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Tri-Party Agreement

Negotiations to Begin Setting Cleanup Schedule for 100 and 300 Area Waste Sites and Facilities

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

Background Information

The U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (USDOE-RL), the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed an Agreement in Principle on October 31, 2001, addressing Tri-Party Agreement negotiations for cleanup actions along Hanford's Columbia River Corridor.

The focus of these negotiations is the completion dates for the 100 Area and 300 Area remedial actions, the completion of interim safe storage for surplus

reactors, and the overall framework for the River Corridor cleanup.

In 2000, USDOE-RL developed a strategy to complete major portions of the River Corridor by 2012. This strategy was discussed with EPA and Ecology, and will serve as a framework for these negotiations. The agencies have developed this agreement in order to establish the basis for these discussions and the preparation of Tri-Party Agreement change packages, if the negotiations are successful.

What is being negotiated?

The Tri-Party Agreement milestones for cleanup of waste sites and contaminated facilities along the Columbia River Corridor, specifically in the 100 and 300 Areas.

Final groundwater remedial action decisions are excluded from these negotiations. Future groundwater decisions will be required upon completion of source remedial actions and an appropriate period of time to assess the performance of these actions.

Why are these negotiations necessary?

The Tri-Party Agreement contains commitments for USDOE-RL to: 1) establish a date for completion of all 100 Area Remedial Actions by December 31, 2001 - TPA milestone M-16-00F; 2) establish a date for

completion of 300 Area Remedial Actions by June 30, 2002 - TPA milestone M-16-03A, and 3) complete disposition of all 100 Area Surplus Production Reactor Buildings by a date to be negotiated - TPA milestone M-93-00.

If you would like additional information or a copy of the Agreement in Principle, please contact:

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The document is also available on our web site at www.bhi-erc.com/news/fact.htm

When are we going to do this and what are the public involvement opportunities?

Negotiations began the first week in November and are expected to conclude by December 31, 2001. When the draft milestone change packages are prepared, they will be sent out for a 45-day public comment period in accordance with the Tri-Party Agreement and Community Relations Plan. The Tri Parties will provide status information to the Hanford Advisory Board in December.

In addition, during the negotiations, the Tri-Parties will hold periodic update sessions to allow the tribal nations and stakeholders to discuss issues directly with the negotiators. If there is sufficient public interest, public meeting(s) will be scheduled during the formal public comment period. A notice will be issued prior to the start of the public comment period.

What does "remediation of waste sites" and "interim safe storage" of reactors mean?

Remediation of waste sites generally means the excavation of contaminated soils, the packaging and/or treatment of that soil and the disposal of the soil in an approved disposal facility. Interim safe storage of reactors includes the decontamination and decommissioning of reactor support facilities (minimize reactor footprint), the deactivation of all reactor components, installation of a new-engineered facility cover (roof) and the sealing of all reactor openings. The interim safe storage concept requires minimal surveillance and maintenance and is designed for a 75-year life.

How do we ensure the agencies are staying on track with public values?

In addition to the public opportunities identified above, Ecology has committed to bi-weekly negotiation updates on its web site at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/negotiations.html

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