



HANFORD UPDATE

A bulletin on Hanford cleanup and compliance

Volume 8, Number 2 - Jan/Feb 1996

Report from HAB Chair Merilyn B. Reeves

The Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) was established two years ago to provide recommendations and advice to the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington Department of Ecology (the Tri-Parties) on major policy issues relating to the cleanup and waste management at Hanford.

In the past two years, the Board has evolved into a cost effective forum for public involvement. But *it is not, and must not become* the sole conduit for citizen participation for the critical issues of how to protect the environment, public health and workers during the long cleanup process. The Tri-Party agencies and the Board need to hear from citizens who may not keep up with all the technical issues, but are still concerned that Hanford's hazardous and radioactive wastes are managed safely.

The HAB recently printed a report, *Tracking the Hanford Cleanup*, that documents cleanup progress and describes the work of the Board during the past two years. This report explains the values that have been adopted by Northwest citizens during the past five years and how these values shape and guide cleanup activities.

The Board continues to remind the Tri-Party Agencies that these values represent the goals and long term vision for this site. Understanding that funding may be reduced, that there will be reality checks and TPA milestone amendments, the long term goal remains the same: cleanup must proceed so the site can be available for future economic, recreational and cultural uses.

Hanford issues are complex. For example, during the past six months, the HAB has reviewed USDOE plans to privatize the treatment and ultimate vitrification of tank wastes, and given advice relating to this high risk venture. This packet of advice was submitted to the Tri-Parties at the recent public hearing relating to proposed changes in TPA milestones.

At each HAB meeting there is an opportunity for public comment, and the Board welcomes you and is interested in your views.

For more information about HAB consensus advice, or to get a copy of its recent progress report, contact: Gail McClure, USDOE (509) 373-5647.

New Hanford management contract bids due March 15

Interested companies have until March 15 to submit bids for Hanford's new Management and Integration contract. USDOE is seeking proposals from results-oriented contractors to manage the Hanford Site. The contract is estimated to be worth \$4.6 billion over the first five-year period, and it contains options for an additional five years. Selection of a winning Management and Integration contractor is expected in June, and after a transition period, the new contractor would assume full site management responsibilities on October 1, 1996.

The current proposal reflects input from more than 2,000 comments received between August and October, 1995, during a public review of a draft proposal. Among changes put into the final proposal is a requirement for bidders to include an economic development plan for the Tri-Cities.

For more information, contact Gail McClure, USDOE (509) 373-5647.

Amendment 6 implements single regulator concept

In an ongoing effort to get cleanup work done faster and cheaper, the Tri-Party agencies have put in place a new approach to regulatory oversight and cleanup management. Under the old system, both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Washington Department of Ecology would assign staff to each individual Hanford cleanup action. Because both agencies have gained experience and trust in each other, they have agreed with USDOE that the same standards of compliance can be reached with just one agency taking regulatory responsibility for individual cleanup projects.

EPA and Ecology will split up lead regulatory agency (LRA) duties for individual Superfund (CERCLA) projects, and Ecology will act as lead regulatory agency for actions covered by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and laws governing air and water discharges. Both regulators will continue to cooperate closely, and neither EPA or Ecology gives up legal rights under the new agreement.

The amendment also modifies TPA language to conform to USDOE's new management structure, which drives key decision making authority down to the project level. The expectation is that administrative costs will be reduced and significantly more resources will be devoted directly to cleanup work.

For copies of the final Amendment 6 package, call Hanford Cleanup toll-free 1-800-321-2008.

EPA, USDOE propose no interim action for 100-FR-3

The 100-FR-3 Groundwater Operable Unit is one of three units associated with the 100-F Reactor near the Columbia River. The other two operable units, 100-FR-1 and 100-FR-2, include contaminated soil sites and burial grounds.

The 100-FR-3 Operable Unit was evaluated as a candidate for an interim cleanup action. However, information gathered on 100-FR-3 groundwater indicates no interim action is required at this time to protect human health or the environment. This recommendation is based on USDOE retaining control of security and access to the site until final action is taken, thus preventing direct human use of the groundwater. Chromium, the primary contaminant of concern, has been detected in the 100-FR-3 near-river wells, but at levels unlikely to cause risk to the environment, including plants and animals in the river. Additionally, samples have been taken from the seeps where groundwater discharges onto the shoreline. Levels of chromium in these seep samples do not exceed EPA surface water quality standards. Several wells located in the reactor area inland from the river have produced groundwater samples with concentrations slightly above the surface water quality standard. However, these wells are a significant distance from the river, and it is expected dispersion, as chromium migrates toward the river, will result in concentrations below surface water quality standards at the river.

The agencies believe the best way to protect the groundwater and the Columbia River is to focus limited resources on remediation of sources and groundwater plumes in areas with higher potential to impact the Columbia River in the near future. The 100-FR-3 groundwater will be re-evaluated as part of the final remedy selection process. In addition, the 100-FR-3 groundwater will continue to be monitored until the final remedy has been selected. If, in the future, it is determined that contaminant concentrations in groundwater increase, resulting in greater risk, further actions to protect human health and the environment will be evaluated. The EPA has agreed with USDOE that limiting access and continued monitoring are the only intermediate steps currently necessary to protect human health and the environment in the 100-FR-3 operable unit and to fulfill the requirements of TPA interim milestone M-15-13H.

For more information, contact Pam Innis, EPA (509) 376-4919.

RCRA closure sought for two unused 300 Area facilities

USDOE proposes to procedurally close two 300 Area units which were to have treated, stored or disposed of mixed low-level radioactive and chemically hazardous waste. The units, which currently have interim-status Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permits, are the Thermal Treatment Test Facilities and the Physical/Chemical Treatment Test Facilities. Although designated in 1988 to be sites for research on mixed wastes, the units were never used for that purpose. USDOE asked Ecology last September to close the facilities under terms of the TPA's procedural closure provision (Section 6.3.3). If the procedural closures are approved, the two units no longer would be managed according to hazardous waste facility regulations.

Ecology will conduct a 45-day public comment period from **February 21 to April 5, 1996**. No public hearing is planned, but one can held if requested by March 8. Requests for a public hearing or meeting should be submitted to Jeanne Wallace of Ecology. Written comments should be submitted by April 5 to Jeanne Wallace, Department of Ecology, Nuclear Waste Program, 1315 W. 4th Ave., Kennewick, WA, 99336-6018.

For more information, contact Jeanne Wallace, Ecology (509) 736-3019.

Budget cuts will affect Environmental Management activities

The President's fiscal year 1996 budget request submitted to Congress in February 1995 included \$1,467 million for environmental management activities at Hanford. However, Congress allocated \$1,353 million. Those funds have been appropriated and are not part of the ongoing federal budget controversy, but the reduction will result in very real impacts at Hanford. There are ongoing efforts to limit the extent of these impacts to the environmental management programs. Examples include: reducing overhead and indirect costs, reevaluating and reworking cost estimates, and re-engineering.

Some of the programs which will feel the pinch include: ground water monitoring, the waste minimization program, B Plant transition, landlord upgrades, and N Springs pump and treat upgrade. The appropriation bill also put severe restrictions on funding for public accountability and economic transition activities.

On the positive side, immediate safety activities, K Basins fuel removal, essential site services such as solid waste burial grounds, analytical services, landlord support and most current operations, were not cut back.

For more detailed information, contact Jim Peterson, USDOE (509) 376-6731.

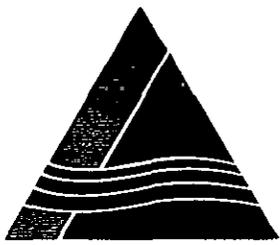
Ecology taking comment on siting mixed waste facility

Ecology will accept written comment through **March 6** regarding acceptance of a demonstration of compliance with state dangerous waste management facility siting criteria for an Allied Technology Group (ATG) facility in north Richland. The proposed plant would treat mixed waste (waste containing both radioactivity and dangerous chemicals) by stabilization and abrasion blasting.

ATG has a separate \$24 million contract with USDOE to use a thermal destruction process to prepare for disposal certain low-activity mixed waste from Hanford. ATG will seek a state permit for the thermal destruction facility later in 1996.

To be part of the ATG permit information mailing list, contact Robert Harper, Ecology, at (360) 407-7122, or call the Hanford toll-free hotline 1-800-321-2008. Copies of ATG permit documents may be reviewed at Ecology's Kennewick office, or the USDOE Public Reading Room, Washington State University, 100 Sprout Road, Room 130 West, Richland.

For more information, contact Pat Irle, Ecology, (509) 736-5708, or send written comments to her at Washington Department of Ecology, Nuclear Waste Program, 1315 W. 4th Ave., Kennewick, WA 99336-6018.



Hanford Happenings

Tri-Party Agreement

February 14, 1996

Cleanup is underway at Hanford and the number of actions requiring public participation continues to grow. The U.S. Department of Energy, Washington State Department of Ecology, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, offer this monthly calendar to help you keep track of scheduled meetings, public comment opportunities and events, and the unavoidable changes in schedules. For the latest information, call the Hanford Cleanup toll-free hotline at 1-800-321-2008.

February	Program	Contact
February 20	Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction Project Task Completion Working Group meeting. Seattle; Stouffer Madison Hotel, 4th Floor, 515 Madison Street. 1-5 p.m.	Steve West (208) 334-0606
February 21-22	Calculating and Interpreting Radiological Doses and Risks for Specified Individuals Exposed to Radionuclides Due to Historical Releases from the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, Technical Workshop. Seattle; Stouffer Madison Hotel, 4th Floor, 515 Madison Street. 8-4:30 p.m. first day, 8:30-12 noon second day.	C.B. Bolter (312) 988-7667
February 27	Fiscal Year 1998 Budget Planning Focus Group meeting. Portland, Oregon. Agenda and location to be determined.	Jon Yerxa (509) 376-9628
February 28	Fiscal Year 1998 Budget Planning Presentation to the Oregon Hanford Waste Board. Location and agenda to be determined.	Jon Yerxa (509) 376-9628
February 29	Fiscal Year 1998 Budget Planning meeting; Red Lion Hanford House, Richland, WA. Agenda to be determined.	Jim Peterson (509) 376-6731
March/April		
March 7	Hanford Advisory Board Environmental Restoration Committee meeting. Kennewick. Ecology's Kennewick offices. 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Chair: Ralph Patt	Naseem Rakha (503) 873-7709
March 13-14	Hanford Advisory Board meeting. Tri-Cities, WA. Agenda and location to be determined.	Elaine Hallmark (503) 243-2663
April 4-5	Hanford Advisory Board meeting. Radison Hotel, 17001 Pacific Highway South, Seattle, WA. Agenda to be determined. 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Elaine Hallmark (503) 243-2663
<i>Members of the public are encouraged to attend Hanford Advisory Board meetings. All meetings are open to the public and time is available to give public comment.</i>		
Comment Periods		
September 22- February 19	Draft Waste Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. NOTE: Comment period was extended. USDOE is seeking comment on USDOE-wide management alternatives for treating, storing, and disposing of radioactive and hazardous wastes.	Carol Borgstrom (202) 586-4600
January 22- March 6	Tentative Acceptance of Demonstration of Compliance for Siting of a new mixed-waste treatment unit for Allied Technology Group, Inc., Richland. Ecology is seeking public comment on its tentative decision to approve Allied Technology Group's demonstration of compliance with siting criteria for its new Richland facility to conduct waste stabilization and abrasive blasting.	Pat Irlle (509) 736-5708
February 21- April 5	Procedural closures of Thermal Treatment Test Facilities and the Physical/Chemical Treatment Test Facilities. Ecology is seeking public comment on the proposed closures.	Jeanne Wallace (509) 736-3019
February/ March Tentative	Tank Waste Remediation Systems (TWRS) Environmental Impact Statement. Ecology and USDOE are seeking public comment on proposed alternatives for the cleanup of the 56 million gallons of waste stored in 177 underground storage tanks on the Hanford Site.	Geoff Tallent (360) 407-7112
Summer Tentative	TPA Community Relations Plan. The TPA agencies will be seeking public comment on the revised Community Relations Plan.	Rob Harper (360) 407-7122

Every effort has been made to list correct information, but dates, times, and locations for particular meetings may change. For more information, please call 1-800-321-2008 or any of the following Hanford Tri-Party Agreement agency public involvement contacts:

U.S. Department of Energy
Jon Yerxa at (509) 376-9628

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Dennis Faulk at (509) 376-8631

WA State Department of Ecology
Laurie Davies at (360) 407-7113

The Hanford Tri-Party Agreement agencies are equal opportunity agencies and do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, disability, age, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disabled veteran's status, Vietnam Era veteran's status, or sexual orientation. If you have special accommodation needs or require this material in an alternative format, please contact Michelle Davis at (360) 407-7126 (Voice) or (360) 407-6206 (TDD).

 **printed on recycled paper**

Hanford Happenings
c/o WA State Department of Ecology
Nuclear Waste Program
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Hanford dose project winding down

The Technical Steering Panel (TSP) of the Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction Project (HEDR) ceased to exist at the end of 1995. Oversight of the project, which will provide citizens with estimates of exposure to radiation from Hanford, has passed to the health departments of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The HEDR Task Completion Working Group, chaired by Steve West of the Idaho Division of Health, will review progress and provide regular updates on project status. Public involvement activities will be centered in the Idaho Division of Health in Boise. Idaho will handle the HEDR toll-free information line (1-800-545-5581), maintain a mailing list, and distribute information such fact sheets, scientific reports and videos.

For more information, contact Elke Shaw-Tulloch, Idaho Bureau of Environmental Health and Safety, Idaho Division of Health, by mail at 450 W. State St., Boise, ID 83720; or phone at (208) 334-0606, or 1-800-545-5581.

News Flash! HAB schedules March meeting

The Hanford Advisory Board has decided to meet March 13 and 14 in the Tri-Cities. At press time, a location had not yet been selected. A formal March meeting was not on the board's original 1996 schedule.

For more information, contact Sarah Cloud, Confluence Northwest (503) 243-2663.

 printed on recycled paper

Hanford Update
Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing

The Tri-Party Agreement agencies are equal opportunity agencies. For more information, call the Hanford Cleanup toll-free hotline, 1-800-321-2008. If you have special accommodation needs, or require this material in an alternative format, please call Michelle Davis at (360) 407-7126 (voice), or (360) 407-6206 (TDD).