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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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January 7, 1993

PUBLIC SCOPING PERIOD BEGINS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION DISPOSAL FACILITY PROPOSAL

Richland -- The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) (the Tri-Party Agreement Agencies) are asking for public input on a proposal for a facility to receive cleanup wastes from around the Hanford Site.

The proposed Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility would provide centralized capacity for burial of hazardous/dangerous, low-level radioactive, mixed (hazardous and radioactive) cleanup wastes. The facility is proposed as part of the recent changes to the Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (commonly known as the Tri-Party Agreement).

The Tri-Party Agreement agencies hope to use the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility as an example of how to combine applicable state and federal regulatory procedures and provide significant early public involvement. This regulatory streamlining would help focus public attention on the entire the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility proposal and allow agencies to use their resources and time efficiently.

The proposed Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility would be a new remediation waste management unit located between and to the south of the 200 West and 200 East Areas of the Hanford Facility, on the Central (200 Area) Plateau, Benton County, Washington. This site is preferred based on an evaluation of potential sites on the Central Plateau meeting the facility land area requirements against Washington State and DOE siting criteria, including protection of human health and

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the environment, geologic and hydrologic suitability, protection of archeological and historical sites, and construction and operational considerations. The proposed location minimizes potential risk associated with siting the facility near environmentally or culturally sensitive areas.

The facility's proposed features include one or more waste trenches, rail and tractor/trailer container handling capability, railroads, an inventory control system, a decontamination building, and operation offices. In the Regulatory Package, design alternatives, including an unlined trench, single lined trench, double lined trench with leachate collection system, soil cover, and RCRA-compliant cover will be evaluated in an Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study format against the CERCLA remedial action criteria. The alternatives will also be analyzed to determine whether they fulfill the Corrective Action Management Unit criteria under RCRA. A no-action alternative will qualitatively assess the environmental impacts of not providing centralized on-site remediation waste capacity. This will form a baseline to evaluate the comparative effects of the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility alternatives.

Initial construction for the facility would be adequate for wastes from cleanup sites which are presently under investigation. The facility would be expanded incrementally to accommodate future cleanup needs as they are identified. This approach allows the facility to be tailored to the requirements of site cleanup, thereby minimizing the environmental impact. By the end of Hanford Site cleanup, the total capacity is not expected to exceed 30 million cubic yards of waste. The Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility and its support facilities could occupy, at its maximum size, as much as 6.12 square miles. However, it should be noted that waste minimization and design options that are currently being investigated may significantly reduce the total volume of cleanup waste to be generated, and therefore, limit the size of the facility. A determination of eventual total capacity needs will be made through the remedy selection process at the operable units.

Timing for construction and operation of an Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility is critical. The proposed cleanup plans for several waste site operable units are due beginning in October 1994. A delay in activities necessary to initiate construction of the facility would prevent timely commencement of

remediation activities. The tentative Agreement on the Tri-Party Agreement requires the facility to be operational in September 1996. To meet this schedule, construction of the facility must begin by October 1994.

A public scoping period has been scheduled for January 10 through February 8. Public input will be taken at scoping meetings held in the Tri-Cities and Seattle.

RICHLAND
Tuesday, January 25
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

SEATTLE
Tuesday, February 1
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Written comments on the scope of the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Regulatory Package, and requests for information should be directed to: Mr. Bryan L. Foley, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office, P.O. Box 550, MSIN A5-19, Richland, Washington, 99352. Information can also be requested by calling the Hanford Cleanup toll-free line at 1-800-321-2008.

A focus sheet and Washington State Notice of Intent are available for review at these Public Information Repositories and Administrative Records:

Please note: The Washington State Notice of Intent will not be available at the Information Repositories and Administrative Records until January 16.

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES:

Gonzaga University
Foley Center
E. 502 Boone
Spokane, WA 99258
Attn: Lewis Miller
(509) 328-4220 ext. 3125

University of Washington
Suzzallo Library
Government Publications Room
Seattle, WA 99195
Attn: Eleanor Chase
(206) 543-4664

Portland State University
Branford Price Millar Library
Science and Engineering Floor
SW Harrison and Park
Portland, OR 97207
Attn: Michael Bowman
(503) 725-3690

U.S. Dept. of Energy Reading Room
Washington State University, Tri-Cities
100 Sprout Road, Room 130
Richland, WA 99352
Attn: Terri Traub
(509) 376-8583

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS:

U.S. Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
Administrative Record Center
2440 Stevens Center

Washington State Department of Ecology
Administrative Record
Nuclear Mixed Waste Library
300 Desmond Drive

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Richland, Washington 99352
Attn: Lee Michael

Lacey, Washington 98503
Attn: Marilyn Smith

EPA Region 10
Superfund Record Center
1200 Sixth Avenue
Park Place Building, 7th Floor
Seattle, Washington 98101
Attn: Karen Prater

Your Input is Needed (text along the side of the advertisement)

Proposed Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Evaluation Scope
public scoping period begins January 10 and ends February 8

You have an opportunity to provide public input on the scope of evaluation for a Hanford Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility. The proposed Facility would handle hazardous, dangerous, low-level radioactive and mixed (hazardous and radioactive) wastes generated during cleanup of the Hanford Site. This was part of the recent negotiations on the Hanford Tri-Party Cleanup Agreement.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Tuesday, February 1

7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Meeting location to be determined
Seattle

If you would like to review the focus sheet and the Washington State Notice of Intent, visit the information repository or administrative record located near you:

Please note: The Washington State Notice of Intent will not be available in the Information Repository and Administrative Record until January 16.

INFORMATION REPOSITORY

Suzzallo Library
Government Publications Room
Mail Stop FM-25
Seattle, WA 98195
(206) 543-4664
Attention: Eleanor Chase

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

Washington State Department of Ecology
Nuclear Mixed Waste Library
300 Desmond Drive
Lacey, WA 98503
(206) 407-7097
ATTN: Marilyn Smith

EPA Region 10
Superfund Record Center
1200 Sixth Avenue
Park Place Building, 7th Floor
Seattle, Washington 98101

For more information, or to send written comments, contact:

Bryan Foley
U.S. Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550 A5-19
Richland, WA 99352
(509) 376-7087 or 1-800-321-2008

If you have special accommodation needs, contact Rob Harper, Ecology at 206-407-7122.

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PUBLIC NOTICE--ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION DISPOSAL FACILITY
Public Scoping Period begins January 10 through February 8
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The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) (the Tri-Party Agreement Agencies) are asking for public input on a proposal for a facility to receive cleanup wastes from around the Hanford Site. The proposed Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility would provide centralized capacity for burial of hazardous/dangerous, low-level radioactive, mixed (hazardous and radioactive) cleanup wastes. The facility is proposed as part of the recent changes to the Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (commonly known as the Tri-Party Agreement).

NEED FOR FACILITY

Seventy-eight operable units containing more than 1,100 waste sites at Hanford are being evaluated for cleanup. Decisions on how each operable unit will be remediated have not been made, however preliminary analysis indicates that there is no effective technology for destroying the waste. Disposal at a landfill outside of Hanford is undesirable because it is expensive, large quantities of waste must be transported on public highways, and adequate landfill space outside of Hanford is limited. Current on-site waste management capabilities are also limited and would not accommodate the projected volumes of cleanup waste.

The proposed facility will be authorized under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), and the Corrective Action Management Unit and the provisions of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). A Regulatory Package will be prepared by USDOE to document and authorize the proposed facility. The Regulatory Package will consist of a CERCLA Proposed Plan, a RCRA Corrective Action Management Unit permit application, technical appendices, and documentation of where the NEPA values have been satisfied. Ecology has made a determination of significance under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the facility. Ecology will use the Regulatory Package to meet the requirements of a state Environmental Impact Statement. The Tri-Party Agreement agencies are asking for public input on the scope of environmental impacts and alternatives to be evaluated in the Regulatory Package.

The Tri-Party Agreement agencies hope to use the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility as an example of how to combine applicable state and federal regulatory procedures and provide significant early public involvement. This regulatory streamlining would help focus public attention on the entire the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility proposal and allow agencies to use their resources and time efficiently.

THE PROPOSED FACILITY

Past waste management practices created environmental conditions which require cleanup under Federal and Washington State laws. The Hanford Future Site Uses Working Group in The Future for Hanford: Uses and Cleanup (the "Future Site Uses Report"), December 1992, recommended that waste management activities be centralized on the Central Plateau of the Hanford Site interior. The report emphasized wise land use to minimize the amount of land devoted to and disturbed by waste management activities.

The proposed Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility would be a new remediation waste management unit located between and to the south of the 200 West and 200 East Areas of the Hanford Facility, on the Central (200 Area) Plateau, Benton County, Washington. This site is preferred based on an evaluation of potential sites on the Central Plateau meeting the facility land area requirements against Washington State and DOE siting criteria, including protection of human health and the environment, geologic and hydrologic suitability, protection of archeological and historical sites, and construction and operational considerations. The proposed location minimizes potential risk associated with siting the facility near environmentally or culturally sensitive areas.

The facility's proposed features include one or more waste trenches, rail and tractor/trailer container handling capability, railroads, an inventory control system, a decontamination building, and operation offices. In the Regulatory Package, design alternatives, including an unlined trench, single lined trench, double lined trench with leachate collection system, soil cover, and RCRA-compliant cover will be evaluated in an Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study format against the CERCLA remedial action criteria. The alternatives will also be analyzed to determine whether they fulfill the Corrective Action Management Unit criteria under RCRA. A no-action alternative will qualitatively assess the environmental impacts of not providing centralized on-site remediation waste capacity. This will form a baseline to evaluate the comparative effects of the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility alternatives.

Initial construction for the facility would be adequate for wastes from cleanup sites which are presently under investigation. The facility would be expanded incrementally to accommodate future cleanup needs as they are identified. This approach allows the facility to be tailored to the requirements of site cleanup, thereby minimizing the environmental impact. By the end of Hanford Site cleanup, the total capacity is not expected to exceed 30 million cubic yards of waste. The Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility and its support facilities could occupy, at its maximum size, as much as 6.12 square miles. However, it should be noted that waste minimization and design options that are currently being investigated may significantly reduce the total volume of cleanup waste to be generated, and therefore, limit the size of the facility. A determination of eventual total capacity needs will be made through the remedy selection process at the operable units.

SCHEDULE FOR THE PROPOSED FACILITY

Timing for construction and operation of an Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility is critical. The proposed cleanup plans for several waste site operable units are due beginning in October 1994. A delay in activities necessary to initiate construction of the facility would prevent timely commencement of remediation activities. The tentative Agreement on the Tri-Party Agreement requires the facility to be operational in September 1996. To meet this schedule, construction of the facility must begin by October 1994.

The USDOE intends to complete the Regulatory Package and ask for public comment by June 1994. Issues and alternatives identified through comments on the Regulatory Package will be considered during preparation of the CERCLA Record of Decision, Corrective Action Management Unit permit, and SEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement. The EPA expects to issue the Record of Decision in September 1994.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

The Tri-Party Agreement agencies are committed to providing opportunities for involvement by individuals and organizations in this and other planning activities. To ensure that a full range of issues related to this proposal are addressed, the Tri-Party Agreement agencies invite public input on the scope of the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Regulatory Package from all interested parties. The public scoping period for the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility starts January 10 and ends February 8.

The following public scoping meetings are planned:

RICHLAND

January 25

7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

SEATTLE

January 31

7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Written comments on the scope of the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Proposal, and requests for information should be directed to:

Mr. Bryan L. Foley
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 550, MSIN A5-19
Richland, Washington, 99352

Pam Innis
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
712 Swift Avenue, Suite 5
Richland, WA 99352
(509) 376-4919

Norm Heppner, Ecology
7601 West Clearwater #102
Kennewick, WA 99336
(509) 736-3048

Information can also be requested by calling the Hanford Cleanup toll-free line at 1-800-321-2008. If you have special accommodation needs, contact Rob Harper, Ecology, at (206) 407-7122.

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Attn: Michael Bowman

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Nuclear Mixed Waste Library
300 Desmond Drive
Lacey, WA 98503
(206) 407-7097
ATTN: Marilyn Smith

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 6th Avenue, HW-070
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 553-1388
ATTN: Karen Prater

Westinghouse Hanford Company
Environmental Data Management Center
2440 Stevens Center Place, Room 1101
Richland, WA 99352
(509) 376-2530
ATTN: Lee Michael