

BENTON COUNTY PLANNING/BUILDING DEPARTMENT

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0055288

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29 June 2001

Dennis Faulk
US Environmental Protection Agency
712 Swift Boulevard, Suite 5
Richland, Washington 99352

Re: Comments regarding "Proposed Cleanup Plan for Hanford's B Reactor Facility"

Mr. Faulk:

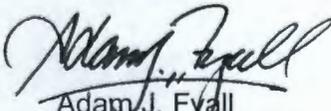
Consistent with previous, related comments from Benton County, and with other formal expressions of a widely-held vision for the 105-B facility and the greater Vernita area; Benton County supports the cleanup and restoration standard presented in the "preferred alternative".

Three documents in particular – DOE's *Comprehensive Land Use Plan* of 1999, Benton, Franklin, and Grant Counties' *Interim Action Plan* of 1999, and Benton County's soon-to-be-completed *Hanford Land Use Plan* – all discuss the desire to see the B Reactor facility saved from the wrecking ball, remediated to a public access level, and eventually operated as a historical museum. B Reactor's scientific, historical, and engineering significance are well documented, it's interest to the public is currently in a major upswing, and it's potential as an economic and recreational opportunity for our region is only beginning to be appreciated.

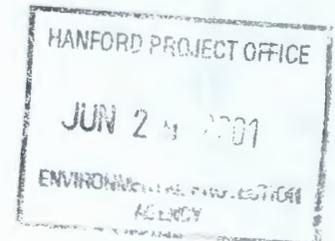
Benton County's vision for this area [Vernita] has been evolving over the past several years and continues to do so. Much of this vision was outlined in a recent letter from the County Commissioners to Interior Secretary Gale Norton which mentioned B Reactor specifically. A major component of this vision is a B Reactor Museum accessible [eventually] by road, rail, trail, and water. Accommodation of such a variety of accesses will require improvements to road and rail infrastructure, as well as a moorage facility. While these projects are future objectives beyond the scope of project at hand, we want the agencies and regulators to embrace rather than prejudice them while doing the work of the present.

DOE has stated a commitment to preserving the B Reactor complex; now DOE and EPA must take a second step in fully remediating the facility to public access levels, and do so as expeditiously as possible. Thank you for this opportunity for input.

Sincerely,


Adam J. Fyall
Associate Planner

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cc: Dee Lloyd, USDOE-RL
Hanford Reach National Monument Federal Planning Advisory Committee
B Reactor Museum Association
Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau
Columbia River Journeys