



# Oregon

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059809

June 24, 1998

Earnest J. Moniz  
Undersecretary of Energy, MS: 7E-079  
U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters  
Forrestal Building  
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20585



MANAGER'S INFO

RP  
MGR  
AME  
TWR  
WSD

Dear Dr. Moniz :

We are writing to commend you and John Wagoner for your announcement on June 8 that the existing SX expert panel, which reviews tank farm monitoring data, will be incorporated into a more comprehensive, site-wide external and independent scientific peer review committee. The Panel will review the technical aspects of the vadose zone/groundwater project at Hanford. As you know, credibility and trust are key issues in the groundwater vadose zone issues at Hanford. The SX tank farm panel has done exemplary work and developed broad stakeholder confidence over the past two years.

Folding the SX tank farm expert panel into the new core expert panel will ensure that the panel hits the ground running and that the new panel will not be forced to all begin with such a steep learning curve. This will save time needed for the panel to be productive. And, it will save money. Both are essential in these days of tight budgets and intense congressional scrutiny.

The SX tank farm expert panel previously identified that it needed additional expertise. The expansion of the core expert panel to include expertise in chemistry and the reaction of tank wastes with soils as well as adding biological and ecological expertise and risk and health assessment skills will greatly aid ensuring that the panel does a comprehensive job.

We look forward to closely following the work of the panel as we have in the past. If we can assist you, your staff or the work of the panel please contact me at 503-378-5544.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Blazek, Administrator  
Oregon Office of Energy

cc: John Wagoner, Site Manager, USDOEARL  
Randy Smith, EPA Region X  
Mike Wilson, Washington Department of Ecology

**RL COMMITMENT CONTROL**

**JUN 29 1998**

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