



Hanford Update



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

First-Ever Record of Decision for Disposition of a Processing Canyon

After nearly nine years of development, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), have signed a landmark Record of Decision (ROD) that lays out how the first canyon facility (U Plant Canyon) in the DOE complex will be dispositioned.

“We’ll be watching the work at Hanford and using the lessons learned to inform decisions on the other canyons across the country,” said James Rispoli, DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management.

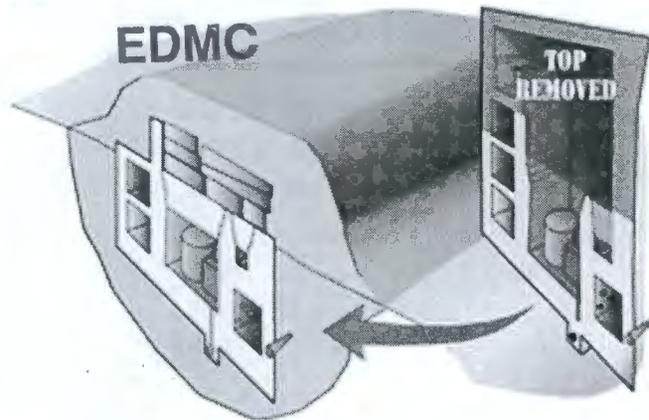
Built during World War II, the building stretches 800 feet long, 70 feet wide, and 80 feet high – with more than 30 feet underground. Its reinforced concrete walls and floor range from three to nine feet thick. The facility was designed to extract plutonium from fuel rods irradiated in Hanford’s production reactors. It was also used for training and later converted to recover uranium from waste generated at the other canyon facilities.

Five cleanup alternatives in the Final Feasibility Study were evaluated, ranging from removing the building

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Representation of a dispositioned processing canyon.

entirely to using the structure for disposing of radioactive waste from other cleanup activities at Hanford. The selected remedy was chosen following a collaborative process that included multiple public

involvement opportunities, technical studies, and discussion among the parties.

“We overcame a number of challenges in this process,” said Nicholas Ceto, EPA’s Hanford Program Manager. “Ultimately, we arrived at a remedy compliant with regulations, protective of human health and the environment, and that makes sense from a technical implementation standpoint.”

“The facility’s robust construction is an excellent shield for the environment and provides long-term protection,” said Keith A. Klein, Manager of the DOE Richland Operations Office. “Not digging up the facility’s sub-surface eliminates the substantial risk to Hanford workers who would have been exposed to radiological and chemical contamination.”

Cleanup actions under the U Plant Canyon Record of Decision will include:

- Removing transuranic waste and disposing of it at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.
- Disposing of some equipment and piping at the onsite Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility or other appropriate facilities.
- Consolidating contaminated equipment on the canyon deck into the below-grade cells.
- Grouting the internal vessel spaces, cells, gallery, and other areas in the facility.
- Removing the facility's roof and wall sections.
- Constructing an engineered barrier over the remnants of the canyon building and planting vegetation to enhance the barrier's ability to wick away moisture from the cap, thus preventing it from pushing contaminants down toward the groundwater.

First-Ever Record of Decision cont...

The ROD also calls for long-term "institutional controls" to ensure environmental monitoring, that the barrier is not disturbed, and a review of the protectiveness of the barrier every five years or more frequently as deemed necessary by the EPA.

"We are pleased that the planning phase of this project is near completion and we look forward to seeing the work begin," said Jay Manning, Director of Ecology.

Copies of the document are available at the U.S. DOE Richland Public Reading Room and on the Hanford webpage: <http://www.hanford.gov/> under the Special Announcements Section.

CERCLA 2006 Five-Year Review Underway

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) have initiated the second Hanford Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Five-Year Review. The review, led by DOE, will evaluate some of the cleanup work done at the Hanford site to make sure cleanup actions continue to protect the workers, the public, and the environment. The first CERCLA Five-Year Review was conducted in 2001 by the EPA.

The review is limited only to operable units listed as past practice units under CERCLA. Ongoing waste management activities, active treatment, storage and/or disposal facilities and tank farm operations will not be evaluated during this Five-Year Review.

Stakeholders interested in more information should contact Cliff Clark at 509.376.9333. A formal public comment period will be held and the final report is expected to be issued some time in April 2006.



Corroded spent (used) nuclear fuel being moved underwater in the K-basins for transfer to a "hot cell" for characterization. Activities such as this will be reviewed in the CERCLA Five-Year Review.

Scope of CERCLA 2006 Five-Year Review:

- 100 Area: removal of contaminated soil, decontamination and/or demolition of contaminated buildings, treatment of contaminated groundwater, and removal of spent nuclear fuel.
- 200 Area: inactive soil disposal sites, inactive facilities, contaminated groundwater, and the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.
- 300 Area: removal of contaminated soil waste sites and debris, treating the material, as appropriate, and disposing of material in an appropriate facility.
- 1100 Area: cleanup completed except for a few hazardous waste areas being managed by caps and institutional controls.

Ecology Seeks New Nuclear Waste Program Manager

An increase in the number and importance of national level issues affecting Hanford cleanup in the last year has led to many recent conversations between Jay Manning, Director of Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), Mike Wilson, Nuclear Waste Program Manager, and Polly Zehm, Ecology Deputy Director.

They determined that a stronger presence is needed at the national level to adequately address critical issues such as waste classification, funding for the vitrification plant, and other key cleanup milestones.

With more than ten years experience in the Nuclear Waste Program, it was obvious that Wilson is the best person to create that stronger presence. He will now focus his efforts on national level issues, working with our Congressional Delegation, high level Department of Energy managers and staff, and with other states.



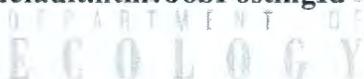
Mike Wilson
Ecology Nuclear Waste Program Manager

Ecology will be hiring a new Nuclear Waste Program Manager who will be located in Richland. Ecology has posted a recruitment announcement for the position, with the hope that a competitive interview process will begin in about six weeks. Wilson will continue to serve as Program Manager until a new appointment is made, although he will start spending more time in D.C. immediately.

Wilson has done a wonderful job as Program Manager and he leaves some big shoes to fill. We wish Wilson a wonderful experience in our nation's capitol and look forward to the energy he can bring to Hanford issues on the federal level.

For more information on the recruitment for the Nuclear Waste Program Manager, please visit the Washington State human resources position posting at:

<http://www.dop.wa.gov/JobSeekers/default.htm?JobPostingId=634>



Look Back on the 2005 State of the Site Meetings

This year marks the fourth year that senior managers from the U.S. Department of Energy, the Washington State Department of Ecology, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency participated in regional meetings. These meetings provide an opportunity for the key Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) decision makers to share recent Hanford cleanup achievements and future challenges. It also serves as an important venue for the managers to hear the public's issues and concerns about the Hanford cleanup. New this year, the State of the Site meetings were held the evening before the 2-day Hanford Advisory Board meetings.



State of the Site meetings include discussions on cleanup and removal of tanks.

Richland, Washington

The Richland State of the Site meeting, held June 15, 2005 was attended by about 100 people. Many current and former employees expressed frustration over the issue of Beryllium disease. Beryllium may affect the lungs, causing lung damage in some individuals, although others appear to be immune. About 30 individuals complained that the contractor in charge of DOE health coverage, AdvanceMed, was denying payment of medical costs that were related to contact with Beryllium, or other exposures at work. As a result of this discussion, DOE launched an independent review of the claims process with the participation of Hanford Site employees and the State of Washington.

Portland, Oregon

Portland was the location for second State of the Site meeting held September 7, 2005. Over 50 stakeholders and members of the public were in attendance. Issues raised by members of the public ranged from concern over possible budget shortfalls, wanting the groundwater cleaned, and construction of the vitrification facility (i.e. waste treatment plant) to continue. A recurring theme from the audience was the importance of meaningful public involvement and the desire for more opportunities to be involved early in key Hanford decisions.

Hanford Facility RCRA Permit Modifications

The U.S. Department of Energy transmitted Class 1 modifications to the Hanford Facility Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Permit through September 30, 2005, to the State of Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology). Pursuant to WAC 173-303-830(4)(a)(i)(B), the Permittees of the Hanford Facility RCRA Permit are providing notice. Hanford Facility RCRA Permit Condition I.C.3 allows for quarterly notification of Class 1 modifications to be made to Ecology. For further information about the Class 1 modifications, contact Greta Davis of Ecology at 509.372.7894.

The U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL) and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) are announcing an upcoming 60-day public comment period on a Class 3 modification to the Hanford Facility Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Permit. This modification proposes to establish a permitted hazardous waste storage unit in the 331-C building in the southern portion of the 300 Area. The 331-C Storage Unit will replace current DOE-RL/PNNL permitted waste management operations housed in the 305-B Storage Facility. RL has scheduled PNNL to move its 305-B Storage Facility operations in order to expedite the River Corridor cleanup currently taking place in the northern portion of the 300 Area.

Hanford Facility RCRA Permit Modifications cont...

Permit modification documentation will be available for review and copying by December 15, 2005 at the Ecology Nuclear Waste Program office and at the TPA Public Reading Room, located in the 2440 Stevens Center building in Richland. The permittee's compliance history during the life of the permit being modified is available from the Ecology contact person.

A public meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2006, 6:30 PM in the Coho Room at PNNL's Sigma 2 facility, 3180 George Washington Way, Richland, Washington.

The public comment period is scheduled to run from December 15, 2005 through February 14, 2006. Comments should be submitted to:

Jeanne Wallace
Nuclear Waste Program
Washington State Department of Ecology
3100 Port of Benton Blvd.
Richland, WA 99354
509.372.7931

Permittee contact:
Tony McKarns, DOE-RL, 509.376.8981
Harold Tilden, PNNL, 509.375.2966

Hanford Advisory Board adopts priorities for 2006

At its September meeting in Portland, the Hanford Advisory Board (Board) adopted work priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. After an extremely successful 2005, the Board is looking forward to the following work in 2006:

- **Values for prioritization of cleanup work.** The Board will focus on how cleanup priorities will be decided in the face of reduced funding, resources and staff. The Board will also prioritize important cleanup activities not currently in the Tri Party Agreement.

- **Values, principles and strategies for Central Plateau remedy selection and waste management.** The Board completed significant work on Central Plateau decision-making in 2005. This priority continues that focus for 2006.
- **Public Education and Public Involvement.** Toward the goal of increasing public involvement in upcoming cleanup decisions, the Board will attempt to increase opportunities for involvement through meetings, speakers, a Board informational display board and more active utilization of the media.
- **Cooperation with other sites on DOE complex-wide interdependencies.** The Board will continue to work with constituencies around the country focused on ensuring credible, comprehensive, common-sense solutions to DOE's nationwide transportation, treatment and disposal challenges.
- **Procurement of major cleanup contracts.** The Board will focus on ensuring stakeholder values are considered in several major contract procurements taking place in the upcoming year.
- **Five Year Review.** Under the Superfund law, cleanup remedies are evaluated every five years. The Board will identify issues and/or concerns focused on ensuring cleanup is consistent with the values of the Board and the public.

These priorities outline a significant scope of work for the Board in the upcoming year. If you're interested in the Board's proceedings, please see the website (www.hanford.gov/public/boards/hab) for Board advice as well as meeting times and locations.



Transportation of waste from Hanford to other plants in the nation is just one of the focused priorities for the Board.

Hanford Happenings

Meetings

November 2, 2005 at 7:00 p.m., Open House at 6:30 p.m.

State of the Site Meeting, Seattle

Grand Ballroom, Best Western University Tower Hotel, 4507 Brooklyn Ave NE, Seattle

Contact: Tim Hill, tihi461@ecy.wa.gov, 509.372.7908

November 3-4, 2005

Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) Meetings, Seattle

November 3, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; November 4, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Grand Ballroom, Best Western University Tower Hotel, 4507 Brooklyn Ave NE, Seattle

Contact: Erik Olds, Theodore_E_Erik_Olds@orp.doe.gov, 509.372.8656

February 2-3, 2006

Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) Meetings, Richland

February 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and February 3, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Location: TBD

Contact: Erik Olds, Theodore_E_Erik_Olds@orp.doe.gov, 509.372.8656

State of the Site is Fast Approaching

Do you want to get involved in decisions affecting our communities and the environment of the Pacific Northwest? Help us plan the cleanup of the Hanford Site in Washington State. It is time for you to clear that important space in your calendar and participate in a dialogue with top Hanford decision makers. Attend the open house at 6:30 p.m. Exhibits and agency personnel will be on hand to answer questions.



The production of the Waste Treatment Plant was recently slowed due to technical concerns. The plant is the cornerstone of Hanford cleanup and integral to the treatment of over 50 million gallons of nuclear waste.

Hanford is facing a myriad of technical and physical challenges to complete the cleanup work. Some of these include:

- Are we making sufficient strides to cleanup the **groundwater** and protect the **Columbia River**?
- Will all the **tank waste** be processed and treated by the 2028 deadline?
- How will Hanford remain a national **funding** priority?
- How will we guarantee the **Waste Treatment Plant** is finished?

The following top decision makers from the Tri-Party Agencies will be on hand to answer your questions:

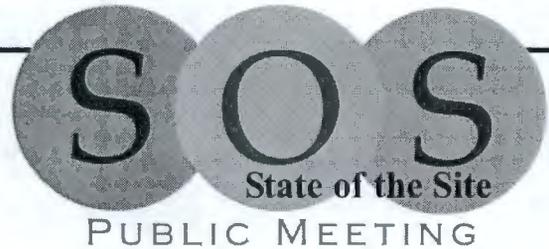
Nick Ceto, Program Manager of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Hanford Project Office

Keith Klein, Manager of U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office

Jay Manning, Director of Washington State Department of Ecology

Roy Schepens, Manager of U.S. Department of Energy Office of River Protection

Hanford Happenings



Speak.
Listen.
Learn. **About
Hanford.**

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. GET INVOLVED.

Cleaning Up America's Nuclear Waste Legacy

Join the top Hanford decision makers, Ecology, U.S. Department of Energy, and EPA, at the State of the Site public meeting. Discuss nuclear waste cleanup decisions that will affect the Pacific Northwest and the Columbia River for centuries to come.

**Seattle, University District
November 2, 2005**

6:30 p.m. Open House
7:00 p.m. State of the Site Meeting
Best Western University Tower Hotel
Grand Ballroom
4507 Brooklyn Ave. NE

*Please also join us Nov. 3 & 4 for the Hanford
Advisory Board Meetings in the same location.*

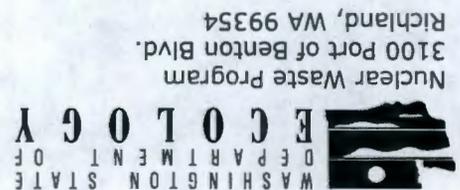
The Hanford Site is a former nuclear defense production site located in southeastern Washington on the Columbia River. The Tri-Party Agencies are committed to a cleanup that is protective of the workers, the public, and the environment.

For more information:
Hanford Hotline 1.800.321.2008
www.hanford.gov



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

Ms. Debra Isom [2050]
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LMSI H6-08
PO Box 950
Richland WA 99352



Hanford Update

The Hanford Update newsletter provides general information about Tri-Party Agreement cleanup and compliance activities. It also contains information on public meetings, workshops, and other opportunities to participate in Hanford Site decisions. The newsletter is available on the Internet at www.hanford.gov/tpa/updates.html.

Comment Periods

September 19 - November 22, 2005: Waste Treatment Plant Permit Modification

October 5 - November 21, 2005: Proposed Tri-Party Agreement changes to status of the 216-U-12 CRIB

October 10 - November 9, 2005: Air Operating Permit Modification



Hanford Hotline: 1.800.321.2008