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May 2, 1999



Mr. Thomas W. Ferns
U.S. Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550, MSIN HO-12
Richland, WA 99352-0550

Subject: Draft Hanford Remedial Action Environmental Impact Statement (HRA EIS)

Dear Mr. Ferns:

I am writing to share my response to the HRA EIS. First, I think it is vitally important that we protect the ecologically significant lands at Hanford. This becomes even more important given the fact that the Hanford Site is one of the last places in eastern Washington to support large areas of native shrub-steppe vegetation and related wildlife.

My request is that you support the Preferred Alternative, but with the following modifications:

- Several adjoining DOE lands should be managed as a permanent National Wildlife Refuge. Specifically, these include the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve, the McGee Ranch, DOE's entire Wahluke Slope, the Hanford Reach, and the Columbia River islands. Protecting this combined area will provide a large, continuous "crescent" of protected habitat lands surrounding central Hanford.
- In order to ensure long-term protection for key native species and systems located across the Site (including central Hanford), neither agriculture, commercial mining, nor livestock grazing should be permitted.

Finally, in order to expedite a final decision on management of uncontaminated lands, it might be best if DOE would issue separate decisions for the adjoining lands as mentioned above.

Again, please support adequate protection for the critical Hanford Reach! Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Weeks