

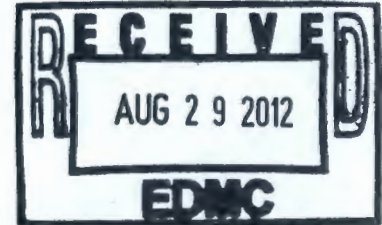
Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
Richland, Washington 99352

1216542

12-SSD-0097

AUG 27 2012

Mr. J. Bell
Nez Perce Tribe
Chairman, Hanford Site Natural Resource Trustee Council
P.O. Box 365
Lapwai, Idaho 86540



Dear Mr. Bell:

FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S (DOE) INTENT TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) FOR THE EXPANSION OF BORROW AREAS ON THE HANFORD SITE, DOE/EA-1934

This letter is to provide formal notification of DOE's intent to complete an EA to analyze any potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed expansion of active borrow areas on the Hanford Site to support DOE's environmental cleanup mission and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact.

The scope of the EA includes expanding the surface area of 11 existing borrow pits and potentially developing 1 new borrow pit to meet DOE needs for available sand and gravel materials for backfill following ongoing environmental remediation activities. The borrow pits being considered for expansion are shown on the enclosed map and include Pits F, H, N, 6, 9, 18, 21, 23, 24, 30, and 35. The EA scope may also include a new pit in the vicinity of the N and K Reactor areas if existing infrastructure associated with environmental remediation activities prevents the expansion of Pit N. The EA will also address actions associated with eventual closure of the pits. The EA scope does not include borrow sources of silt-loam material, which are not needed in the near-term. DOE will conduct a separate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to identify borrow sources of silt-loam material at a later date.

The 11 borrow sources included in this EA scope along with 16 other Hanford Site borrow sources and 2 rock quarries were previously evaluated in 2 EAs—Use of Existing Borrow Areas, Hanford Site (DOE/EA-1403, October 2001), and Reactivation and Use of Three Former Borrow Sites in the 100-F, 100-H, and 100-N Areas (DOE/EA-1454, March 2003). The 2 previous EAs assumed a 10 percent expansion of the disturbed surface area at each borrow pit beyond the identified needs at that time. DOE has used the available expansion under the 2 EAs at 9 of the 11 pits, and has a continuing need for fill material to support remediation activities.

DOE intends to coordinate compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the steps taken to meet the requirements of NEPA. We anticipate distributing a draft EA for a 30-day public review towards the end of the 2012 calendar year, and the final EA and its Determination in early 2013. We will post the draft EA on the Hanford website and issue stakeholder notifications via the Hanford email distribution list. We look forward to your participation in the forthcoming EA process.

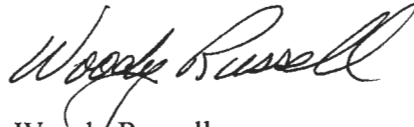
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-2-

If you have any questions, please contact me at (509) 373-5227, or your staff may contact Paula K. Call, NEPA Document Manager, at (509) 376-2048.

Sincerely,



Woody Russell
Hanford NEPA Compliance Officer

SSD:PKC

Attachment

cc w/attach:

Administrative Record
Environmental Portal



Legend

- Borrow Pits Proposed for Expansion
- Proposed N/K Pit
- Major Environmental Remediation Areas of the Hanford Site
- Roads

NOTES: Aerial Image, 2011, NAIP.

Proposed Expansion of Borrow Pits on the Hanford Site

Benton County, WA

