Good afternoon, and a sincere note of thanks on behalf of the Administration for giving us this opportunity to be part of the EMS kick off here at West Point. The way I fit into this afternoon is to bring the perspective of the White House on what you are doing here, and to personally commit our support to the journey on which you are embarking.

As you may already know, it was 2000 when then President Clinton issued Presidential Executive Order 13148 that mandated environmental management systems at all appropriate federal faculties by 2005. And that began a flurry of activity. Later in 2000, with the arrival of the new Administration, we saw a dramatic increase in high-level support and visibility for EMS. Chairman Connaughton and then OMB Director Mitch Daniels issued a memo to the cabinet formally stating the commitment to EMS.

My office, the Office of Federal Enviromental Executive, was tasked with championing the implementation of EMS across the Federal community. I came on board as Deputy in 2003 and took over as FEE in the fall of 2004. My background is in EMS, and that was a major driver for my being hired, further illustrating the commitment to EMS. Our current Mission is to Promote sustainable environmental stewardship throughout the Federal government. We believe that the main strategy to do this is through

effective use of environmental management and Environmental management systems.

Within 24 hours of the election of 2004, Chairman Connaughton publicly reaffirmed the Administration's commitment to environmental stewardship priorities for the Federal government, including EMS. In those same comments, he re-affirmed the role of OFEE as a champion and resource to help the Federal community meet its EMS goals.

But why the flurry over EMS? It is not because of the EO. As a matter of fact, the EO itself is a product of a deeper rooted belief that sound environmental management will lead to better performance in meeting our missions and protecting the environment. President George W. Bush has committed and repeatedly restated that we as government must lead by example, be stewards of our natural resources, and operate efficiently and effectively.

We have taken the position that comprehensive and proactive environmental management will lead us to being even more efficient and successful and meeting our respective missions, and at the same protecting the environment and being stewards of our natural resources. We also believe that environmental management systems are a piece of environmental management. Where the EMS is the framework, foundation, or

infrastructure upon which we build our environmental management practices.

But what else is there to EM if EMS is only part of it? Well, environmental management as a broader strategy includes using the measurements and results we get from the EMS process to make broader policy decisions; it means striving for organizational cultural change so the EMS philosophy is inherent in everything we do. That is how we will get the EMS from being a series of procedures and process to becoming an organizational work ethic.

So where are we? There is much activity in the Federal community. We have nearly 300 "completed" EMSs in place, of which almost 30 are certified to ISO 14001. Although most are DOD, DOE and NASA sites, we now have a group of EPA and NPS locations. And there are more than 1000 new EMSs being developed as we speak. They range from site by site EMSs at traditional facilities in the context of geographic locations, to innovative definitions for the EMS scope. For example, GSA is grouping all buildings in specific areas into regional EMSs. The TSA is looking to group all airport operations into one EMS, covering activities at over 450 airports. TVA already has a corporate EMS that covers all of their sites. And so on; many variations on the theme.

We are addressing some key issues as we go into 2005. First and foremost is the issue of how we will verify to each other and the public that our systems are indeed in place and robust. Not all are going to be ISO 14001 certified, and not even all are using the ISO model. So we are working with the Federal community to develop verifiable and transparent ways to show that these systems are indeed good and in place.

We are also working very aggressively on demonstrating how we can use the EMS to meet our various other environmental responsibilities. For example, there is a major initiative underway, as prompted by the President's Management Council and OMB, to improve regulatory compliance performance. We have taken the position that good compliance performance is in large part a function of good compliance management, and compliance management is a natural component of environmental management. So we are working with agencies to effectively integrate compliance into their EMS. And for those not doing an EMS, to consider doing so to avoid stand-alone compliance management systems.

Other examples of promoting the use of EMS include a series of modules being prepared to clearly show how the EMS can help support recycling, green purchasing, E2, electronic stewardship, green buildings, and NEPA

requirements. EMS should be the foundation of how this is done, not another parallel effort.

A very recent major output that is putting Federal use of EMS squarely in the public eye is the new Forest Planning Rule out for public comment by the USFS. This new rule radically affects how Forest plans are managed and updated. Now, we intend to use EMS and adaptive management concepts to maintain and update the plans. Articles in the WSJ, WP, and NYT among others indicate that the public is taking notice.

OK, so with all of this activity in the Federal government, why did I come to West Point? First of all, I want to commend you for being a leader in applying the EMS concept to this kind of facility. It is surely one of the very few "non-traditional" locations doing this and you will indeed set the pace and be the benchmark for others. Secondly, the scope of the EMS is very comprehensive, rather than starting in smaller segments of the facility. And that too is a notable bite to take, so I commend you for that initiative.

Lastly, and probably most importantly, this hallowed institution is one of learning. From here, will come the career military leaders. Your graduates will lead our military for the next 20 to 30 years. So, what you do here in terms of environmental stewardship will be part of the collective education experience that they will take with them to their assignments. So, hopefully

as we move into the future, the mindset of proactive environmental stewardship will not be so dependent on the 4 to 8 year turnaround of the political process, but be engrained for decades with our career leaders. Specific to the military is the phenomenon of the short-term turnaround of base commanders. To ensure consistency and long term continual improvement, we need to ensure that as many leaders as possible have this philosophy, so that no matter who moves into the commander chair, there will be consistency. We can do this by training our career personnel. Training in seminars after they get to work is one thing, but instilling these concepts in the academic setting is much more effective. I do realize that this EMS deals with the operation of the academy, but it will have tangible and visible elements to the students that go here; so we will see not only enhanced environmental performance on how this place is run, but it will also serve as a classroom for our future military leaders.

And on that note, I thank you for the honor to speak at this prestigious and historic institution. And on behalf of President George W. Bush, I congratulate you on your commitment to excellence. Please do not hesitate to involve our office as you move forward.

Thank you,