



Tri-Party Agreement

Focus Sheet

Proposed Plan for Clean Up at the 100 Area Remaining Sites

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

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington State Department of Ecology (the Tri-Parties) are inviting public comment on a proposed plan to conduct clean up at wastes sites located in the 100 Areas of the Hanford site. The 207 wastes sites, referred to as the 100 Area Remaining Sites, may consist of radioactively and chemically contaminated soils, structures, and debris. Comments are requested on three issues: 1) use of the proposed clean up alternative of remove/treat/dispose at 46 of the wastes sites, 2) use of the "plug-in approach" at the remaining 161 sites, and 3) use of proposed alternatives for disposal of excess equipment and debris from the 100 Area reactor building to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF). The proposed clean up alternative for the 100 Area Remaining Sites will be used for both the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980* (CERCLA), also known as "Superfund," and the *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976* (RCRA) waste sites.

Public comments will be accepted on the proposed plan from NOVEMBER 2 through DECEMBER 1, 1998. All public comments will be considered and responded to before a final decision is made on the clean up alternative. A public meeting is not currently scheduled, however, should substantial public interest indicate a need for such a meeting, the Tri-Parties will respond accordingly.

To request copies of the document, or to submit comments, either written or electronically or request a public meeting, please contact:

Dennis Faulk

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
712 Swift Blvd., Suite 5
Richland, WA 99352
(509) 376-8631
E-mail:faulk.dennis@epa.gov

Or call the Hanford Clean Up Toll-free Line at 1-800-321-2008.

SITE BACKGROUND

The Hanford Site, located in southeastern Washington, was established in 1943 to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons using reactors and chemical processing plants. The 100 Area of the Hanford Site is located along the Columbia River and includes nine inactive nuclear reactors that were used for plutonium production between 1943 and 1987. In

addition, the 100 Area also includes waste sites from construction camps used during the 1940s and 1950s. In November 1989, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency designated the 100 Area of the Hanford Site as a Superfund site and placed it on the National Priorities List (NPL) because of soil and groundwater contamination that resulted from past operations of the nuclear facilities. Sites on the NPL are the nation's highest priority for clean up.

PROPOSED DECISION-MAKING AND CLEAN UP APPROACH FOR THE 100 AREA REMAINING SITES

The 100 Area Remaining Sites include 207 waste sites located in the 100-B/C, D/DR, H, F, and KE/KW reactor areas, as well as the 100-IU-2 and 100-IU-6 operable units (see map for locations). Seven additional waste sites are in the 200 Area and have been included in the 100 Area Remaining Sites because they have process history closely aligned with 100 Area liquid waste disposal sites. The 100 Area Remaining Sites are divided into two categories:

- ▲ 46 sites where adequate information exists to conclude that contamination may present a risk to human health and the environment. These sites will be addressed using the proposed clean up alternative of remove/treat/dispose described below.
- ▲ 161 sites require sampling to determine whether contamination may present a risk to human health and the environment. These sites will be remediated using the "Plugin Approach" described below.

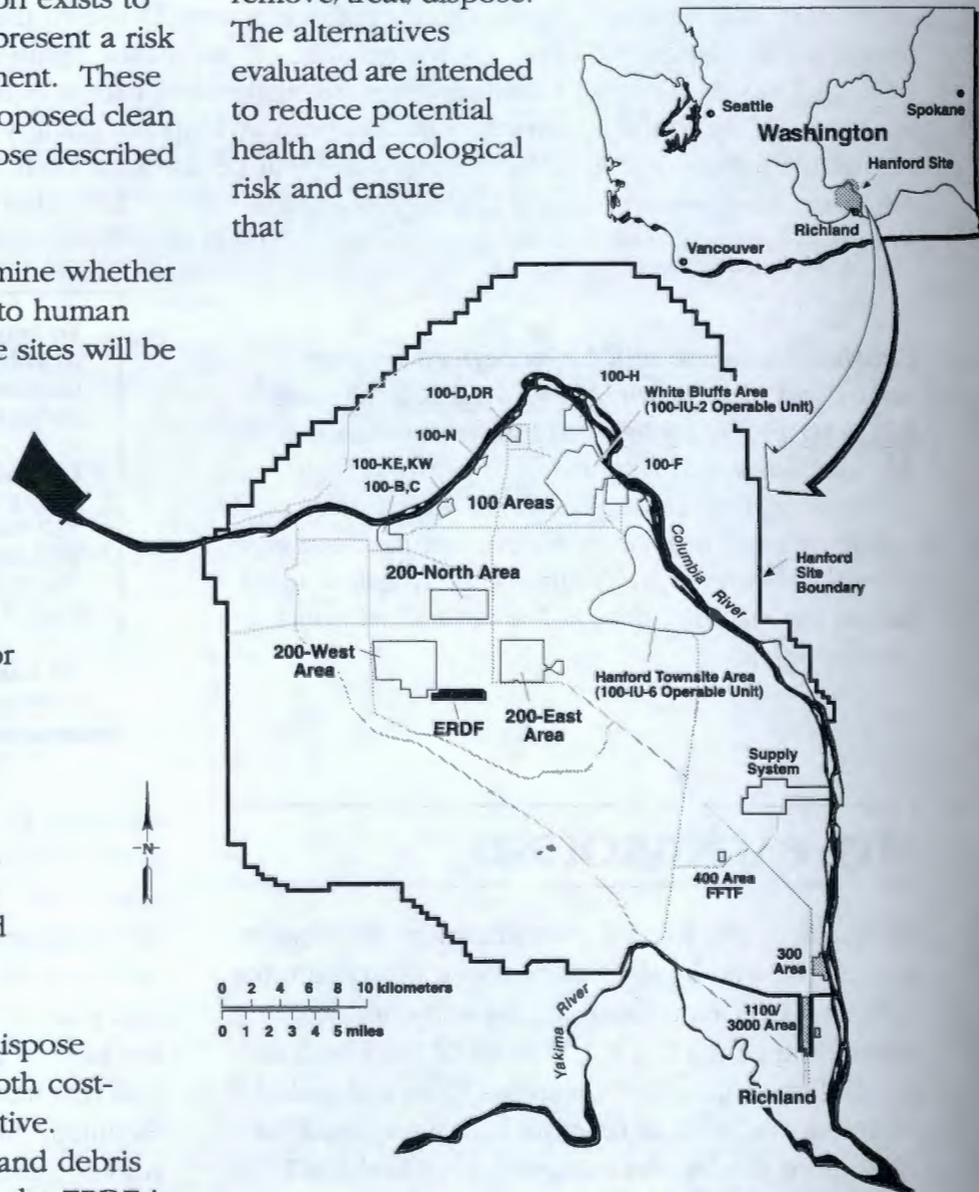
Proposed Clean Up Alternative

The proposed clean up alternative for 46 remaining sites is remove/treat/dispose. The remove/treat/dispose alternative has been chosen in previous 100 Area decision documents for cleanup of sites that are similar to the 100 Area Remaining Sites and is being proposed because it provides the best balance among the criteria used to evaluate remedial alternatives. Remove/treat/dispose has been proven in the field to be both cost-effective and environmentally protective. Contaminated soil and/or structures and debris would be excavated and disposed at the ERDF in

accordance with the waste acceptance criteria. Any waste that could not meet the ERDF waste acceptance criteria would be treated prior to disposal.

Advantages of the Proposed Approach

Besides the proposed alternative of remove/treat/dispose, a focused feasibility study identified five other general response actions that could be applied to the 100 Area Remaining Sites. The alternatives evaluated in that study included no action, institutional controls, containment, in situ treatment, and remove/treat/dispose. The alternatives evaluated are intended to reduce potential health and ecological risk and ensure that



contaminants present at these waste sites will not adversely impact groundwater or the Columbia River. Based on the evaluation, the proposed alternative of remove/treat/dispose is believed to provide the best balance of tradeoffs between the alternatives with respect to the CERCLA evaluation criteria, values established under the *National Environmental Policy Act*, and the RCRA corrective action performance standards. Use of ERDF for disposal of waste site remediation waste and reactor building materials is more cost-effective and protective than the use of other Hanford facilities.

"Plug-In Approach"

The plan presents an innovative approach, called the "Plug-in Approach" for use in clean up decision-making for 161 Remaining Sites. The "Plug-in Approach" has been used at other NPL sites around the country, and at the Hanford Site, to enhance the efficiency of waste site clean up. The Tri-Parties propose to establish remove/ treat/dispose as the clean up approach for those 161 sites where sampling indicates clean up is required.

PROPOSED DECISION-MAKING AND CLEAN UP APPROACH FOR 100 AREA REACTOR BUILDING MATERIAL

The plan presents the proposed alternatives for removal and disposal of excess equipment and debris, potentially containing hazardous and radioactive substances, from the 105-B, 105-D, 105-H, 105-KE, and 105-KW reactor buildings. The two alternatives evaluated included 1) leaving the contaminated materials in place within the buildings, and 2) removal with onsite disposal at ERDF. The materials that would be removed from the reactor facilities are contaminated with many of the same radiological and chemical contaminants as the soil waste sites outlined in the proposed plan.

SUMMARY

The proposed clean up alternative outlined by the Tri-Parties in the plan is to remove/treat/dispose of any material that is above clean up levels for waste sites as well as reactor equipment. In addition, the Tri-Parties intend to use the "Plug-in Approach" to clean up other sites in which sampling data indicate clean up is needed to protect human health and the environment.

Hanford Public Information Repository Locations:

PORTLAND

Portland State University
Branford Price Millar Library
Science and Engineering Floor
Tri-Party Information Repository
934 SW Harrison and Park
(503) 725-3690
Attn: Michael Bowman

SEATTLE

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

RICHLAND

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

SPOKANE

Gonzaga University
Tri-Party Information Repository
Foley Center
E 502 Boone
(509) 324-5932
Attn: Tim Fuhrman

Hanford Clean Up Toll-free Line: 1-800-321-2008

