

[1] From: Kevin J Kjarmo at -WHC117 8/30/96 9:08AM (14783 bytes: 278 ln)
 To: ^Jacobs Engineering Group at -DOE_HANFORD_1
 Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Hanford S
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 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Hanford Site
 Tank Waste Remediation System, Richland, WA

AGENCY: Department of Energy and Washington State Department of
 Ecology.

ACTION: Notice of availability.



SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) announce the availability of a Final EIS entitled "Tank Waste Remediation System at the Hanford Site, Richland, Washington" (DOE/EIS-0189). DOE and Ecology co-prepared the EIS. DOE and Ecology revised the information in the Draft EIS in response to public comments and to reflect new environmental information that became available after the Draft EIS was issued in April 1996.

The EIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of DOE's proposed action as well as reasonable alternatives for management and disposal of mixed, radioactive, and hazardous waste currently or projected to be stored in 177 underground storage tanks and in approximately 60 active and inactive miscellaneous underground storage tanks that were associated with Hanford's tank farm operations. In addition, the EIS evaluates the management and potential disposal of approximately 1,930 cesium and strontium capsules currently on loan or stored at the Hanford Site.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the Final EIS and for further information on the Final EIS should be directed to Ms. Carolyn Haass, DOE TWRS EIS NEPA Document Manager, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office, P.O. Box 1249, Richland, WA 99352. Requests for copies of the Draft EIS also can be made via the Internet at TWRSEIS@ken01.JACOBS.com or by calling Ecology's Hanford Information Line at 1-800-321-2008. Addresses of locations where the Final EIS will be available for public review are listed in this notice under "DOE Reading Rooms and Information Repositories." The Final EIS is also available for review on the Internet at www.hanford.gov.

General information on the DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process may be requested from Ms. Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585. Ms. Borgstrom may be contacted by telephone at (202) 586-4600 or by leaving a message at 1-800-472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

DOE and Ecology issued a Draft EIS for public comment and published a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register on April 15, 1996 (61 FR 16471). EPA published a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register on April 12, 1996 (61 FR 16248). Public hearings on the Draft EIS were held in Pasco, Washington on May 2, 1996; Portland, Oregon on May 9, 1996; Arlington, Virginia on May 7, 1996; Spokane, Washington on May 15, 1996; and Seattle, Washington on May 22, 1996. All written and oral comments on the Draft EIS received during the 45 day public comment period were assessed and considered by DOE and Ecology both individually and collectively. Comment letters, transcripts of oral comments, and transcripts of public hearings and meetings are available for review at locations listed in this notice under "DOE Reading Rooms and Information Repositories."

DOE requested the National Academy of Science to review and comment on the TWRs Draft EIS. DOE will carefully consider all comments provided by the National Academy of Science and the public in the Record of Decision.

DOE and Ecology revised the information in the Draft EIS in response to public comments and to reflect new environmental information that became available after the Draft EIS was issued. Appendix L contains oral and written comments and DOE and Ecology's responses to the comments. Responses to comments included appropriate revisions of the EIS, answers to questions, explanations of technical issues, references to information in other DOE environmental impact statements, references to information provided in the Draft EIS, explanations of the relationship of this EIS to other related DOE NEPA documents, statements of government policy, or indications that the comment was outside the scope of this EIS.

The Final EIS has been filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and has also been distributed to Federal, State, and local officials, Tribal Nations, as well as agencies, organizations, and individuals who may be interested or affected. The Final EIS and supporting technical reports also are available for public review in DOE reading rooms and designated information repository locations identified in this notice. DOE plans to issue a Record of Decision on the EIS no sooner than 30 days after publication of EPA's notice of availability of the Final EIS in the Federal Register (i.e., no sooner than September 30, 1996).

Alternatives Considered

The Final EIS evaluates ten tank waste alternatives in detail:

- <bullet> No Action--perform minimum activities required for safe and secure management of Hanford's tank wastes with the current tank farm configuration;

- <bullet> Long-Term Management--perform minimum activities required for safe and secure management of Hanford's tank waste including upgrades to tank farms with the current single-shell tank farm configuration and the replacement of the double-shell tanks twice during a 100-year period;

- <bullet> In Situ Fill and Cap--retrieve and evaporate liquid waste from the double-shell tanks, then fill all tanks with gravel and cover the tank farms with an earthen surface barrier, disposing of all tank waste onsite;

- <bullet> In Situ Vitrification--retrieve and evaporate liquid waste from the double-shell tanks, then vitrify all of the tank

farms and cover the tank farms with an earthen surface barrier, disposing of all tank waste onsite;

<bullet> Ex Situ No Separations--retrieve all tank farm waste practicable (assumed to be 99 percent), then either vitrify or calcine the waste and package the treated waste form for onsite storage and eventual offsite disposal at a geologic repository;

<bullet> Ex Situ Intermediate Separations--retrieve all tank farm waste (99 percent) and separate the high-level and low-activity waste streams using sludge washing and ion exchange, then vitrify the waste streams in separate facilities and package the treated waste form for onsite disposal of immobilized low-activity waste and offsite disposal of the immobilized high-level waste at a geologic repository;

<bullet> Ex Situ Extensive Separations--retrieve all tank farm waste (99 percent) and separate into high-level and low-activity waste streams using sludge wash, ion exchange, caustic leach and acid dissolution, then vitrify the waste streams in separate facilities and package the treated waste form for onsite disposal of the immobilized low-activity waste and onsite storage and eventual offsite disposal of the immobilized high-level waste at a geologic repository;

<bullet> Ex Situ/In Situ Combination 1--retrieve waste from 70 tanks based on the potential long-term risks to human health or the environment, separate the retrieved waste into high-level and low-activity waste streams using sludge washing and ion exchange, then vitrify the waste streams in separate facilities and package the treated waste form for onsite disposal of the immobilized low-activity waste and onsite storage and eventual offsite disposal of the immobilized high-level waste at a geologic repository. Fill all tanks, including those with waste that had not been retrieved, with gravel, and cover the tanks with a barrier, permanently disposing of the waste in-place;

<bullet> Ex Situ/In Situ Combination 2--retrieve waste from 25 tanks based on the potential long-term risks to human health or the environment, separate the retrieved waste into high-level and low-activity waste streams using sludge washing and ion exchange, then vitrify the waste streams in separate facilities and package the treated waste form for onsite disposal of the immobilized low-activity waste and onsite storage and eventual offsite disposal of the immobilized high-level waste at a geologic repository. Fill all tanks, including those with waste that had not been retrieved, with gravel, and cover the tanks with a barrier, permanently disposing of the waste in-place; and

<bullet> Phased Implementation--for Phase 1, construct commercial demonstration-scale facilities that would include one low-activity waste separations and vitrification demonstration plant and one low-activity and high-level waste vitrification demonstration plant to operate for up to 10 years. These facilities could treat up to 30 percent of the tank waste by volume during the 10-year operating period. For Phase 2, construct larger capacity separations and vitrification plants, retrieve the remaining waste, separate the waste into low-activity and high-level waste streams, vitrify the waste in separate facilities, package the waste, and dispose of the low-activity waste onsite in near-surface vaults and the high-level waste offsite at a geologic repository.

The cesium and strontium capsules are currently classified as waste by-product and are therefore available for beneficial uses. If beneficial uses cannot be found, the capsules would be subject to management and disposal actions as high-level waste. As in the Draft EIS, cesium and strontium capsule alternatives analyzed in the Final

EIS are:

<bullet> No Action--Continue existing operations and maintenance in the Hanford Site Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility for 10 years;

<bullet> Onsite Disposal--overpack the cesium and strontium in canisters and store onsite indefinitely in a newly constructed dry-well storage facility;

<bullet> Overpack and Ship--overpack the cesium and strontium into canisters, which would then be overpacked into Multi-Purpose Canisters, and dispose of offsite at the proposed national high-level waste repository; and

<bullet> Vitrify with Tank Waste--remove capsule contents and vitrify with the high-level tank waste, place in Multi-Purpose Canisters, and dispose of offsite at a geologic repository.

Preferred Alternatives

DOE and Ecology's preferred tank waste alternative in the EIS is the Phased Implementation alternative. DOE and Ecology's preferred alternative for the Hanford Site's cesium and strontium capsules is the No Action alternative.

Availability of Copies of the Final EIS

Copies of the Final EIS are being distributed to Federal, State, and local officials and agencies; to organizations and individuals known to be interested in the EIS; and to persons and agencies that commented on the Draft EIS. Additional copies may be obtained by contacting Ms. Carolyn Haass, DOE TWRS EIS NEPA Document Manager, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office, P.O. Box 1249, Richland, Washington 99352. Requests for copies also can be made via the Internet at:

TWRSEIS@ken01.JACOBS.com or by calling Ecology's Hanford Information Line at 1-800- 321-2008. Addresses of DOE Public Reading Rooms and Information Repositories where the EIS and reference documents will be available for public review are listed below:

Summary of the EIS

Summary:

Summary of the alternatives and analysis presented in the EIS

Volume One:

Main Text of the Tank Waste Remediation System EIS

Volume Two:

Appendices Supporting Volume One

Appendix A. Waste Inventory

Appendix B. Description of Alternatives

Appendix C. Alternatives Rejected from Analysis

Volume Three:

Appendix Supporting Volume One

Appendix D. Anticipated Health and Ecological Risks

Volume Four:

Appendices Supporting Volume One

Appendix E. Accident Risks

Appendix F. Groundwater Modeling

Volume Five:

Appendices Supporting Volume One

Appendix G. Air Quality Modeling

Appendix H. Socioeconomic Impact Modeling

Appendix I. Affected Environment

Appendix J. Consultation Letters

Appendix K. Uncertainties Analysis

Volume Six:

Appendix Containing Comments and DOE and Ecology Responses and Supporting Changes to the Summary and Volumes One through Six made in Response to Comments

Appendix L. Comments and Agency Responses

The Summary of the EIS is available for those who do not wish to receive the entire Final EIS. When requesting copies of the Final EIS, please indicate whether you wish to receive only the Summary (50 pages), the Summary and Volume One (620 pages), or the entire EIS, including the appendices (3,100 pages).

DOE Public Reading Rooms and Information Repositories

University of Washington, Suzzallo Library, Government Publications

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Room, Seattle, WA 98185. (206) 685-9855, Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Gonzaga University, Foley Center, E. 502 Boone, Spokane, WA 99258. (509) 328-4220 ext. 3829, Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. to midnight, Friday 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Sunday 11:00 a.m. to midnight.

U.S. Department of Energy Reading Room, Washington State University, Tri-Cities Campus, 100 Sprout Road, Room 130W, Richland, WA 99352, (509) 376-8583, Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Portland State University, Bradford Price Millar Library, Science and Engineering Floor, S.W. Harrison and Park, Portland, OR 97207, (503) 725-3690, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters, Freedom of Information Public Reading Room, 1E-190 Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20585, (202) 586-6020, Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Issued in Washington, D.C., this day August 26, 1996.

Stephen P. Cowan,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Waste Management.

[FR Doc. 96-22186 Filed 8-29-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P