to announce the formation of Heal Group, LLC (Heal Group), a family-owned holding company, of which TFE will now be a subsidiary. Heal Group consolidates multiple companies into a single holding group, providing integration of key infrastructure services such as finance, operations, strategy and growth, and human resources.

TFE is a provider of innovative solutions and services for logistics, records management, information governance, training, and other technical services for Government and commercial clients. In addition to TFE, other subsidiaries within Heal Group are Clinch River Services, LLC (CRS), DML, Inc. (DML), and Walker Metalworks, LLC (Walker Metalworks). CRS has been supporting United States Department of Energy (DOE) contractors with trucking and logistics services for more than four years. Since 1998, DML has offered equipment and facility leasing services. Walker Metalworks was recently formed to manufacture waste containers and provide specialized fabrication services.

This group of companies has a strong footprint throughout the U.S., with major offices in North Augusta, SC; Oak Ridge, TN; Piketon, OH; Carlsbad, NM; and Abingdon, VA.

Joining this group effective Jan. 1, 2024, is American Radiation Services (ARS), with a laboratory in Port Allen, LA. Heal Group acquired ARS from The Aleut Corporation in late 2023–bringing into the family of subsidiaries the ability to perform a variety of analytical and characterization services. ARS has been providing radiological, inorganic, and organic analyses for commercial and Federal customers across the U.S. for more than 31 years and will continue to expand these services offered.

“Working with TFE for the past 11 years has demonstrated to me the importance of investing in the growth of companies and building capabilities to better serve our customers,” Heal stated. “With all of our current subsidiaries and partnerships, we have a strong footprint providing services throughout DOE and the commercial nuclear industry. The addition of ARS not only builds our footprint within DOE, but also begins to open doors to new customers including the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and other commercial customers who may need the services of our other companies.”

The formation of Heal Group represents a commitment by the Heal family to continue to grow and invest in its local communities and expanding its resources and services throughout the U.S. Our focus is continuing to offer our customers innovative ideas and creative solutions.



Veolia desalination project earns exceptional ratings again

The VNS Federal Services (VNSFS) team that operates the Paradox Valley Unit (PVU) desalination project in Colorado for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation once again received exceptional ratings on its most recent evaluation.

PVU received “exceptional” ratings in three of the four areas covered in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) assessment completed Oct. 30. VNSFS has been performing operations & maintenance (O&M) at PVU since 2014.

The evaluation period was from July 26, 2022, through July 25, 2023, and the categories were: Quality, Management, Safety, and Small Business Subcontracting. The VNSFS team at PVU received exceptional marks in the first three categories, and satisfactory in the latter.

The assessment includes an extensive list of projects on which Esplin said VNSFS took the initiative to identify and remedy.

In terms of safety, “VNSFS continues to provide an exceptional level of service for their focus on the safety program which consistently results in an exceptional safety record, and other trainings programs to be in compliance with Reclamation’s safety requirements,” wrote Dwane Esplin, Contracting Officer for the Bureau of Reclamation.

In December, longtime VNSFS Project Manager John Adams retired after more than 15 years at the helm of PVU. Joe Bird, who was PVU’s Operations & Maintenance Supervisor, took over as Project Manager.

PVU operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week to prevent up to 100,000 tons of salt per year from entering the Delores and Colorado rivers in this remote area of western Colorado. It does this by extracting brine groundwater and injecting it into a deep injection well. Saline concentrations of this naturally occurring brine groundwater have measured in excess of 250,000 milligrams per liter - about eight times saltier than seawater. PVU is part of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program.

New Quality Assurance Manager at VNSFS



Henry “Hank” Chafin recently joined VNS Federal Services as Quality Assurance Manager.

Hank has more than 45 years of experience in Quality Assurance and Quality Control – 16 of those years in management positions. He has a strong background in the nuclear industry, which includes extensive experience in the development, implementation and management of QA programs for commercial nuclear and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) applications. Hank is certified as an ASME-NQA-1 Lead Auditor and possesses an excellent understanding of quality-related codes and standards, including DOE Order 414.ID, 10 CFR 50 Appendix B, 10 CFR 830 Subpart A, ASME NQA-1, DOE/RW-0333P and ISO 9001 series.



Member Highlights



Hanford landfill disposal tops 19 million

'Hey, Nineteen' isn't just a hit by Steely Dan. The number also represents the tons of waste disposed at the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) as part of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) cleanup of the Hanford Site.

Veolia has managed operations at ERDF since 2013. In January 2023, it began a new contract to manage ERDF and the Integrated Disposal Facility at Hanford to the VNS Federal Services (VNSFS) joint venture with CTI and Associates, called CTI-VNSFS Environmental, LLC (CVE).



A CTI VEOLIA JOINT VENTURE



Workers at the 107-acre facility have disposed of demolition material from more than 800 facilities and solid material and soil from 1,300 waste sites since the facility's operations began in 1996. ERDF consistently receives a monthly average of 10,000 to 15,000 tons of waste. "The disposal facility and the people who operate it continue to play a critical role in the site's risk-reduction mission, as they have done for more than 25 years," said Heather Dale, assistant manager for River and Plateau for EM Hanford.

Ben Hanson recently joined CVE as the new Project Manager for ERDF and IDF. Ben brings significant experience in project management, nuclear conduct of operations and maintenance, program management, business management, work control, operational readiness assessments, integrated safety management systems, environmental management systems and customer/stakeholder relations.

Veolia turns 170

On Dec. 14, Veolia celebrated its 170th anniversary. The company began as Compagnie Générale des Eaux (General Water Company), at the heart of the first Industrial Revolution in 1853. It was authorized by Emperor Napoleon III. Over the years, waste and energy were added to the company's services.

Today, with nearly 220,000 employees worldwide, Veolia designs and provides game-changing solutions that are both useful and practical for water, waste and energy management. Through its three complementary business activities, Veolia helps to develop access to resources, preserve available resources, and replenish them. In 2022, Veolia provided 111 million inhabitants with drinking water and 97 million with sanitation, produced 44 terawatt hours and recovered 61 million tons of waste.

VNS Federal Services (VNSFS) is the mitigated entity formed in 2018 to bring solutions to the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) most complex cleanup challenges.

To learn more about Veolia, visit www.veolia.com.

To learn more about VNSFS, visit www.vnsfederalservices.com.



VNSFS fills key engineering positions

The Engineering Services group of Veolia Nuclear Solutions – Federal Services (VNSFS) recently filled two key positions in its office in Richland, Washington.



Heidi Schuette joined VNSFS as a Senior Project Manager / Engineering Manager. She is a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) with more than 30 years of experience in the nuclear industry and she holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering as well as an Industrial Engineering master's degree. Heidi's career experience includes assignments for U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) projects, commercial nuclear power plants and fuel fabrication projects, as well as active-duty service in the Nuclear Navy. Her expertise includes implementing NQA-1 engineering design processes, effectively managing multidiscipline and international design teams, and operational experience at nuclear facilities.

Kurt McCracken is VNSFS' new Chief Engineer. Kurt has worked in the DOE Nuclear complex for nearly 30 years, mainly in the Richland area, either working for the Hanford site or with sub-contractors supporting the Hanford site clean-up mission. His background is in Mechanical Engineering, for which he has his Professional Engineering license, and large test program development. Following his initial years at the Hanford site working for Westinghouse (and other companies shortly thereafter), he spent 10 years at AECOM as the Richland office's chief engineer and division manager. After AECOM, he returned to the Hanford site as a test engineer/test director heading up test programs for the Engineered Container Retrieval and Transfer System (ECRTS) project and the management of the cesium and strontium capsule project. There, he developed the test programs commensurate to the DOE's technology readiness levels to integrate and prove the integrated process, mechanical, electrical, and instrumentation systems' operation for both projects. Both projects were noted for their "high fidelity" of the system test mockups and training simulators developed under his direction. For his work on the ECRTS project, he, and a small team of individuals on the project were awarded the DOE's Secretary's Achievement Award.



VNSFS is always looking for new members to join the team. Please visit www.vnsfederalservices.com to see all the job opportunities.

Alaron has new client services director



Ethan Begg is the new Director of Client Services for Alaron - VNSFS' licensed radioactive materials processing facility in western Pennsylvania.

Begg has more than 25 years' experience in the environmental industry and started his career in air pollution control for fossil-fired power plants. He earned a degree in Chemical Engineering and has worked on a wide variety of projects in the utility and heavy manufacturing industries.

For the last 11 years, Begg has been heavily involved in decommissioning nuclear power plants and research facilities in both the U.S. and Canada. He has extensive experience in project management and has spent years involved in contract management and procurement.

In his new role at Alaron, Begg said he is excited to help the facility grow and expand its capabilities and client base.