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14426 Lazelle Lane
Yelm, WA 98597
5/12/99

Mr. Thomas W. Ferns
U. S. Dept. of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P. O. Box 550, MSIN HO-12
Richland, WA 99352-0550



Dear Mr. Ferns:

As a person deeply interested in our state's natural areas, I've been trying to keep abreast of the Environmental Impact Statement on the Hanford reach. We have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to protect a very important natural area, and I hope we don't let it slip through our fingers.

Specifically, in order to protect this land, we need to adopt the "Preferred Alternative" of the EIS, not the alternative submitted by local governments. I also agree with an article I read recently that says we need to add a few modifications to the Preferred Alternative:

- 1). Adjoined DOE lands should be managed as a permanent national Wildlife Refuge (the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve, the McGee Ranch, DOE's entire Wahluke Slope, the Hanford Reach, and the Columbia River islands). And DOE should issue separate decisions for these areas in order to expedite a final decision.
- 2). There should be no agriculture, commercial mining, or livestock grazing permitted on the site, including central Hanford. This would ensure long-term protection for native species and their ecosystems.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ruth Stambaugh
Ruth Stambaugh, Volunteer Land Steward for DNR

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