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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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March 1, 1994

Mr. Michael J. Farrow
Director, Department of Natural Resources
Confederated Tribes of the
Umatilla Indian Reservation
P.O. Box 638
Pendleton, OR 97801



Dear Mr. Farrow:

Re: North (Wahluke) Slope Expedited Response Action Comment Response

Thank you for taking the time to review the North Slope Expedited Response Action Proposal. The task at hand is not to decide future use of the North Slope, but to cleanup the landfills and other waste sites in the area. The subject document was not intended to imply future land use decisions, and it has been revised to reflect this fact. Future land use issues are not within the purview of the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). Ecology supports the Future Site Uses Working Group's recommendation for unrestricted use of the North Slope.

A concern was expressed about the propriety of the Categorical Exclusion (CX) to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A copy of the U.S. Department of Energy's (USDOE) CX and the supporting Information Bulletin are attached as requested. This review under NEPA was performed in accordance with the USDOE NEPA Implementing Procedures (10 CFR 1021) and the then current USDOE Order 5440.1D, NEPA Compliance Program. The review leading to the CX considered the environmental consequences of both the characterization of the North Slope (including both the ecological and cultural resource surveys) and the removal action. It was performed prior to the initiation of these proposed actions and used available information. This information appeared sufficient to satisfy the eligibility criteria for the CX, and is documented in the Information Bulletin.

Concerns were also expressed regarding adequacy of the Radiation, Cultural Resource, and Flora and Fauna surveys. Ecology recognizes these surveys as inadequate for the implementation of this removal action. Radiation surveys and seasonally correct flora and fauna surveys will occur prior to any ground disturbing remediation activities on the Wahluke Slope. Continuous monitoring by proper authorities for any impact to cultural resources will take place during the course of remediation activities.

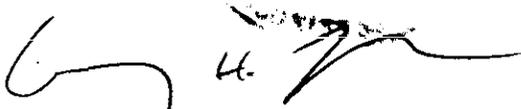
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Your comments have been addressed, and the majority are reflected in the Wahluke Slope Action Memorandum, and in the final version of the plan, which will be entitled North Slope (Wahluke Slope) Expedited Response Action Cleanup Plan, DOE/RL-93-47, Revision 0.

Again, thank you for taking the time to review the proposal. If you have questions regarding the cleanup of the Wahluke Slope, please contact me at (509) 736-3026, or Dib Goswami at (509) 736-3015.

Sincerely,



Gary Freedman
Unit Manager
Nuclear Waste Program

GF:mf

cc: Dennis Faulk, EPA
Walter Perro, USDOE-RL
Administrative Record (Wahluke Slope ERA)

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Subject: NORTH (WAHLUKE) SLOPE EXPEPEDITED RESPONSE ACTION COMMENT RESPONSE

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