



0043091

9613404-0224
Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
Richland, Washington 99352

MAR 4 1996

96-SFD-064

Dear Interested Party:

RECORD OF DECISION (ROD) FOR THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (FEIS) ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL (SNF) FROM THE K BASINS AT THE HANFORD SITE, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON (DOE/EIS-0245)

Enclosed is a copy of the ROD for the Management of SNF from the K Basins FEIS. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared this ROD in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Department's NEPA regulations.

The FEIS [Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Addendum] analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the removal of SNF from the K Basins, and subsequently, the management of that fuel for up to 40 years until decisions on ultimate disposition are made and implemented. Additionally, the FEIS analyzes a no action alternative involving continued storage in the K Basins for up to 40 years with no modifications except for maintenance, monitoring, and ongoing safety upgrades.

Based on the analysis in the FEIS and after careful evaluation of environmental impacts, costs, compliance requirements, engineering considerations, worker and public health and safety, and public, agency and tribal comments, DOE has decided to implement the preferred alternative evaluated in the FEIS with two modifications and is documenting that decision in this ROD. The preferred alternative consists of removing the SNF from the basins, vacuum drying, conditioning and sealing the SNF in inert-gas filled canisters for dry vault storage in a new facility, to be built at Hanford, for up to 40 years pending decisions on ultimate disposition. The K Basins will continue to be operated during the period over which the preferred alternative is implemented. The preferred alternative also includes transfer of the basin sludge to Hanford's double-shell tanks for management, disposal of non-SNF basin debris in a low-level burial ground at the Hanford Site, disposition of the basin water, and deactivation of the basins pending decommissioning.

The first modification in the ROD is with respect to management of the sludge. Should it not be possible to put the sludge into the double-shell tanks, the sludge will either continue to be managed as SNF, or disposed of as solid transuranic (TRU) waste. The second modification in the ROD is with respect to the timing of the placement of the SNF into the transportation casks. The SNF would be loaded into multicask overpacks (MCOs) that are

Interested Party
96-SFD-064

-2-

MAR 4 1996

already in transportation casks, then the MCOs would be drained and vacuum dried. This differs from what was previously proposed, which was to load the SNF into MCOs, drain, and vacuum dry prior to placement of the MCOs in the transportation casks. This modification would reduce the radiation exposure to the workers.

The FEIS and reference documents are available in the Department's public reading rooms and the public libraries. Their addresses are included in Section 5 of the FEIS. For further information or to request additional copies of the ROD or the FEIS, contact:

Dr. Phillip G. Loscoe
NEPA Document Manager - K Basins SNF EIS
P.O. Box 550, MSIN S7-41
Richland, WA 99352
Telephone: (509) 376-7434

Thank you for your interest in the K Basins SNF EIS Project.

Sincerely,



Dr. Phillip G. Loscoe
NEPA Document Manager
K Basins SNF EIS

Enclosure