

19 May 1999

069314

Dear Mr. Ferns,

As a member and supporter of the Nature Conservancy I would like to urge that authorities protect the ecologically significant lands at the Hanford Site. The Hanford Site is one of the last places in eastern Washington supporting large areas of native shrub-steppe vegetation and related wildlife.

I support the Preferred Alternative, but with some modifications, including: the following adjoined DOE lands should be managed as a permanent National Wildlife Refuge: the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve, the McGee Ranch, DOE's entire Wahluke Slope, the Hanford Reach, and the Columbia River islands. This will provide a large, continuous "crescent" of protected habitat lands surrounding central Hanford.

To ensure long-term protection for key native species and systems located across the Site (including central Hanford), there should be no agriculture, commercial mining, or livestock grazing permitted. To expedite a final decision on management of uncontaminated lands, DOE should issue separate decisions for the areas mentioned above. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of these important issues.

Sincerely,

Kathy M. Wing
409 S. Matthews Road
Ellensburg, WA. 98926-905999

RECEIVED**MAY 25 1999
DOE-RL/DIS**