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5 June 1999

Dear Mr. Ferns,

As a member of the Nature Conservancy of WA, I am writing to you re: protecting the Hanford Reach ecosystem. I believe that the DOE's Preferred Alternative in the HRA EIS is by far the best solution to protecting the hundreds of diverse species of native plants and animals.

However, I also believe that the Preferred Alternative should have some modifications, as follows:

These adjoined DOE lands — the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve, the entire Wahluke Slope, the Hanford Reach, the Columbia

River islands and the McGee Ranch — should be managed as a permanent National Wildlife Refuge.

In addition, no commercial mining, agriculture or livestock grazing should be permitted throughout the area of the suggested NWR, including central Hanford.

Further, I strongly urge the DOE to issue separate decisions for the areas mentioned above. This should expedite a final decision on management of uncontaminated lands.

Thank you, Mr. Ferns, for giving this matter your attention.

Yours truly,

(Mrs.) Beverly McLaughlin