



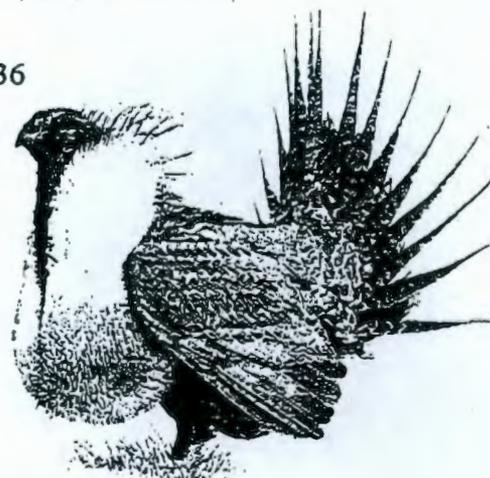
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State of Washington
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FAX TRANSMITTAL SHEET



Date: 29 Jan. 1998

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Note: RE: TWRS ROD language & Project 519 mtg min.

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[6450-01-P]**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Record of Decision for the Tank Waste Remediation System, Hanford Site, Richland, Washington.

AGENCY: Department of Energy

ACTION: Record of Decision

SUMMARY: This Record of Decision addresses actions by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage and dispose of radioactive, hazardous, and mixed waste within the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) program at the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington State. DOE, in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) entitled "Tank Waste Remediation System, Hanford Site, Richland, Washington, Final Environmental Impact Statement" (TWRS EIS) (DOE/EIS-0189, August 1996). The Final EIS evaluates alternatives for the management and disposal of mixed, radioactive, and hazardous waste currently stored or projected to be stored in 177 underground storage tanks and approximately 60 active and inactive miscellaneous underground storage tanks associated with the Hanford Site's tank farm operations, as well as the management and disposal of approximately 1,930 cesium and strontium capsules currently stored at the Hanford Site.

- Extensive environmental monitoring systems will be implemented to continually monitor potential releases to the environment;
- All newly disturbed areas will be recontoured to conform with the surrounding terrain and revegetated with locally derived native plant species consistent with Sitewide biological mitigation plans;
- Historic, prehistoric, and cultural resource surveys will be performed for any undisturbed areas to be impacted;
- Potential impacts to shrub-steppe habitat and cultural resources will be among the factors considered in a NEPA analysis to support the site selection process for facilities and earthen borrow sites; and
- Consultation with Tribal Nations and government agencies will be performed throughout the planning process to address potential impacts to shrub-steppe habitat, religious sites, natural resources, and medicinal plants.

Mitigation measures will be refined and presented in the Tank Waste Remediation Mitigation Action Plan. Tribal Nations and agencies will be consulted, as appropriate, during preparation of the Mitigation Action Plan.

(scheduled for May 1998); 2) prior to the start of hot operations of Privatization Phase I Part B (scheduled for December 2002/December 2003); and 3) before deciding to proceed with Privatization Phase II (scheduled for December 2005). In conducting these reviews, DOE will seek the advice of independent experts from the scientific and financial community, such as the National Academy of Sciences which will focus on performance criteria and the costs of waste treatment. DOE has established a TWRS Privatization Review Board consisting of Senior DOE representatives to provide on-going assistance and interactive oversight of the review of Part A deliverables and discussions with the contractors.

Informal evaluations also will be conducted as the information warrants. These formal and informal evaluations will help DOE to determine whether previous decisions need to be changed.

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife Comment

Comment: The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife recommends that the following language be included in the Record of Decision:

“The site selection of the precise location of remediation facilities for the selected alternative shall be subject to future supplemental NEPA analysis. This supplemental NEPA analysis shall commit to a supplemental Mitigation Action Plan. The Mitigation Action Plan and supplemental Mitigation Action Plan will be prepared in consultation with the Washington State

Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with input from the Hanford Site's Natural Resource Trustee Council.”

“Impacts to State priority shrub-steppe habitat would be one of the evaluation criteria used in site selection. The site selection process would include the following hierarchy of measures:

- Avoid priority shrub-steppe habitat to the extent feasible by locating or configuring project elements in pre-existing disturbed areas.
- Minimize project impacts to the extent feasible by modifying facility layouts and/or altering construction timing.”

“Compensatory mitigation measures for the loss of shrub-steppe habitat shall be identified and implemented in the supplemental NEPA analysis and Mitigation Action Plan.”

Response: DOE believes that the following approach satisfies the substance of these comments. The EIS (Section 5.20) describes both mitigation measures that are integral parts of all of the alternatives (Section 5.20.1) and further mitigation measures that could be implemented when indicated or appropriate (Section 5.20.2). In selecting the preferred alternative DOE has committed to all of the mitigation measures in Section 5.20.1, which include measures to restore newly disturbed areas. As the State requested, the Record of Decision commits to conducting NEPA analysis for site selection of facilities.

DOE intends to implement those further measures described in Section 5.20.2 as may be necessary to mitigate potential impacts on priority shrub-steppe habitat, and will consider the potential for such impacts as a factor in the site selection process for TWRS facilities. The site selection process will include the following hierarchy of measures: 1) avoid undisturbed shrub-steppe areas to the extent feasible; 2) minimize impacts to the extent feasible; 3) restore temporarily disturbed areas; 4) compensate for unavoidable impacts by replacing habitat; and 5) manage critical habitat on a Sitewide basis.

DOE believes that mitigation of impacts to habitats of special importance to the ecological health of the region is most effective when planned and implemented on a sitewide basis. Recognizing this, DOE is preparing a sitewide biological management plan to protect these resources. Under this sitewide approach, the potential impacts of all projects would be evaluated and appropriate mitigation would be developed based on the cumulative impacts to the ecosystem. Mitigation to reduce the ecological impacts from TWRS remediation would be performed in compliance with the sitewide biological management plan. Mitigation would focus on disturbance of contiguous, mature sagebrush-dominated shrub-steppe habitat. Compensation (habitat replacement) would occur where DOE deems appropriate. Specific mitigation ratios, sites, and planting strategies (e.g., plant size, number, and density) for TWRS facilities and operations would be defined in the TWRS Mitigation Action Plan, which would be revised for each specific TWRS facility siting decision. The Mitigation Action Plan would be prepared in consultation with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Tribal Nations, with input from the Hanford Site's Natural Resources

Trustees Council. DOE will make the Mitigation Action Plan publicly available before taking action that is the subject of a mitigation commitment.

Draft summary of Project 519 Mitigation meeting, held 28 January, 1998

Attendees: Mike Sackschewsky, PNNL; Dana Ward, USDOE; Bob Lober, USDOE; Jamie Zeisloft, USDOE; Dave Nichols, Jacob Eng.; Ray Johnson, EM&I
Phone participants: Tom O'Brien, USFWS; Bill Bosan, Jacob Eng.

Bob provided information on the Umatilla nursery and weed control. The Umatilla nursery employs 6 people which includes a horticulturist, soil scientist and range scientist. They are in the process of pouring footers for a green house and have several agriculture fields leased for propagating grass. They also have some of the equipment needed to collect seed e.g. an ATV with a sweeper cart, and have a contract to provide USFWS with 10,000 sagebrush plants. If they collected seed this year, it would be 3 years for turn around.

L&H seed may be the source for this projects needs. This needs to be confirmed. In addition to answering the question: how much seed is needed for the disturbed areas, i.e. rectification component of the MAP which includes the transmission line and pads, and access roads.

The upland committee presented its options The first being an on-site grass and forb nursery utilizing abandoned agriculture fields and performed at 1:1 mitigation. This option appeared be the only one common to both parties. This option has so many possibilities and would solve allot of long-range issues. First, it would serve as compensatory mitigation since it would be located on -site and would restore a level one resource of extremely low quality. Second, it would provide seed for future programs needs. Examples include, the TWRS program revegetation of caps and rectification of future disturbances from a full scale vitrification facility; the solid waste programs need for revegetation of caps; ERC program-reveg. of caps; SID- rectification of disturbed areas from construction of new infrastructure; USDOEs stewardship role - trust responsibilities to the tribes etc.; cooperation with state nature resource agencies to ensure sustainability of state's natural heritage; and any others YOU can think of. To state it simply, this is a golden opportunity for USDOE to build the foundation for future mitigation projects.

Unfortunately, USDOE staff present were able to present an infinite number of road blocks to this option. I will leave it at that.

It appears that USDOE could accept performing the upland committees second preferred option i.e. compensation utilizing existing or new mitigation areas in addition to rectification of the 42 acres of transmission line/pads/roads etc.

A budget of 350-500K was thrown out on the table.

The discussion then revolved around this budget range with options for acres (ratio) and planting density. The following matrix was created.

	Acres	100	200	300
	400	80K (120)	160K (240)	240K (360)
density	600	120K (180)	240K (360)	360K (540)
plants/acre	800	160K	320K	480K
monitoring	3 years	50K	75K	100K

top figure is at \$2/plant

() figure is at \$3/plant

Rectification would involve 42 acres at an estimated cost range of 40-60K. Bob has asked his contractors to bound the rectification costs. This should assist us in a decision.

USDOE is proposing:

240K-sagebrush compensation which would be between the (240K) and 240K

60K- rectification

75K- monitoring

and with discretionary funds remaining being applied possibly to: 1)weed control, 2) research or, 3) other options previously thrown on the table but discarded by the upland committee.

When the upland committee concluded with its conference calls, the main objective was to replace habitat value (in-kind and preferably on Central Hanford) loss due to this proposed action. This was the main reason why options such as research were not considered any farther or included in the final list.

As Dave Nichols summarized it, we appear to be trying to maximize density, maximize acreage and maximize learning. Learning could come from the monitoring efforts.