



June 10, 2024

Casey Sixkiller, Regional Administrator
Office of Environmental Cleanup, Region 10
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 155
Seattle, WA 98102

RE: Support for NPL Listing – J.H. Baxter Eugene

Dear Regional Administrator Sixkiller:

On behalf of the State of Oregon, I support the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed listing of the J. H. Baxter site in Eugene to the National Priorities List.

The J.H. Baxter site, which was home to a wood treater starting in the early 1940s, has been of concern to the state for many years. The company has conducted treatment of a groundwater contamination plume at the site since 1994, and J.H. Baxter has been under a cleanup order from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) since 2019. DEQ discovered elevated levels of dioxins in the surrounding neighborhood in 2021, which widened the area of concern. The facility closed in January 2022, and DEQ requested assistance from EPA in March 2022 to help characterize the contamination both on the site and in the surrounding community. The involvement of your EPA Region 10 staff in helping characterize the contamination has improved our understanding of the impact of the site and made it clear that the resources available through an NPL listing are critical to a timely cleanup.

In addition to EPA and DEQ, there has been significant involvement from other state and local regulatory agencies, community organizations, and the general public. The level of public involvement and interest in this site has been high, particularly regarding the contamination in the residential neighborhood adjacent to the site and, in part, due to environmental justice concerns. DEQ has begun the first residential cleanups on some of the properties with the highest levels of dioxins, but much more work remains to be done to ensure the long-term public health of Oregonians living near the site. The level of resources, staff, and expertise that EPA can bring to bear on this site will be crucial in this effort.

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I value the cooperative relationship between Oregon and EPA as we continue the cleanup efforts at J.H. Baxter and in the surrounding neighborhood to help return the land to a safe condition for Oregonians living in the area and for future generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tina Kotek", with a stylized, cursive script.

Governor Tina Kotek

cc: Calvin Terada, Director, EPA Region 10 Superfund and Emergency Management Division
Leah Feldon, Director, Oregon DEQ