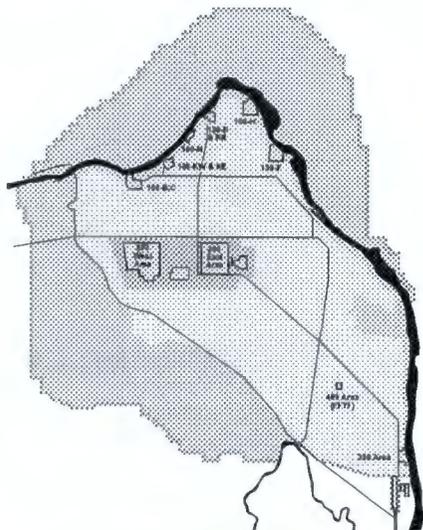


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EDMC Cleanup Alternatives Evaluated for the U Plant Area Waste Sites (200-UW-1 Operable Unit)

U.S. Department of Energy Washington State Department of Ecology U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Department of Energy, Washington State Department of Ecology, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Tri-Party Agreement agencies) would like your feedback on the 200-UW-1 Operable Unit (OU) Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan presents the results of the cleanup alternative evaluations and identifies the preferred cleanup alternatives for 31 waste sites in the U Plant Area. These sites are contaminated or potentially contaminated from past U Plant-related operations. The Plan also describes the closure strategy for the 216-U-12 Crib, a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act treatment, storage and/or disposal (TSD) unit.

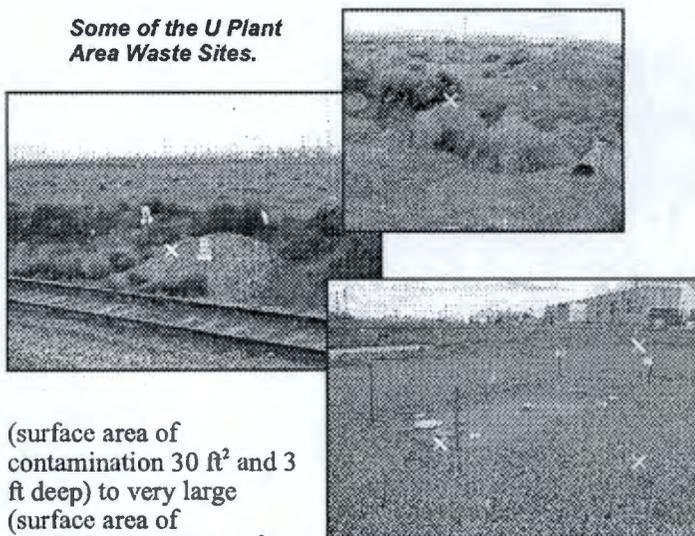
Background

The U Plant Area is located in the Central Plateau (200 Area) of the Hanford Site. Approximately one-half mile square, the U Plant Area encompasses the U Plant Canyon Building (221-U Facility), ancillary facilities that supported the Canyon, soil waste sites and underground pipelines. It overlies part of the 200-UP-1 groundwater OU. The U Plant Area Waste Sites Proposed Plan is the third in a series of U Plant Area remedial and/or removal actions on which the public is asked to comment. The U Plant Ancillary Facilities Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis underwent public review in September 2004 and the 221-U Facility Proposed Plan in January 2005.

Chemical processing, plutonium and uranium recovery, and waste separation were performed in the 200 Area until 1989. High-activity and low-activity liquid waste were generated from these processes. The high-activity waste streams were sent to large underground tanks and low-activity liquid wastes were discharged to trenches, cribs, drains, and ponds, most of which were unlined. There were also unplanned releases to the soil, e.g., spills, leaks from broken pipes.

Thirty soil waste sites and one TSD make up the 200-UW-1 OU. These 31 sites are primarily contaminated with cesium-137, technetium-99, uranium, and/or nitrate-constituents that pose a potential risk to human health and the environment. These sites include structures (e.g., cribs), debris (e.g., timbers) and/or soils that range from small

Some of the U Plant Area Waste Sites.



(surface area of contamination 30 ft² and 3 ft deep) to very large (surface area of contamination 50,000 ft² and 200 ft deep). The Feasibility Study originally identified 33 sites that included 200-W-56 and 200-W-57. These two sites were equipment lay down or staging areas and were determined not to have contained hazardous or radioactive contaminants. Based on that information they were removed from the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) process with no further action required.

Approach to Evaluating the Sites

Many of these waste sites are alike. They received same volumes of waste water and like chemicals. Similarities among these waste sites enabled them to be assigned to one of five groups. Grouping the sites streamlined the investigation and evaluation process. A representative site was selected from each group for comprehensive investigation. The investigation results were used to describe the contamination of all sites in that

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Tri-Party agencies want your feedback on the 200-UW-1 Operable Unit Proposed Plan. The public comment period will run from May 16 through June 30, 2005.



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group. Cleanup alternatives were evaluated against the contamination description to identify which alternative would best meet the clean-up goals. More investigation (e.g., sampling) will be done after the cleanup alternative is selected to confirm that the data matches the cleanup description. If the additional investigation changes the contamination description (known as the conceptual model) for any waste sites, those sites can be "plugged in" to a different alternative.

The Plan also introduces and describes the "plug-in" approach process. This process would help the Tri-Parties make cleanup decisions for waste sites not addressed in this plan. The proposed plug-in approach would use analyses, evaluations and selection of preferred alternatives identified in the 200-UW-1 OU Feasibility Study and Proposed Plan to be applied to similar wastes sites within the U Plant Area. Three types of waste sites are identified as potential candidates for this process: 1) newly discovered waste sites; 2) known waste sites from other Operable Units, and 3) waste sites whose preferred alternatives are found through the sampling process not be protective and a different selected cleanup alternative is needed. Building off of the work from this Proposed Plan could streamline the process and reduce administrative paperwork.

Cleanup Alternatives Evaluated

The Proposed Plan summarizes four clean-up alternatives that were analyzed and evaluated for each of the five waste site groups. A more detailed discussion of the analysis performed and the alternatives evaluated can be found in the Focused Feasibility Study that is available at the Administrative Record and Public Information Repository, Richland, Washington. The alternatives are:

No Action: The waste sites are left in their current state. No surveillance or maintenance would be performed.

Maintain Existing Soil Cover, Institutional Controls, and Monitored Natural Attenuation: The existing soil covers

are maintained while radioactivity decays to a level below the cleanup goals, generally achieved in less than 150 years. Institutional controls are maintained to limit human access during that period, and sites would be monitored.

Remove, Treat, and Dispose: Structures and soils are excavated for sites whose levels of contamination pose a potential risk to human health and the environment (i.e. exceed the Remedial Action Objectives). The removed, contaminated material is characterized, separated by waste type, and then shipped to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF). Both during and after excavation, samples of soils/materials at the site are analyzed for their contaminant concentrations. The excavation will continue until all the contaminated material exceeding the Remedial Action Objectives is removed. The site will be backfilled with clean material.

Engineered Barrier: An engineered surface soil barrier is built over the waste site to "cap" the contaminants. The engineered soil layer or layers of the barrier will greatly reduce the infiltration of atmospheric water and the intrusion by plants, animals, and humans at the surface from coming into contact with the contaminated materials below. The barrier protects groundwater by preventing (or greatly limiting) rain or snow at the surface from filtering down into the underlying contaminated soil. Once the barrier is built, institutional controls will be put in place.

Preferred Alternatives

Preferred alternatives were selected by applying the nine CERCLA criteria to each of the five waste groups. In some cases, more than one preferred alternative was identified for a waste group, i.e., waste sites within a group could have different alternatives identified as the preferred alternative. Remove, Treat and Dispose was identified as the preferred alternative for 15 sites. Maintain Existing Soil Cover, Institutional Controls, and Monitored Natural Attenuation was identified as the preferred alternative for 9 sites. Engineered Barrier was the preferred alternative for 5 sites and No Action was recommended as the preferred alternative for 2 sites.

How you can become involved

A 45-day public comment period on the Proposed Plan for the 200-UW-1 Operable Unit will run from **May 16 through June 30, 2005**. The Tri-Party agencies would like your feedback on this document and will consider all comments before finalizing it. A public meeting will be held jointly with a public hearing on the proposed TSD closure plan. The meeting is scheduled for **June 2** at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr., Richland, Washington. For information on requesting additional meetings, please contact Kevin Leary, USDOE (509-373-7285) or John Price, Ecology (509-372-7921) by **May 31, 2005**.

Please submit comments to:

Mr. John Price

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Richland, WA 99354-1670
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To obtain a copy of the document call the Hanford Cleanup Line 1-800-321-2008.

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The Proposed Plan can be viewed online at <http://www.hanford.gov/public/calendar/>
under the Public Comment Period section

The document is also available for review at the
Public Information Repositories listed below.

HANFORD PUBLIC INFORMATION REPOSITORY LOCATIONS

Portland

Portland State University
Branford Price and Millar Library
934 SW Harrison
Attn: Judy Andrews (503) 725-4126

Seattle

University of Washington
Suzzallo Library
Government Publications Division
Attn: Eleanor Chase (206) 543-4664

Richland

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room
Washington State University, Tri-Cities
Consolidated Information Center, Room 101-L
2770 University Drive
Attn: Janice Parthree (509) 372-7443

Spokane

Gonzaga University Foley Center
East 502 Boone
Attn: Linda Pierce (509) 323-6110

Administrative Record and Public Information Repository:
Address: 2440 Stevens Center Place, Room 1101, Richland, WA.
Phone: 509-376-2530
Web site address: <http://www2.hanford.gov/arpir/>

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