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JG: Why don't we go ahead and get started. There is an echo in here. Let me introduce myself first of all, my name is Jerry Gilliland and I am public information manager for the Department of Ecology. My role here this evening is to make sure this meeting moves along, make sure you get questions answered, and that things go well for you. This is I'm sure you all know that this is a public meeting to talk about the proposal to clean up the Wahluke slope, the north slope of the Hanford Nuclear Site.

(interruption).....for us to get a chance to explain what the various proposals are to clean up the Wahluke slope. The second is to answer any questions that you have. The third and probably the most important is to take any comments that you might want to give to us. We also are seeking written comments until January 8th. We have written materials to tell you where you need to send those comments to. Before I introduce our panel, I want to note that there are some other folks here from the State of Washington Department of Ecology. Darcy Teal and Dib Goswami, Dib's there, this is Darcy. From the Department of Energy, Julie Erickson and Karen Randolph, right there. From the Environmental Protection Agency, Dennis Faulk. The format of the meeting will go like this, we will first of all have a presentation by Grant County Commissioner, Helen Fancher. We will then have an overview of the Wahluke slope by Dave Nylander from Washington Department of Ecology. And then Walt Perro from the U.S. Department of Energy will talk about key technical issues. After that, we will have a period of time in which you can pose questions and we will go on with that for a while and then we will proceed to the period of the evening in which we take your comments. So, if you could save your comments until, then we really want to make sure that we get them recorded. We have sign up cards in the back for you to sign



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up if you wanted to received further information about this issue or other Hanford issues. If you wanted to comment there is a little box in the corner for you to check and what we will do is go in the order that we receive the cards. Let's proceed then, we'll begin by having Commissioner Fancher speak. You can come right here if you like, we can turn this around here.

HF: We welcome you all here tonight and we are very glad to see such a nice turn out. We particularly want to thank these departments for having a hearing in the vicinity of the property that we are talking about, in Grant County. I do have some prepared remarks that I am going to turn in on behalf of the commissioners in Grant County tonight. They touch on a number of things other than just cleanup so I won't get into all of it. First of all, I would like to introduce the other elected officials that are here that I have spotted. There may be some that I haven't spotted yet. We have Representative Mick Hanson from the 13th district, from Moses Lake. We have Commissioner Leroy Allison and Commissioner Tim Sneed, these are the second and third legs of our commission. We have Sue Miller, Commissioner from Franklin County, and Bob Drake, Commissioner from Benton County. The ones that always seem to get left out of the loop, we have commissioners Dean Judd and Bill Wills from Adams County. Oh, Bill ??? is here too. I am sorry Bill, I didn't see you. That is the problem with introducing people. You are always going to miss somebody. We also have Mike Connelly of the Mattawa Port District. He is the executive director and Wayne Solly, Mattawa Port Commissioner. Are there any that I am missing? We are going to have Commissioner Sneed read the resolution that was written and signed by the commissioners from four counties. We also have had tremendous vocal support from Okanogan County, Chellan County, and Douglass County who are very sympathetic. They don't know exactly what



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they can do to help us along but they are very interested in this issue. Our most fervent request is that the Department of Energy be instructed to do whatever is necessary to clean this land for unrestricted use. No matter what it's use is eventually it is should be cleaned so that the appropriate sections can once again be used for agriculture. We feel that the dollar amounts to do this cleanup mentioned in the Department of Energy's North Slope Expedited Action Proposal, which is this proposal that we are working from tonight, are exaggerated and completely unrealistic. We have had meetings with these people, we have discussed this they know why we feel this way. In fact, we have had some very good meetings with these people and we really appreciate the department's sitting down and letting us discuss these things. We are also teaching each other about this area. We can't help wondering if Department of Energy is the appropriate agency to be placed in charge of this cleanup rather than the army itself. We know that the army had many bases throughout the State of Washington many of them located in city parks in the city of Seattle. They moved in very rapidly they had radar bases, they had anti-aircraft guns to protect these, and hundreds of soldiers that were bivouacked mostly in the mud, as I remember it in Seattle in WWII for several years. When the war ended, the military moved out just as rapidly as it had arrived and obviously the parks were left clean enough for unrestricted use. Just looking to see if there is anything else that I think that should be mentioned here. We are hopeful that these departments will carefully consider our concerns and do what you can to require the Department of Energy to restore this land to a condition which will allow it to be used for farming as well as the other planned uses and resolve this matter in a way that will be fair to all concerned parties. I would like at this time if Commissioner

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Sneed would please read the resolution that was signed by the Commissioners from the four counties.

TS: This is the resolution on the Hanford Reach on the Columbia River. Whereas the board of County Commissioners, Adams, Benton, Franklin and Grant County have a responsibility to the citizens of their counties to protect private property rights, to encourage economic development opportunities, and to provide for the preservation of the Columbia River in order to protect the fish and wildlife of the Hanford Reach and whereas we believe the local government responsibilities require us to act in behalf of our combined and joint regional interests in the Hanford Reach. We take this action by resolution to oppose the designation of the Hanford Reach as a wild and scenic river. And whereas we support the Wahluke 2000 study, the Hanford Land Use Task Force study, and the return of the Department of Energy lands to the uses described in the studies and whereas we continue to support wildlife habitat, fish habitat, and have never supported dams or dredging on the Hanford reach. We demand that you U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Wildlife, the U.S. Department of Fisheries, the U.S. Department of the Interior, the governor of the state of Washington and the President of the United States negotiate with Adams, Benton, Franklin, and Grant counties for the future use of the Hanford Reach. Therefore we give notice to this resolution that Adams, Benton, Franklin, and Grant counties will apply any and all remedies available to the counties including legal avenues to assert our position for the future of the Hanford Reach. This is signed by the county commissioners of Adams, Benton, Franklin, and Grant county on the 3rd of December 1993.

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- JG: It's on now. I would like to ask Dave Nylander from the Department of Ecology to give you an overview of the north slope proposal.
- DN: Thank you. I appreciate the commissioners comments over the last month. We have gotten to know the county commissioners much more intimately than we have in the past. It's unfortunate it was under these circumstances but we are hearing the concerns and we want to make sure we get your thoughts and comments on the cleanup for the north slope. I live in Kennewick, and I am with the Washington State Department of Ecology and I manage the nuclear and mixed waste program office in Kennewick. We are the clean up office that oversees the regulatory actions under which DOE and their contractors are to clean up the Hanford area. We know the north slope, the Wahluke slope is of vital interest to all of you. By all means we encourage your comments so we can carry on those comments. I am not going to spend a lot of time on detail, Walt Perro on the left is going to provide some more specific information on actions the Wahluke slope cleanup is going to be taking. I would like to cover some of the basic actions that we are looking at and some of the proposals. As most of you already know, the Wahluke slope is one of the first major portions of the Hanford site that is going to be cleaned up by the Department of Energy who is a current owner. They have agreed to remediate and release this from DOE oversight once the clean up is done. The process whereby the land use decisions are made are not at this level. I guarantee you, but the cleanup action is and that is where we are coming into play here. The Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Ecology will be making recommendations on future use of this area. We have no real authority to make land use decisions. As directed by the Tri-Party Agreement between Ecology, U.S. Environmental Protection

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Agency, and the Department of Energy, we are asking for your thoughts on how this 124 square mile area should be cleaned up. We are seeking your advice. We need your advice either orally here this evening or in written format. We have forms you can fill out or you can just write in and send us comments on the cleanup actions. Because there are no nuclear facilities on this side of the Columbia River, it should be a relatively easy cleanup action, fairly straightforward. There is no radiological contamination that was on this side of the river. It was all on the other side in the central portion of Hanford. But that is not to say that there are not any problems out there. The Wahluke slope was originally a security zone as most of you are aware for the reactors and production plants across the river.

Anti-aircraft guns were placed there during the Korean War and later Nike missile sites were placed there. We know from studying past military practices that there are a variety of contamination that may be found in these dump sites. That is where most of the cleanup is going to occur. In addition, there are some old agricultural sites that need to be cleaned up, abandoned wells, and possibly some unexploded ordnance that were left over from the security days. Because of the relative simplicity of the Wahluke slope cleanup, the Ecology Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have called for this to be cleaned up under what has been called an expedited response action. And this is essentially an action that allows for rapid cleanup where we know that the corrective action is fairly simple. The technology is available and it all fits for the Wahluke slope to be cleaned up quickly and put back into future uses. This cleanup action is under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act. It has a long acronym. It is often referred to as CERCLA or more commonly referred to as the Superfund law. As the owner, the Department of Energy is responsible for the current

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condition of the land and for paying for and performing whatever is ordered under the Superfund act. The State Department of Ecology and the Environmental Protection Agency share the regulatory responsibility for selecting the cleanup action that will take place on Hanford, and then overseeing the project to make sure that it is done correctly. For this particular action, the Department of Ecology has been designated the lead agency. That identifies the cleanup action and that the Environmental Protection Agency will work with us and support our decisions as we go forward on a cleanup. The Department of Energy has studied the problems on the Wahluke slope and have proposed four alternatives for the cleanup. One of those alternatives is one that is always required called a no action alternative. The No Action Alternative will not provide for public health and safety out there, so there we are not giving it much further consideration as a viable option. The other three cleanup proposals are identified in the plan that has been distributed. I would like to just briefly cover those. The first one is called hazard mitigation. This simply means that the surface material would be cleaned up to reduce or mitigate any impacts to the public that may go out there. It's isolation of physical hazards such as removing contaminated soils, asbestos that may on the surface, and it is the cheapest proposal at an estimated 2 million dollars. The future uses would be limited. This alternative fits the wildlife refuge model, but is not supportive of unrestricted access. The second proposal is characterization and hazard mitigation. This proposal adds to the first option, but it includes removal of one landfill and testing the others to see if there is contamination there and what type. The projected cost of this one is 4.6 million dollars but there could be restrictions on future land use for these contaminated areas. This is the alternative that has been recommended by the U.S. Department of

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Energy. The third proposal is called hazard removal or complete cleanup. This proposal is estimated by the Department of Energy to require 25 million dollars and hazardous materials and landfills would be removed along with any surface hazards. It is obviously the most expensive option but the true final cost could be much lower depending on what is found as each trench is removed or each dumpsite is cleaned up. If it is found that the landfills do not contain chemical hazards that have to be removed under the Superfund act, their complete removal may not be necessary. Ecology's and the Environmental Protection Agency's current position is that, wherever possible, Hanford land should be cleaned up to allow unrestricted access. Specifically previous contamination should not preclude any future human uses. Our position is consistent with the Hanford future site uses working group which recently recommended the north slope be cleaned up in any way that allows unrestricted access. Again we look forward to hearing from you about this clean up proposal, your input is important even though we at Ecology do not make future land use decisions here. We will forward your ideas and comments to the governor's office on the future of Wahluke slope. Your comments are important to us. The comment period goes until January 8th. If you feel uncomfortable with giving an oral presentation tonight, by all means send us written comments. They will be incorporated as part of the document and responded to. With that I would like to turn it over to Walter Perro of the Department of Energy. He's the responsible unit manager for this Wahluke slope action proposal. He is probably one of the more knowledgeable people about the actions that are proposed out there.

WP: Thank you Dave. I am Walter Perro, as he said the Department of Energy unit manager for the north slope. I do have a presentation to show you tonight with viewgraphs and hopefully it will answer

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some of your questions that you already have in your mind. Can you hear me alright now? Okay, I believe that we all know what the purpose tonight is, to discuss the cleanup of the north slope. And I want to really stress that I am here tonight to present as much information to you that I can about the actual cleanup of the north slope. What the Department of Energy would like to see happen on the north slope. I am going to try to present a lot of history behind the north slope. Okay, I hope that it works all right. Here are viewgraphs that shows you what the Hanford site is all about. The North slope, in particular north of the Columbia River, we are talking about basically 140 square miles of property or roughly 89,000 acres. Part of the property on the left is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a Saddle Mountain wildlife refuge. There is very limited public access to that part of the property. The other part, the 75% that is managed by the State Department of Wildlife, is a recreation area and it has public access during daylight hours and it has a boat ramp along the river. I would also like to mention there has been some questions lately about is the arid lands ecology facility part of the north slope clean up? That is what you see right here. The ALE is not part of the north slope. We are strictly talking about all of the area north of the Columbia River. The history of the North slope basically starts in 1951 when construction of Camp Hanford started. Camp Hanford was put in place as the security buffer zone for the so called Hanford Works at that time frame. We had ten anti-aircraft batteries installed during 1951 and those were 90 millimeter and 120 millimeter artillery pieces which, basically are five inch in diameter artillery pieces. Seven of those batteries remained in place until about 1957, 58 and were taken out of service. The remaining three batteries were converted into Nike Ajax missile batteries. Those missile batteries were only in place for 3 or 4 years and in

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1961 the army decided that they no longer needed to defend the Hanford Works and they pulled out. When the army pulled out in 1961, it was very, very fast. They basically moved out in out 6 months time and left all of the buildings there and the buildings stayed on site for another 13 years until the Atomic Energy Commission demolished the buildings. Mentioning what Dave said earlier, we have no history of activities on the north slope that dealt with radiological research. There is no plutonium production facilities on the north slope and we should not have any concerns about radiological contamination on the north slope. We have basically three types of hazards to deal with on the affected sites. We have the potential environmental hazards. Those are basically the remains of the army sites from the three Nike Ajax missile sites and the seven anti-aircraft battery sites. We also have a landfill that was associated with each one of those batteries. So we have basically have ten landfills that we have to deal with. We also have several homestead sites, cisterns, we have some acid disposal pits that went along with the Nike battery sites and we have a 2,4-D pesticide site. We also have one place that has some oil contamination which was caused by recent activities by the public out at one of our sites, at a grease rack that we eventually had to demolish. The other kind of hazard that we have is the physical hazards which Dave mentioned. All of the safety hazards out there, open cisterns, we have sub-surface shelters that are open to the public, and we have a lot of exposed rebars sticking out of the ground, and we have those open concrete well head structures. One thing that I would like to mention is that Helen brought up a while ago about maybe the army coming to do some of this work and, in fact, that is happening. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been tasked by DOE to do the physical hazardous cleanup and also the environmental cleanup and the Corps is also doing the ordnance survey on the north slope. The army is

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actively involved in the north slope right now. The other hazard we have, I mentioned the ordnance hazards, we have three sites out on the north slope that may have had ordnance fired that we need to try to account for. We have an artillery firing range that has 120 millimeter shell fragments that actually have been found out on site. We have a small army firing range that doesn't sound bad on the surface but we have an actual document showing 37 millimeter anti-tank rounds were fired at the firing range. We also have a potential for ordnance contamination in the landfills because the army did have a bad practice back in the 50's and 60's of getting rid of any out of spec ordnance in the nearest landfill and leaving. We have that problem to deal with as well. One very important thing that I should mention, we keep talking about the unrestricted land use for the north slope. Basically the work that we are talking about the Department of Energy is going to be working on is basically 400 acres out of the total 89,000 acres. That is less than 1/2% of the total site. The remaining 99 1/2% is available for unrestricted land use now. There is nothing wrong with that property. We are strictly talking about the 400 acres out of the mass total of 89,000 acres. That is a very important fact. This map will show you the location of some of the waste sites that we have out there. The PSN numbers represent anti-aircraft battery positions. The H numbers are the three Nike batteries. We have three out there. We had one right here just north of the Vernita bridge, we had this one just north of highway 24, and we had this one down here just back behind the white bluffs. When you see an H number that is a Nike battery. The L stands for launch center and the C stands for the control center. Both were kept basically 2 to 3 miles apart just so the radar systems would work correctly. This is one of the sites that we call PSN 7/10. It is not going to show very well under these lights. I think that you can see that there is nothing left out

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there but a lot of asphalt paving. All the buildings that were there have been demolished and pushed off into demolition burial pits around the perimeter of the site. There is nothing out there now but asphalt paving. This is a little bit better. This is one of the Nike launch sites. This is the area where the silos used to be. This dark brown area and those have been filled in from all of the demolition debris of the buildings. We don't think there is any hazardous waste or chemical waste in there. As far as the records are concerned, it is demolition debris from the buildings. This is the site that I told you about earlier, where we have the only contaminated soil. This grease ramp was in place for many many years and this was open to the public and we have found that the public tended to use that grease ramp to do oil changes and dump oil filters on the ground. We expect a lot of oil out there. One of the few hazardous wastes we found out there on the north slope is the oil contaminated soil under the grease rack. This past summer, we had that grease rack demolished and now it is not available any more for midnight dumping. This gives you kind of a view of what has been happening on the north slope for over the last three years or so. We did start a site investigation back in 1989. We went through archive records, historical searches, and a complete site walk over by the Westinghouse Hanford Company. When they did the site investigation, they found 39 potential sites that seemed to maybe indicate that was hazardous waste there possibly from the records, we are not real sure. Based on that site investigation, we went into initial characterization. They did a complete visual inspection of all 39 sites. They did limited geophysical surveys on three of the landfill areas that we thought had the most promise of containing waste. They took about a hundred soil samples spaced in different areas throughout the north slope to see if there were any contaminants of concern out there. After

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all of those 100 soil samples were taken, there was no contamination found above regulatory requirements expect for the oil at that grease rack site. Based on the findings of the initial characterization, we got into the expedited response action proposal which is the brown book that Helen was mentioning. The complete proposal for the north slope. That is the book that we have put in the four alternatives, clean up options, and what DOE would like to see as the preferred alternative. Based on the expedited response action, we went into cultural resource review of all 39 sites to see if any of them were potential landmarks that needed to be registered on the historical register. The state historical preservation office reviewed the report and came back and agreed that the findings were that the five cisterns out there were the only things of historical importance on the north slope. They said our plans to just to backfill the cisterns instead of digging them up was okay with them, because we are leaving the cultural resource there as is, in fact we are protecting it better than what it is now. We also did the flora and fauna survey but that was done strictly on the 400 acres of concern, not the whole entire north slope. The flora and fauna survey did show that we have very few plant species endangered or threatened to worry about and the wildlife that we need to be careful for is basically the hawks, the Curlews, there are some owls out there, things like that. All of our construction activities out there will necessarily try to avoid the nesting seasons. Or whenever we think that those birds may be in residence, we are not going to work on that site. This kind of shows in graphic detail what Dave Nylander mentioned about the cost and the four options we are looking at. The hazard mitigation that seems to be a high cost but a lot of that is associated with trying to close off these abandoned water wells. We have the ordnance surveys included in that cost estimate and we

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also have the physical hazards cleanup in that cost estimate. The characterization and hazardous mitigation work is the DOE preferred alternative. That is where we would like to go out and excavate the one landfill that we think has the most potential for containing contamination and that would be the H06L landfill. That was used by the anti-aircraft batteries as well as the Nike missile batteries. If we have any contamination in any of the landfills, we would assume that it would be in this landfill. Based on the results of the excavation of that landfill, we will go into further characterization of the other 9 landfills by soil gas survey, geophysical surveys, soil sampling and actually trenching through 9 landfills to see if there is any hazardous waste. The army had all the standard operating procedures on the north slope and they had a battalion headquarters on the north slope. Based on those standard operating procedures, we are going to assume that if one landfill is dirty, all 9 of them are dirty. On the other hand, if one of them is clean, we are going to assume the other 9 are clean. It is not going to be that much variance in military standards when you are under one battalion command working in the same operating procedures. The hazard removal option there is about half the cost of the total removal because that just deals strictly with digging up the ten landfills but not removing the demolition debris that is out there. The bottom one would actually remove everything. Try to make the north slope as clean as possible with the exception of removing all of the asphalt paving. That wouldn't necessarily mean to dig up of those missile silos where we have 40 feet of fill material from demolition debris. That would get quite expensive trying to dig that out. So that is the difference of the four options right there. Again, the DOE preferred alternative is this one, which basically takes a baby step first, get one landfill out, see what you have before you go into digging the rest of them out. Another

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hot topic seems to be lately our idea about the water well closures. These wells were installed by the military in the 1951, 52 time frame to support their activities out there. When the military left in 1961 time frame, they left the wells in place you know abandoned. They tried to plug a few of them from what we can tell so far. The water has not been produced out of those wells since 1961. They have been abandoned now for over 30 years. Some of these wells have been disturbed naturally by the sand and silt flowing into the wells because they have not been used for so many years. We have also found cases of vandalism by humans dumping things down the wells, which you know has caused quite a problem for us. These well head structures are open to the public and they can fall in if they try to lean in too far. We need to see about closing all of those well head structures. The bottom mentioned there that WAC requires we properly close these wells because they have not been used for 30 years. We have to follow the WAC for the proper abandonment of these wells. This is one of the drilling logs for the wells. It kind of gives you a little bit of an idea what is actually out there, what's involved in these wells. This one was put in 1952. You can see that we had depths of water at the time the well was installed of 287 feet below ground. I've got basically basalt from the 280 level all the way down to the hole which is at 636 feet. This particular well is at the PSN site 07/10 which is adjacent to the landfill that we would like to remove on the H06 site. One thing that we found out last week in some of our video investigation, is that we have actually found that there is a plug in this well. It is at the 208 foot elevation right there, which is just coincidental maybe, I don't know, but at the top of the basalt layer. There was no water in that well when it was checked last week by video. There was one other well we checked out on site PSN72. Again, that one had a plug in it too at 370 feet below ground. That one

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did have water in it but the water was basically in an area where the casing is not perforated. All we can imagine is that maybe the water came in from rain water or possibly hydrostatic pressure pushing water up from underneath the plug and getting into the top. But there is no way for water to really be in that area above the plug that is nonperforated casing. We also believe that it is possible those plugs that we encountered half way down into the wells is actually full depth plugs. If that is true, then there really is no way to even consider trying to remediate these wells for future use. It would just be too costly. It would be a whole lot cheaper to go in and drill brand new wells from scratch. Part of our well closure strips I would like to bring out to you since the wells are a hot topic. The concrete structures that we have right here would have to be demolished and pulled out of the way so a drill rig could cover those and properly do the video investigation down hole monitoring and actually clean out any debris that we might have in there. To properly cap out this well, we actually have to go in, perforate the casings, and do pressure grouting full depth. And we can't do the pressure grouting full depth, we can't do the pressure grouting adequately if we have bridged material in there from debris or animals or whatever is in there, so we have to do the cleanup. Again, the only way we can do the cleanup in these wells is to remove these concrete wellhead structures and pull them out of the way. My last one here, so we can get down to some questions on all of this, is the schedule. The public comment period on the North Slope started November 8th. We're now at the December 14th public meeting. Like Dave said, comments close January 8th and we hope that the regulators, the EPA and Ecology, will give DOE directions to proceed on the cleanup of whatever is chosen by late January early February time frame. We do have a milestone that we would like to see completion of the cleanup on

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the north slope by October 1994, which was an agreement made by the Tri-Parties back last March. We would like to see this cleaned all up by October 1994. Once we are through with the cleanup, the land is excessible for whatever needs, requirements, whatever. Right now, we strictly want to see the clean up done and get out of the way, and let the land usage run it's course, whatever happens. That is all I have right now, and I guess I will turn it back over to Jerry.

JG: We now are ready to get questions from you. I wanted to check though before we started how long you want to take for questions before we start to get the formal comments. I was thinking until about ten after eight, is that all right? There is always people here who want ask question, or people here who want to make comments, does that sound all right? If that's okay then who would like to be the first to ask a question? Yes.

NV: I am wondering if that preferred alternative is going to be unrestricted use, take it to unrestricted use.

WP: I can answer that one. What we are going to try to do is like a baby taking a first step. Dig up one landfill and if it is dirty then we are going to have to go in and take a look at the other nine. If it doesn't have any significant contaminants in there, we don't see any reason to go forward with the other nine. Basically, we will end up with nine or ten demolition debris landfills out there. There is nothing wrong with anybody doing any farming, whatever, out there as long as you are aware that you have demolition debris and you may not want to plow too deep because of construction rubble. Basically, that is getting towards unrestricted land use right there for the very small parts of the total property.

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NV: Next question. Don't be shy. There we have a question.

NV: I have a couple questions, one is what is the official position of the EPA and the Department of Ecology on the Unclear..... The second question is when are you going to find... ???

NV: The state and EPA if I may speak for the EPA. Our position is that we want whatever takes place out there unrestricted land use on the north slope or the Wahluke slope. Our recommendations on future uses, we haven't even started to approach that area yet. Whatever it is we feel that the public's input is paramount to making those decisions. If you have comments on future uses, we will be conveying those to the governor's office but we are not even to the stage of talking about future uses out there. There are five major laws that are guiding the future uses out there all of them federal laws that we have no jurisdiction over so we can make recommendations. The second question I will probably turn over to Dave or Dennis.

NV: Well Ecology would prepare the ??? number and along with the EPA's ??? end up January ??? so basically I want to say that we will make that decision sometime the end of December after hearing all the public comments.

NV: Unclear

NV: These will be available to the public, yeah. As soon as the action number will be signed it will be able to go public.

NV: Yeah, something that we are doing tonight of course is that we are hearing from you, the public, and this will help EPA and Ecology make their final decision. One thing that I want to stress to you

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if you want to receive a copy of the response to comments please make sure that you leave your name and address so we can send that, or as you are up here making your formal testimony, give your name and address so we can send them to you. Again if we don't know your address we can't let you know what the comments were. The other thing that we will do is the document will be revised and we will send that document back out to Grant county and all of the various places that we have put it, the libraries and what have you around the county. Yes.

NV: I was in your comment there that you were making claims to the land that you were the owners of the land. I still got a copy of the original contract which is on file as an official document which states that the Bureau of Reclamation owns all that land, a majority of it and it was clearly loaned to the agency as a control zone and the agreement stated that it would be returned to the Bureau of Reclamation when you no longer needed it. Now under that document, I am wondering why all your pictures show that you guys own it or that fish and wildlife own it or anything else when they are only operating under a temporary agreement which we are talking about for the use of that land during that time you were using it or controlling it as an AEC control zone. So why do all of your documents show that you are the owners of the land?

WP: There has been some kind of confusion about the property ownership. You are right that we should not be saying the U.S. Fish and Wildlife nor the Department of Wildlife nor the state actually owns the property. They only operate them as wildlife refuges. I am not quite such how to answer the thing about the Atomic Energy Commission. I believe you are talking about the 1957 agreement. I just don't know anything about the real estate

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aspects of the property or the landlord aspects. Something I just can't answer.

NV: We requested a copy unclear..... but you sent a copy of that agreement and this is officially on record with the ownership of the land in the courthouse in the department of records that was my impression and everything that you have shown and all of your documentation is indicating that you people own it and that is not the case ??? ???.

WP: If you would like to give us your name, we will try to get a written response back to you. And maybe I can get Julie Erickson, who is the division chief for the environmental remediation division of DOE, to maybe answer that.

JE: I think that you make a very good point and we should probably be saying that it is under the control of the Department of Energy. We feel that it is our responsibility to do any cleanup out there before it is released for unrestricted use. I think you make some good points. We weren't trying to imply that there was any ownership or any past agreements are not valid. We do feel that it is our responsibility to do any cleanup action before the land is permitted for any unrestricted use.

NV: I have got another question along that, kind of following up Jim. On page 41 of the report, it talks about the Bureau of Reclamation indicated that it has no future development plans for the North slope area. Now February 7th, 1993, memorandum to the National Park Service from the project manager Bureau of Reclamation of Ephrata, having to do with answering some questions that they had. One of the final statements in there in response to question is

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the Reclamation continues to have an interest in the ultimate development of the irrigated lands and the entire Wahluke slope.

END OF SIDE A

NV: The existence of that letter out on DOE was copied, furnished the letter or whatever but it is not in any of the records that I had access to in the report.

WP: I don't have copies of that, our site infrastructure may have it but I don't have it.

JG: Other questions, this guy back here.

NV: I have a question, will the costs of well closures go down?

WP: Yes it will. So far, all we checked last week was two of the seven wells and those two have plugs. We can't check the others until we can get the wellhead structures out of the way and get the proper equipment over them, but yes if they are already plugged half depth, three quarter depth, whatever, of course the cost will go down tremendously. A lot of the work will have already been done.

NV: Unclear.

WP: Right now the budget for the wells is approximately 1.3, 1.4 million dollars for the seven wells because it is quite expensive to close the wells to the WAC code that we have to work with. Again, those costs will go down dramatically if the wells are already plugged and they don't have any debris. If we don't have

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to remove a lot of debris out of the wellheads, we will be in much better shape.

JG: Next question. Why don't you go ahead and ask your question.

NV: Unclear.....

WP: Okay, I can tell you that we haven't changed our policy or the preferred alternative. I believe if you stripped away from this ERA proposal any mention of land use at all, whether wildlife or agricultural, whatever, we would still come up with preferred alternative that we have in there.

NV: Unclear.....

WP: Okay, I think that I can. Maybe it is not necessarily a policy change or anything like that. Again, I just mentioned that if you stripped all of those words away about wildlife refuge, whatever, and we did this alternative evaluation and summary, we would still come up with the alternative that we have based on cost and timeliness to incorporate within the time frame that we have. Going back to the 400 acres versus the 89,000 acres, like I said, that is all unrestricted land use right now. We don't need to mess with it other than with just the 400 acres. If we do take it one step at a time, the DOE preferred alternative. To dig one landfill out now, see what is in there now before you proceed, then you stand a benefit by saving a lot of money and a lot of time if you don't have to go and dig those other nine landfills up. So I think irrespective of whatever we have said in the ERA on the wildlife refuge, future land use whatever, the DOE preferred alternative stands.

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JG: Next question. Go ahead.

DF: Mark, I want to address it a little bit more too. I think we talked and you know that EPA prefers unrestricted land use and again this document is going to be revised through your comments and EPA and Ecology's comments we have not commented on the document. I think what the whole jest of the matter is, maybe speaking for DOE a little bit. If we knew what the land use was going to be you know if it was already defined that it was wildlife refuge or whatever that would make the cleanup decision much more cut and dried. What we are doing now is we are using the future site use working group of unrestricted land use. That means that it can be anything under the sun. So that is kind of where we are at.

NV: They have a question.

NV: ??? I am a little confused in that ??? about 400 acres unclear.....

WP: For the part of where the wells are located on the state department of wildlife operated property, that is fully open to the public during daylight hours and it is not even hardly under lock and key at night. We have absolutely no control on whoever would go in there and do any dumping in those wells.

NV: How long has it been unsecured?

WP: It is however long the State Department of Wildlife had it, I believe since 1975, 1976. I am not real sure but it has been open to the public that long, at least that long. Even the areas under the Fish and Wildlife Service operated property, there is very limited fencing and

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some of the sites we have, like at the site H83 near the Vernita bridge, you have maybe a 100 foot long fence and the rest is wide open. Anybody can walk in there, there is no restrictions at all. Again, there are some wells sited over there. There are septic tanks with big holes in the ground wide open but we don't have ways to limit the public.

NV: Back to your alternative is obviously going to take the least amount of money to... Unclear..... but why don't they return it to God knows who, because I'm not sure how many have access to it...Unclear....It's kind of a reverse situation in what this state has taken in it's desperate attempt to protect wildlife. ...Unclear.... what we are willing to say is for the minimal amount of cleanup certain types of wildlife are expendable ...unclear.....

WP: I think I can comment on that. I don't believe that any of the plant species, animal, bird species, out there are expendable. We have done the flora and fauna survey to make sure that when we are doing work out there, we are not going to disturb any raptor nests, bald eagle nests, whatever, so we are going to do the best that we can not to endanger any of the endangered or threatened species. As far as getting the property back to agricultural uses whatever, again 400 acres versus 89,000 acres. We haven't even checked to see if there is any contamination in that other nearly 89,000 acres, there has been no need to.

NV: There in the back.

NV: Why do you suppose that such ??? separated in the schedule ??? hurry up and getting it done? ??? Election year. ???

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NV: This came, this happened back in March of this year, 1993. DOE tried to offset some problems that the DOE was having in meeting their cleanup goals and do the new Tri-Party Agreement negotiations going on. There were trade offs here and there. One of the trade offs was, instead of letting the North Slope go for however long it took to get it cleaned up, let's go clean it up now, by 1994, because it is one of the simpler sites to do. It does not have radiological contamination. It's a very simple project, get it over and done with and get out of there. It had nothing to do with politics.

NV: Your next.

NV: Back to the ??? question about the DOE changing policies, why, kind of goes along with what he is talking about in pages 151 ?? Why were references in the action proposal to talk about the ??? why were letters from the governor and I'm not sure if it's ??? park service, ??? why were the ??? made the decision to improve those if the ??? were ??? about the possibility.

WP: Those documents are included in the ERA proposal because this is a public document. The public needs to be aware of what decision may have been made or not made. Who has been talking about what, we put those documents in there so the public could see them. My philosophy is have more documents in that ERA than you need, instead of fewer and it has opened up the discussion obviously.

NV: What if they are all one sided as opposed to a broad spectrum of the proposal.

WP: The only documents I had in my hands were those. I had no letter from BLM like this gentleman brought up that we could have put into the

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report. I had no copies of those. I don't know if the DOE was ever furnished copies of the BLM correspondence.

NV: In other words, those future uses meetings that some of the people that I know went to for the last two years, didn't produce any documents talking about multiple uses?

WP: They may have, but it did not get down into the cleanup area that we are dealing with here, talking about the cleanup alternatives.

NV: One other thing. Who changed the name on the ??? from the Wahluke Slope to the Hanford North Slope?

WP: I have no idea. It's been north slope as long as I've been here working on it.

DF: I can address that. Under the superfund when they did the operable unit designations, they called it the north slope. That is how it got in as that.

NV: That was fairly recently.

DF: Yeah it was in 1989.

NV: I'm totally confused on ??? I've got a curiosity question. I know you don't want to discuss the future uses...

JG: We have reached 8:10 I would like to now go into the public comment period and what we are going to do as I've said, those of you who have wanted to speak. I hope you have had the chance to fill out one of these cards and check down at the bottom. What I will do is call on you one by one, and ask you to come up to the microphone and identify

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yourself and please limit your comments to about five minutes so that everyone has a chance to comment. If you have more to say than you can say in five minutes, just be patient because when we've gone through everyone who has wanted to comment for the first time then anyone who wants to come back up and speak they will be free to do so. Some of you may have additional questions. When we finish the public comment the people here will be available to try to answer those questions. Does that make sense? Does that sound alright. Why don't we go ahead and get started. I wasn't sure if the Grant county commissioners had any further comment or not. Okay, come on up.

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LA: Just to make sure I get on the tape. My name is Leroy Allison. I'm a commissioner from Grant County. I would like to ask several questions of this audience. First of all how many of you live within 25 miles of this Wahluke Slope. Thank you. Furthermore how many of you live within Grant County? Okay. Washington State? Excuse me, outside Grant County Washington State, let's put it that way? Okay. Now beyond Washington State. As a commissioner of Grant county and as a life long resident of Grant County I strongly urge that the Wahluke slope be cleaned up for unrestricted human use. Thank you.

JG: We would now like to here from Franklin County commissioner Sue Miller.

SM: Franklin county commissioners prefer to comment on the future use of the north slope. The commissioners are totally in opposition to the position taken by the draft for the disposal of the land referred to as the North Slope, after cleanup. We believe the draft does not take into consideration the economical concerns the counties have nor the possibilities of multiple division and land use. Indicating the belief the land had one use illustrated in narrow review process. It also failed to review those former contract documents signed in good faith by other government agencies at the time of procurement. Nor does the

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government agency need title to that land and expect taxes to care for it. With proper division the land would generate a revenue base that would guarantee proper stewardship by all the agencies involved. This report should generate a land disposal document that creates faith in our governmental agencies and restores the confidence that we need to have in those that staff our public governmental departments. In short we encourage the unrestricted use of the North slope after cleanup and request a complete review of the Wahluke 2000 plan, generate the next draft around it. It is something for all and it's very workable. Thank you.

JG: Benton county Commissioner Bob Drake.

BD: Thank you very much, Bob Drake Benton County Commissioner. I guess I am totally confused after coming here tonight and listening to some of the comments and some of the questions and the answers to the questions. I would like to share with you just a moment to take you back to when I first came to the Hanford project in 1946. This zone that you are talking about now the buffer zone for security reasons only, that's all it was and that is all it is. That's all it ever has been. While with the AEC and ADC security one of my primary jobs was to keep good relationship with the farmers and the land owners adjacent to the Hanford project. In it's entirety 640 square miles. After saying that I would like to then, focus on what I have heard here tonight from DOE and their role in the cleanup. I support the cleanup of this hazardous waste. As indicated here there is no radioactive waste out there so it's a hazardous waste that we are talking about. I appreciate the fact that they are going forward with the 400 acres, but let's face the facts and reality. Fish and wildlife and the parks department, are not taking care of the land that they have control of today. We all know that, everybody in this room knows that. They don't have the money the resources to do the job. It's not that they are not good employees or

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they are lazy or whatever. They don't have the resources. If you are going to take this land, the wisdom of DOE and say well we feel that we are going to turn it back to fish and wildlife, or some other source and not use it for the human resource, that we are all becoming endangered species in this good ole US. Well, less ladies and gentlemen, please take a hard look at what big government is doing to you. When big government says they can come in and change your culture, I'm talking about the county and the counties role in these, every county commissioner, in the State of Washington, and the county commissioners role, is to have a comprehensive plan to manage that county to the best of their ability. If they have that plan in place then the federal government, the state government, can not come in and destroy your culture and your economic base. DOE supposedly owned this land. What I'm hearing here tonight different ownerships of this land, and the purpose of cleaning this land up and who is it going to go to after it's cleaned up. Well if we only clean it up to this point we can turn it over to Fish and Wildlife, but if we go beyond that then maybe we can farm it. That leads me to believe that some decisions have already been made. The planner of Benton County gave me a copy of the Yakima Herald which was printed Sunday. I believe a lot of peoples mind has been made up in that article in the Yakima Herald. I would encourage everybody including Department of Ecology, DOE, to please consider what you are doing here and where and what you are leading yourself into to before you make a decision to only go so far then we'll give it to fish and wildlife, but if we don't go that far then we can do something else. I come here tonight hoping I would get a good feel of where DOE is in this. Now I'm becoming more confused, now we get back to the Hanford Reach, are you going down to the waters edge, in this cleanup?

WP: We just, again the 400 acres and none of those are close to the water.

BD: You don't know about the firing range down there by the...

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WP: Yeah, I know which one you are talking about. We are going to look at that one.

BD: By the Prairie landing?

WP: For the ordnance hazards, we are going to look at that one.

BD: You are going to look at that?

NV: For the ordnance hazards.

BD: Okay, but what I'm saying is, if you get into this to the point to where you are going to take it just to the point to where then these are the only people that are going to be eligible for this property, not farming or whatever other use it might be eligible for. I have a problem with that. Thank you very much.

JG: Thank you. Before we move on I did know that the Adams County Commissioners would come and wondered if they had any comment that they wanted to make..

DJ: My name is Dean Judd, I'm an Adams county commissioner. Adams county has been a little bit late getting into to this process, mainly because we've been left out. The original maps just plain left Adams county out. They didn't even draw the map correctly. At Franklin County where Adams county is, they just drew the line straight on North, therefore we haven't been part of the process a great deal. We haven't received really very little notification on what's been going on. We do have in the very corner of the county have a stake in it certainly. Geographically with a couple of half sections. However, it's a lot more important than that to us. As Othello residents, it's certainly the economic impact of potential agricultural development out there would be

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tremendous. Speaking for Adams county, we completely, totally, back the resolution that was signed by the four counties. We intend to become a major player in this process in the future. We think this area should be cleaned up so that it can be farmable. We will be working for a land use that will include agriculture.

JG: Thank you. There is one other elected official that I wanted to make sure, whether he wanted to speak or not, and that was Representative Nick Hansen.

NH: I'm representative Nick Hansen. I guess I just wanted to ask one further question to add onto what Leroy is asking. That is how many people here want to see this go into wild and scenic? Two, Three. The rest of you want to see it go into farm, or at least partial into farm ground? Thank you.

JG: Thank you. Next person is Christopher Reno. Did I get that right? I hope I didn't get the last name wrong, it looks like Reno, could it be Bend? Is he here. Okay, next is Jim Pritchard.

JP: I'm Jim Pritchard from Ephrata. I'm a professional farm appraiser for fee. I want to speak in favor of unrestricted use. I hope it doesn't cost as much as what the proposal shows. With the population pressure that we have in this country and in the world and with the fact that we aren't doing all that much about family planning and trying to educate ourselves and control ourselves a little bit. We are going to have a tremendous growth of people and this means that we need food. We have got to have this cleaned up so that we can consider this use for agriculture for this 30-50,000 acres of Pedia 9000.

NV: unclear.

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NV: Just talking to Helen Fancher here, commissioner Helen Fancher. During the last legislative session we had a house joint memorial 4020. What this amounted to was a recommendation to use the Wahluke 2000 plan. We added some more language to it. It was addressed a number of Congress people and sent onto Washington DC. We took all of the people East of the Cascades, the senators, the representatives, which amount to 30 people. Out of these 30 senators and representatives, we had 28 of them that bought into the plan and signed onto this. So we had 28 out of 30 people. I'd just like to make that clear.

JG: Thank you. Next is Wayne Solly, of Mattawa.

WS: Port of Mattawa, what I think we are really after is some money that they owe us on back taxes, that they haven't paid us. Here's comments from the port. The port of Mattawa land base covers approximately 66,000 acres of the property covered in the Hanford buffer zone, located north of the Columbia River. The subject of the Department of Energy's expedited response action proposal. The port is a junior taxing district charged with the responsibility of encouraging economic development and job creation in the area. The port has not been kept informed by the federal and State agency regarding the various studies that pertain to the future use of this region in a timely matter. We have had to rely on secondary information regarding this proposal, when in fact we should have been one of the first contacted for involvement. Regarding the Department of Energy, North Slope expedited response action proposal, we feel that DOE has completely ignored the comments and wishes of the local governmental elected officials when it assumes the area will be managed as a wildlife refuge area, which in turn only supports the studies preferred alternatives that allows for a minimal cleanup. The port recommends that the fourth alternative of complete cleanup be the only one acceptable to the people of the area, while at the same time questioning the accuracy of the 26 million dollar price

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tag that goes with that alternative. These numbers only make us more convinced that the DOE has already made up its minds favoring the preferred alternative which will lead to a wildlife refuge. This is at least the third study that has been made of the local lands in the last five years. They have all come forward with the wildlife refuge alternative as the highest alternative and have ignored the input from the local community which supports the idea of balanced development of these lands. The port fully supports the Wahluke 2000 plan for balanced development, and to settle for anything less than full cleanup would be a great injustice for our area.

JG: Thank you. Next is Simon Martinez.

SM: I'm Simon Martinez from Moxey Washington. I represent the Martinez livestock company. My father had property in this Hanford White Bluffs, in 1943 which was taken under the War Powers Act. They told him that as soon as the war effort was over, he would get it back. This has been over 40 years ago. We currently lease about 10,000 acres north of highway 24 for grazing of livestock, sheep and cattle. We feel that this area should be cleaned up and returned back to the agriculture base that this community deserves. Natural resources and agriculture has made this country what it is. We feel that it should be made available to us back in the future. I'm also a member of the Washington State oil and gas commission, I believe someday in the future when these price conditions change price oil and gas gets a back up we will see some more exploration on this Wahluke slope. I thank you.

JG: Thank you. Next is Carol Martinez.

CM: I'm the other half of that which was just here, but I'll speak to you gentlemen, because I think I'm in favor with the people behind me. I'm in favor of the cleanup of the restricted use in cleaning up for human

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use. For 400 acres that comes to \$62,500 an acre. Secondly, I think the land should be returned back to the agriculture use. This is what it is designed for and this is what it was originally intended. The canals are there, the structures are there, it would be a simple thing to include it in, although some of the land that is not suited for agriculture that can go into ??? for wildlife. The environmentalists point of view that in order to enhance wildlife the land has to be completely fallow, isn't always the right answer. If you have farming out there, you are going to have water, and water is going to enhance the wildlife. We took sagebrush land and put sprinklers and had irrigated pasture and we have more Curlews, Pheasants, Chukkars than was ever there before, including coyotes. That is true with this land that we graze. There is not a thing out there because there is no water. You get farming in there and you are going to have a lot of wildlife that you have never seen before. Making the Wahluke slope a wildlife refuge is a little bit misleading when you think about it. That isn't a wildlife sanctuary. There is still going to be hunting out there, and these animals have to be controlled and the wildlife departments they do not have any plan for controlling them. Look at the elk. They have elk running all over the plac. They are becoming a nuisance. It's a pain to feed them in the wintertime. There is no plan for controlling these things. The environmentalists call that we need to have more land for wildlife enhancement. That isn't always the answer. These become stagnant acres and they become weed infested and a fire hazard as you well know on the fire that we had just this summer. We grazed on the north side of the highway and that didn't burn. There is still sufficient cover there, but the south side hasn't been grazed and that went like wildfire, and they had a hard time putting it out. I believe the counties had to pay the price of putting it out besides. These environmentalist ideas, maybe they sound good but in the long run, you look at them 25 years later and you just have a big weed patch that no wildlife is on them. They go where it's grazed.

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JG: Next is Mike Conley.

MC: I have three sets of comments here they are all fairly brief. First, I have a letter here from Senator Hockstetter who is in Seattle tonight. He sends his regrets that he can't be here, he is over working on the Welfare problem for us all, so let's hope that he is successful. Harold is again a life long resident of Grant county, he fully supports multi-use of this property. I won't read all of his letter but in his last paragraph it says, in closing, let me remind you if you want wildlife then opt for agriculture. Having lived in the basin in the dustbowl of the thirties, there was precious little wildlife until irrigation projects brought water. Multi-use will serve the people of Washington best. Listen to your local officials, we must save farmland for farming as well as save the river. Second comment is from Priest Rapids Stock and Grain. This is a joint operating agency between the ports of Mattawa and Royal Slope. Their comment is we support the Wahluke 2000 as an agency concerned with the Department of Ecology's North Slope expedited response action proposal. We recommend the fourth alternative plan of complete cleanup be the only one acceptable for the area, signed by Donna Smith, secretary. Thirdly, for myself, I'm also elected official maybe not the same level as the county commissioners but I am a PUD commissioner for Grant County. I've been exposed to this Wahluke slope problem on the National Parks here since EIS was first released and it is a major concern to me and it's a major concern to the Grant County PUD. We will leave these comments directly regarding this DOE proposal. Grant county PUD provides electric utility service to the residents and businesses of Grant County. In addition, we own and operate Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dams on the Columbia River, as well as transmission facilities in Grant and Benton counties. The district is concerned with that's a DOE plan, the cleanup is certainly a portion of the Wahluke Slope, referred to as the North Slope is based on erroneous assumption. A primary concern is a statement on page 41. It is soon

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based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services listing the area as it's number one priority and land acquisitions for future wildlife refuge areas that the property will be made into a wildlife refuge. Elected county commissioners of Grant, Benton, Franklin and Adams have joined in expressing their concerns about the proposal for the entire area to be dedicated for wildlife refuge. Representative Jay Inslee has indicated that he is undecided about the best land uses for the area. Under these circumstances, is inappropriate for the DOE to assume the use of the entire slope as a wildlife refuge. On the basis on this erroneous assumption, DOE indicates on page 41 that it favors the alternative of characterization and hazard mitigation. Page 37 acknowledges that this alternative would support use of the area as a wildlife refuge but not for unrestricted use, including agriculture and or residential development. The only alternative which would support agriculture and residential development is hazard removal. As stated on page 37, it says the future use of the area has not yet been determined. The district respectively requests the DOE adopts the hazard removal alternative for the complete cleanup of the DOE lands on the Wahluke Slope.

JG: Thank you. Next is Tom Patten.

TP: Thank you. If you don't mind, I'm going to turn this way. Turn my back to you. I feel like I'm preaching to the choir. The Hanford future site uses working group is made up of all interests, government, tribal, labor, environmental, agriculture, economic development and public interest. It's important when trying to strike a balance in issues like this, that the efforts of these working groups be given extremely strong consideration. It can't be strictly jobs, or extreme control over the environment. We must strike a balance. In another scenario on this land, the National Park Service EIS, no alternative option is the only option that comes close to striking any balance. The waste of an EIS.

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The wild and scenic designation, provides no alternative for any economic development. In the Hanford transition and restoration process, it's extremely important that economic considerations be provided great attention. The future of all Tri-City and all surrounding communities depend upon it. What I believe I hear here tonight, hazard removal is the only alternative that provides opportunity for striking a balance for all groups interests, unrestricted human use. It shouldn't be assumed that the wild and scenic designation eventually will be approved by Congress, but it should be assumed that individuals and groups that are expressing their interests here tonight and the Hanford future site uses work groups who are working to strike a balance of interest will eventually be heard and a balance strategy between environmental and economic development interest should prevail. Again, hazard removal option is the only one that seems to provide this opportunity. Thank you.

JG: Next, R. Michael Dillard wrote down he maybe wanted to comment. Okay. Next is Mark Hedman.

MH: So many people have said it so well, I didn't have anything not to say here, but I'll say it anyway. I guess every time that I read the statement which Mr. Conley read again from the preferred alternative it makes me really upset. I don't get too mad about things, but when I read that it makes me mad and the problem is that it assumes that the only priorities that matter in DOE's decisions are those of the federal government agencies. Priorities which are often changed by the whims of politics have little to do with seeking the highest good for the nation over a long period of time. DOE's preferred alternative ignores the past that people have brought up here tonight, the fact that in 1943 the land was owned and controlled by ranchers and farmers in the Bureau of Reclamation. It ignores the fact that federal agencies are required to consider customs and culture of a region when making any decision under

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NEPA. It ignores the present, the future site uses working group worked for years to give input to the DOE and Mr. Perro stated that there were no documents available to include in this that had to do with future site uses other than the wildlife refuge which is not true. I would like to remind the parties that are here, Ecology, DOE, and EPA that they signed a document in March of 1993, that says that they agreed "to identify actions which could be taken as a result of the Hanford cleanup to support local economic development and diversification to this end the parties agree to conduct an economic conference to explore opportunities." That has not been done. The DOE's alternative also ignores the future, because as has been stated, if your alternative is followed, there won't be any future land uses other than a refuge. I'd like to make three recommendations. I realize that I'm saying some things here to DOE people who are just involved in cleanup but you are the only people we can talk to in DOE, so you need to get higher. Number one, the agreement to be signed by the DOE, the EPA and the Department of Ecology must require a full cleanup as other people have stated. Secondly, the DOE should not declare the Wahluke Slope lands excess until all the future land use questions are resolved, and the DOE should play an active role in insuring that all the Hanford lands are returned to uses consistent with those when they were taken in 1943. The DOE should accept responsibility for the fact that it initiated ill feelings between citizens and the government by taking away the land that was won by blood, sweat and tears. It's not enough just to perform some level of cleanup and then let someone else do the dirty work, or even worse to throw the land into the lap of the Fish and Wildlife Service by default through the General Services Administration. The DOE has a tremendous opportunity to create good public sentiment if it will work on restitution as well as cleanup. Last, and probably the most important is that the local governments, the four counties who are here tonight, must be given the lead in determining the cleanup options and

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the future land uses, because it is their citizens who pay the taxes and make the economy work. Thank you.

JG: Next is Gary Maughan.

GM: I'd like to especially thank the commissioners tonight for their resolution in a...

End of Tape 1 side B

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NV: Just talking to Helen Fancher here, commissioner Helen Fancher. During the last legislative session we had a house joint memorial 4020. What this amounted to was a recommendation to use the Walluck 2000 plan. We added some more language to it. It was addressed a number of Congress people and sent onto Washington DC. We took all of the people East of the Cascades, the senators, the representatives, which amount to 30 people. Out of these 30 senators and representatives, we had 28 of them that bought into the plan and signed onto this.

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NV: ...had no problems. I wasn't aware that there was any major cleanups. There were a couple of holes out there that need to be buried. It seems like an awful lot of money, but in my opinion to clean up out there but if you made a mess, I think you should clean it up or fence it off and let us get on with our livelihoods out there. The contract that Mr. Curty talked about was part of a grazing lease. I am familiar with that where those lands were owned by the Bureau of Reclamation and controlled by the Atomic Energy Commission and managed by the Fish and Game Department or the Fish and Wildlife Department. The point I would like to bring out is it seems like the agencies that are pushing the cleanup and the disposal of those lands are not being objective. They're certainly a...the press releases I read in the paper are written by someone hired by the game department within their department and they certainly push their point of view. Even in your presentations as you go around the state or have in the past, we see the purple sage when it is in bloom, and we see deer and rarely do you see deer out there. You see down by the river when seldom does anyone stand up there in the thousands of acres that burn nearly every year where there is nothing. But those lands would certainly be better used in orchard or farming or in areas that drive our economy. I do have lands that join these lands and some pieces of them are fenced in with your lands. How you dispose and what you do with your lands effect my lands. I have had little input with what has been done. Thanks.

JG: Next is Jerry Whalen.

JW: My name is Jerry Whalen and I am the Grant County Economic Development Director. I've gone through this process from its start when the government tried to exclude this part of the region from even being involved in this process. I've been mad ever since and I'm still mad. Farmers create habitat, and to the best

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of my knowledge, I have seen the Federal and State Government create habitat that they can't manage. They can't manage the wildlife, they can't manage the flora and the fauna. I appreciate the position that all of you are in, in this particular process. I doubt that any of you probably owned a farm, managed a farm, owned a business, managed a business, before you got into government business. Which means you don't understand sometimes what it is the private sector goes through, the private business man goes through, the private business woman goes through. My father homesteaded in the Yakima Valley before this state was a state. He was in the apple orchard business, had the first livery stable in Union Gap, and the first livery stable and General Store. When I go back through this process which was a process that was to originally.....now everyone in this room probably accepted to some degree the reason that the government took this land originally. We didn't know what they were going to do with it ultimately. We didn't even understand a lot about. We were willing to give it up. Some of these people here who had relatives that had their land taken from them the way it was taken by the federal government has to be a little mad right now. Mad because the guarantee that we were going to get it back for what it was originally used for is nothing where our elected officials are willing to give it back to us again in the same way they took it. Sure it's dirty, it needs to be repaired, it needs to be cleaned. I don't think anybody in this room accepts the fact that it doesn't have to be cleaned. I think we are willing to probably give up part of what can't be cleaned. I want to hear about wells that can't produce water any more that isn't tainted, we can get water to that land. There is a Bureau of Reclamation program that shows how the canals can bring water to the farm land. It is a betrayal to the citizens of this particular county that the money that was appropriated by Congress to do this study originally covered a quarter of a mile on each side of the Columbia River.

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It did not include the appropriation for where all of these agencies have taken it. I am not blaming you because it has been taken to a point that you have now had to counteract and react to what the federal government is trying to do. When you have had elected politicians that have already made up their minds about what this land is going to be used for. I can tell you right now that I can take any equation you want to, and I can design it to my better use to prove that I'm justified in trying to do what I think is the better and higher use of anything. It's all a matter of mathematics and numbers. What we're talking about here is the federal government and the state government buys land on a regular basis. I saw what the federal government is going to buy in land, and what the state government is going to buy in land, for preservation. We're preserving land at a rate that we can't manage for fish and wildlife. I was a forester for eight years. I replanted over three million trees. Not only did I replant three million trees, I took care of the streams. I studied the laws. I can tell you right now there are more laws on the book right now, if they were enforced you wouldn't have the problems that you've got right now trying to enforce additional laws that are being set in place, when no one knows how and why and where to even manage them in the first place. They just keep coming, they just keep coming. These people are stewards of the land. A farmer knows how to take care of his land better than anybody that I know in most cases. They create habitat. They know how to farm. I don't think there is anybody here that isn't willing to give up part of the process to get part of that land back. We have probably one of the most agriculturally productive areas in the world here. We seem to be under a ??? by rules and regulations from the state and federal level that are contradictory. We have fees that are going off the roof, because somehow somebody has decided that we have some kind of an advantage. People forget that the farmer produces in this area a

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product at a consistent price that allows it to be competitive internationally, internationally, if you continue to take that away, in this particular case there is an area of land that some of the most potentially productive land, at least it was before the government took it, in the world. That will give us an edge in a growing season to produce some of the best crops in the world. Who wants to take that away from the United States, a bunch of bureaucrats. Excuse me, I am sorry, but I am adamant about this. I sent a letter to the governor as director of the 195 member Grant County Economic Development Council (GCEDC) we wish to add our voices in opposition to the National Park Services preferred alternative plan to the Hanford Reach. Most of us on this side of the state feel we were taken advantage of by the comments that were made by the governor. You didn't make those comments, we appreciate that. The state of Washington wants this area to be placed under the Wildlife Act and Refuge and at the same time the majority of the Eastern Washington caucus, this was the comment. Excuse me I'm getting ahead of myself. The governor was making this statement, o.k. and Mark alluded to it earlier. The state of Washington wants to be under the Wildlife and Scenic Areas Act and the Wildlife Refuge. I don't believe that is what the state wants to be under. That's what the governor said. At the same time, the jury of the Eastern Washington Caucus was signing a memorial to Congress asking for a balance development of this land. This action that is being endorsed by the governor would lock out approximately ...and I...this is minimizing 35,000 acres. We're being reasonable now about how many acres may go back into productive land. That is potentially some of the most productive farmlands in the United States. While at the same time the state has taken action that will bring economic development to this area, quote the governor, what's he going to do? Float a bunch of rafters down the river so they can see what they can't use, utilize, do anything but tell their kids that this is the way

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it went. He wants to return to what it was 1500 years ago. People forget that the PUD, the Grant County PUD is a result of the plentiful and bountiful fish population that we have in this particular area. The beautiful round of fall chinook that's referred to is a result of the PUD. It's great fish management. Farmers know how to farm and manage farmland. The PUD has gotten involved with helping to manage fish. This is a cooperative effort. We have people here that know how to cooperate with the environment, and we know how to manage the environment. To the most part with the exception of a few people that I've seen here from the start that come from Seattle, that have no other purpose to be here other than the fact to lock this land out for everybody. I see some reports here that started in 1992 and 1993 all of a sudden on culture resources, flora and fauna. You know? Expedited response action. Why all of a sudden is this important now? When this thing has been going on for years? As you can tell I am adamant about this. I support a group of people that are adamant about this. I think we are being cheated. I think we have been cheated from the start. I am sorry that you're part of the process because I know it was not....you got injected somewhere in the middle into this, and this not an accusation to you. That original legislation only stated that the funds by Congress that were appropriated was a quarter mile to the right and a quarter mile to the left. It wasn't close to 90,000 acres we're talking about. Thank you.

JG: We have gone through all the cards that were filled out. What I would like to do now is ask if anyone else wants to come up and make a comment. Does anyone else want to come up? Be sure and identify yourself if you would.

JA: I'm Jim Aquin, a local concerned citizen and a member of the Walluc 2000 Committee. I want to thank the various federal and

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state agencies that are present here for seeking public comment on cleanup on the North slope. As compared to the more secretive past at Hanford, the more recent openness by these agencies will lead to a more informed and involved public as evidenced by this meaning tonight. This is an important part of our democratic society, so thank you again. We who live on the Walluc slope next to that portion called the North slope especially appreciate this opportunity to air our comments about the North slope area that we feel so strongly about. We have long had elevated expectations for the North slope because of our understanding that once no longer needed by DOE for security reasons, portions of the North slope would be made available for agriculture. In effect returning it to the purpose for which much of it was used prior to the expropriation in the early 40's. We now find these expectations in jeopardy by recent events. I am making reference primarily to the National Park Service EIS. What started out as a seemingly noble effort to study and provide protection to the Hanford Reach and the Columbia River mandated by public law 100-605, mysteriously got broadened and scoped and includes study of the 90,000 acre North slope. In clear exception to the intent if not the letter of the law. The result of this clearly manipulated study by the National Park Service resulted in the Hanford Reach EIS. Which recommends making the 90,000 acre North slope a federal wildlife refuge. From our perspective, the study conducted by the EIS study group task force appeared to be made in seclusion from those who would be impacted the most. The neighbors to the North slope. Unfortunately, the preferred alternative listed in the draft EIS was put forth void of input from many concerned citizens groups and with only limited input from our elected local government officials. While I am obviously not in agreement with the preferred alternative as written in the EIS, I feel that not all its intentions were inheritantly bad. Instead, as a member of the Walluc 2000 Committee, we feel we have

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a more balanced approach for utilization of the North slope. Very quickly, the 2000 Plan provides for carefully planned agricultural development on portions of the North slope, while providing for protection of the Hanford Reach. We can have both. It plans for many square miles of wildlife habitat along the river and elsewhere across the slope, fully allowing for all recreational tourism activities on the river. This balanced approach gives food production for the human species at least as high a priority as wildlife habitat set aside. Portions of the north slope constitute a national treasure for future food production. No where else in the United States are left lands with the potential that we have on the north slope. Many of the other irrigation projects across the western United States are losing acreage very rapidly. You are aware of areas in California that received no water at all last year. Approximately 120,000 acres. We don't have many of the problems that some of these other areas have. This needs to be recognized, and this land needs to be looked at as a national treasure for future food production. It should be acknowledged as such. This is where my comments about the expedited response proposal come about. I gave you a little bit of background, most of the technical comments I have, have already been stated so I won't reiterate other than to stress that, let's clean up the north slope for unrestricted human access. I greatly appreciated commissioner Greg's comments. He is very justified to be concerned by the tone set forth in this expedited response proposal. In reading the proposal it is obvious that a very limited scope of assumptions were made for estimation purposes. That scope should be included, ??? to include the possibility of other future uses. Not just wildlife use. This document is a DOE cleanup document and should deal only with cleanup. Anytime a National Park Service briefing statement about the NPS EIS and a letter from the governor of the state recommending the NPS EIS are included in this type of document, as they are in this one, then

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DOE had better well provide balance and input from other interests. Otherwise, this becomes a very biased document unworthy of the task for which it has been produced. Let's make this expedited response proposal truly a cleanup document and nothing else. I also have one further comment, it's a little pet peeve of mine. I used to work for a DOE contractor and we were enamored with acronyms and titles. I would recommend that, when documents like this are titled, that the title talk about what the proposal is about. Unless you are informed, you would never know that this document is a cleanup proposal. It's entitled expedited response proposal. For those of us who are interested in these documents in the future, let's title these things in a way that we know right off what they are about.

JG: Do we have another comment? Be sure to identify yourself.

JC: My name is Jim Curty, I'm from Mattawa. I mentioned to you the legal agreement that was entered into in the use of that land to AEC. You claim that you had no knowledge of it. The copy was sent to the gentleman over here on the end. In reference to the copy of the actually signed agreement, it's a matter of legal record in the Grant County courthouse, on the ownership. You people were supposed to have that. The second item is you entered into the record a governors letter which is the governor letter. Why didn't you enter the resolution by all of the thirty representatives and senators of Eastern part of Washington as a document of that too? You should try and give equal balance to the statement. Then I would ask that you would enter that resolution into it and be part of it also. Give a fair shake to everybody concerned. You have described the area as it was mentioned here, it should be described the same way in all of the things because it was most confusing, this item here on the hearing. We are only talking really about 400 acres, right? Why don't you take those 400 acres put a fence around it and release the other 85,000 acres to the

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farmers for farming. You only borrowed the land in the first place and you agreed to return it and the land that is under contract was all set up for irrigation blocks and that is shown in several maps that we could supply you a copy of. It shows the different irrigation blocks and each of those blocks was assigned a part of the cost of the Columbia Basin development project. It says in that contract that you will repay that portion of it if the land goes for any other use. We need the land back in the possession of the county for farms and farming area as all around is done. The main water canals are in, we need a little bit of additional water, but the main lines are in there for the farming. We don't want it to go exclusively to any one group. Thank you.

JG: Anyone else want to comment? Let me make sure there isn't somebody who wants to speak for the first time, and then you will get your chance.

NV: Unclear.

JG: Would you come up to the microphones so that we can record your comments.

MM: My name is Martin McKeely. I've lived here since 1967. I came into the country in 1938 over here at Cool Creek. Farmed a land over there and this wildlife business they are talking about all this wildlife. I've never seen a goose or a duck or anything down here at Hanford until it quieted down because that was all farm land. Fruit trees and everything it's the best in the country. Out here, wildlife got this out here, I haven't seen a bird out there for the last thirty years. I don't know why they want to turn it back to wildlife and all that for when the farmers can make better of it and have birds and everything. As far as cleanup out here, I hope they don't give it to the first man that comes along to make a million off of it. We have been paying through the nose for taxes and everything in this Grant county for years. We haven't got much back. Farmers have but they are still paying through the nose for

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taxes. School taxes has gone clear out of sight. If they are going to clean this up I'd like to see them clean it up as cheap as they can. I'm for cleaning it up but cheap, it isn't all that bad. The worst place is up there on top of the mountain. Up there in what they call the saddle, down over that there isn't enough poison and buckets and tin cans and stuff dumped down in there you couldn't haul it out of there in three weeks. You have the rest of the same type of stuff buried, but it doesn't have that much junk around it. I hope you get it done for populace out here for as cheap as you can not make some millionaire a contractor. That's all I have to say.

JG: Anyone else want to comment for the first time? If not why don't you come on back up.

NV: My comments are really just blunt and...

JG: If you would come to the mike so that we can record it.

NV: As the economic development director for the county, I guess what disturbs me more than anything in this whole process that this whole process I do believe to some degree has been victimized. Was never supposed to occur in this county. We were never supposed to know that this was going to go on and happen and someday we were going to wake up. If it hadn't been for a few that picked up on what was going on, I don't think we would even be having this meeting today. I think that irritates me more than anything. As a taxpayer and somebody who has paid a lot of money and has spent time with the government, that can sit here and listen to governmental agencies begin to dictate a policy to a region of any part of the United States, I don't care if it's on another slope or wherever because some bureaucrats decided to make a decision back in Washington DC that was going to be exclusive of the people. I bet there is not one farmer here that is probably part of that original report. I know that PUD was part of it but with exception of the PUD

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and a few other people I don't think anybody even knew what was going on until somebody stumbled across what was going on. I don't think that is the way that this process should work in the United States. It shouldn't work in Grant county that way and it shouldn't work that way in Mattawa, because these people have been waiting to get tax monies back for years. With an agreement that indicated that that's the way it was going to come back. Somebody changed the rules, you can't find that person any more because it's like a bar of lard it's all over the place nobody accepts any responsibility. This agency or this group has a right for answers. This is not an issue that should be debated in Seattle. It ticks me off to find out that there are more people turning out for some of these meetings in Seattle that don't know anything about this area trying to make decisions for us on behalf of the state and federal government that have never been here with exception of a handful that continue to migrate from Seattle over here that want to protect certain elements. I don't think anybody here would ever deny cultural elements being preserved, once they are identified. Culture is part of our society, farming is part of our society. I don't think anybody here in an and/or situation that one has to be eliminated as a result of the other. Fish, wildlife. I was down and was privileged to be able to take a tour through the white bluffs and the old city of Hanford. There is a big herd of deer, and for the hunters with some of the biggest racks you have ever seen that were ever preserved to roam that land. I was amazed. I was amazed to see the wildlife that is on that reservation already. You and I don't see it unless you get a pass and have a privilege to take that visit. The culture of what the white bluffs represented and the old stage station and the old indian supply station and the military supply station that occurred through that area. I think should be recreated through culture. I think we ought to know about what the value of that whole area was, before it was what it is today. I don't think it has to add to the sacrifice of potential farm use. Sorry to take so much time up but I mean this is something that unfortunately when its all said and done we are probably going to wonder

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what happened and why it happened. It sure isn't going to be because there is going to be group of people here that aren't going to let this group know. We are upset about what is going on and the process. We feel that we have been eliminated from the start from a process that snowballed way past us. It isn't a directive to any one of you that are doing your jobs, that have been ordered to do your jobs the way you are doing them. These people know how to manage their land and they just want their land back.

JG: Anyone else want to comment?

JP: I'm Jim Pritchard from Ephrata. I think I need to follow up on what Jerry just said. We are not being singled out here in this area. I think Jerry knows that too. Any of you that read the lands rights newsletter or similar publications, knows that this sort of thing that Jerry just talked about, has happened a lot of places in the United States. That says that we have got to be vigilant, we've got to work with Congressman Inslee and see that the right thing happens.

NV: Thank you, we have heard the Walluc 2000 plan referred to several times. This is a plan that was designed by some of our young farmers that are living in this area. Citizens of this area, and it has been endorsed by the county commissioners and by all of the elected officials in these four counties. It's a very well thought out plan that really does offer something for everyone. It identifies which land can be farmed, which land would best be suited for wildlife habitat, there are some draws out here where there is some brows for deer. Deer don't eat grass and they don't eat sagebrush which is what is in the rest of this area without water on it. They certainly like alfalfa. The plan states that indian tribal burial grounds should be left untouched, that the river should be left free flowing through the Hanford reach with no new dams and no dredging. We think this plan is well rounded and has something for everyone. Another thing that we have heard mentioned several times

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tonight is a letter that was written by the governor to congressman Inslee. It was inserted in the back in the appendix of this plan that we are studying here tonight. What prompted it first, the first thing we saw was when the governor floated the river with the environmental groups and went on national television saying he wanted this land to look as it did 1500 years ago. There is a lot of history that has taken place in 1500 years. In this letter it says it is the position of the state of Washington that this stretch of the Columbia river shall be designated a wild and scenic river and all of the 90,000 acres north and east of the Columbia river shall be designated a wildlife preserve to be managed by the US fish and wildlife service. He also stated that he would propose to include all the lands along the river currently in private ownership. This is probably what got us all moving on this. We've had a number of comments about Grant County PUD, public utility district has built, owns, and maintains two hydroelectric dams on the Columbia River. They also own a fish hatchery in conjunction with one of the facilities. They have been required to spill great quantities of water at times to enable fingerling salmon to escape. They also maintain fish ladders and fish counting at these facilities. There are many salmon spawning beds below the lower dam in that free flowing section of the river, which is the primary reason that we all agree that this stretch of the river should remain undeveloped. However, the US Fish and Wildlife Service is doing a tremendous disservice to this entire ecosystem by encouraging such non-indigenous birds as pelicans which are feeding on the fingerling salmon, both in the spawning beds and below the dams, as these fish are being spilled. They will tell you that the pelicans eat scrap fish, but I have watched them. When the river is just black with those fingerling salmon, they scoop them up by the bucket full. We feel that the Fish and Wildlife Service should be required to eliminate or relocate these pelicans immediately. The spilling of that much water reduces both generating capacity and irrigation capacity and it seems ludicrous to destroy the very purpose for which this spilling is taking place while threatening to make salmon

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another endangered species. Thank you very much. Thank you so much for coming and for your interest and for your comments. We have appreciated everyone of you.

JG: Anyone else want to make a comment? If not...

NV: Yes, thank you very much for coming and holding this here.

JG: Thank you, thank you. That's very nice, thank you. We wanted to...Walt Perro wanted to ask you a question before we close down and also Dave Nylander has something he wants to say.

WP: I should have mentioned this earlier during the topic I was on about the potential ordnance hazards out here. We have our ordnance experts here in the audience tonight and if anybody has any knowledge or knows someone who has knowledge of any potentials for ordnance out there, whether it be fired ordnance or ranges or whatever... we would sure like to here from you. We really need some data to go into this assessment that we are doing on the ordnance contamination. If you know anybody or know of it yourself, please come talk to me and I'll give you to the ordnance experts that are here tonight to talk to them. Thank you.

DN: On behalf of the three agencies I do appreciate everybody coming this evening. The comment period closes January 8th, if you have comments please get them in, if you know people who might want to comment, talk to them have them send those comments and the comments will be considered, addressed, responded to in the document. Your decision on how this should be done is important to us. I can't stress how much I appreciate the open interactive communication here. Although we are not responsible for the land use decisions, the clean up action here is driving land use. We recognize that, your comments on land use will be forwarded to the governors office. Thanks again for coming.

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JG: Thank you for coming, if you have any questions please feel free to come up and ask the folks. Thank you.

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