

**START**

FACT SHEET



# U.S. Department of Energy Draft Hanford Remedial Action Environmental Impact Statement and Comprehensive Land Use Plan

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is preparing a key document that will help shape the future of the 560-square-mile Hanford Site in Southeastern Washington State. The document is the Hanford Remedial Action Environmental Impact Statement and Comprehensive Land Use Plan (HRA EIS).

This fact sheet and others in this information package will help interested citizens take part in a public review and discussion of the Draft HRA EIS. Public comments will help DOE revise the draft and issue a Final HRA EIS.

*The HRA EIS will:*

1. Discuss future land uses and institutional controls (e.g., fences and deed restrictions) for the Hanford Site
2. Describe environmental impacts from cleanup actions DOE must take to allow those uses
3. Guide DOE decisions on future uses of Hanford Site facilities

## **DOE's Need to Prepare an EIS/Comprehensive Plan**

DOE will prepare the HRA EIS in accord with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). This Act requires federal agencies to analyze the potential impacts of proposed actions. DOE policy requires DOE Richland to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Hanford Site. The intent of NEPA and DOE policy is to avoid or limit adverse effects on people and the

Portions of the Hanford Site lie within Benton County and the City of Richland. State law requires both the County and the City to prepare Comprehensive Land Use Plans.

The HRA EIS provides information and analyses of a range of future land-use choices. The intent is to help decision makers, including the public, understand and compare the environmental impacts of choices and cleanup actions on people and the environment.

The HRA EIS will not make site-specific decisions regarding cleanup technologies and actions. Those decisions will be in accord with two federal laws: the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.

DOE's Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates future land uses and needed restrictions at the Hanford Site for the next 50 years. The Draft Comprehensive Plan describes different future land uses, or "alternatives." The HRA EIS presents information to help decision makers understand the recommended land-use designations in the Plan.

## **Background**

In 1992, DOE Richland launched a public "scoping" process to define the breadth of issues the HRA EIS should cover. Public meetings in Portland, Spokane, Pasco, and Seattle gathered citizens' views on scoping questions. DOE's scoping process also included the creation of and input from the Hanford Future Site Uses Working Group. The Working Group included representatives from labor, environmental, governmental, tribal, agricultural, economic development, and citizen interest groups.

The Working Group divided the Hanford Site into six geographic areas. The HRA EIS deals with future land uses for all six of the areas. It also deals with potential remediation impacts for four of the six.

For those four geographic areas to be remediated, the HRA EIS defines three levels of public access to Hanford land: unrestricted, restricted, and exclusive. Unrestricted means the land is safe for any human use. Restricted means contamination precludes some human uses. Exclusive means access will be limited and strictly controlled because of potential health risks.

1. The Columbia River - Unrestricted and Restricted
2. Reactors on the River - Unrestricted and Restricted
3. Central Plateau - Exclusive
4. All Other Areas - Restricted

DOE finished cleanup in the North Slope (Wahluke Slope) and the Fitzner/Eberhardt Arid Lands Ecology (ALE) Reserve. Both fit the alternative for unrestricted and are included in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Description of Alternatives**

Under each alternative, cleanup reduces risks to levels that protect human health and the environment. However, the methods to reduce risks differ. In developing the alternatives, DOE made two assumptions. One, risk reduction for unrestricted land use would be achieved mainly through waste removal. Two, for restricted and exclusive uses, lower risks would be achieved by restricted access, waste removal, and/or other engineering and controls.

Information in the Draft HRA EIS will support active public involvement in the HRA EIS review. The public will help DOE make choices on alternatives and implement a prudent Comprehensive Plan for the Hanford Site.

### **Public Involvement**

**A public comment period for the HRA EIS starts September 13, 1996 and ends November 15, 1996. A public information meeting is scheduled to be held on October 1, 1996 at 6:30 in the Shilo Inn, Richland, Washington, followed by a public hearing being held on October 17, 1996 at 6:30 in the Shilo Inn. Other public forums are being scheduled in Washington and Oregon.**

Written comments may be submitted during the comment period to the addressees listed below. All public comments will be considered in making the final decision.

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The Draft HRA EIS is available at the information repositories listed below, on the internet at <http://www.hanford.gov/eis/hraeis/hraeis.htm>, or on CD-ROM upon request.

### **Information Repositories**

#### **PORTLAND**

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

#### **RICHLAND**

U.S. Department of Energy Reading Room  
Washington State University  
100 Sprout Road, Room 130 West  
(509) 376 8583  
ATTN: Terri Traub

#### **SEATTLE**

University of Washington  
Suzzallo Library  
Government Publications Division  
Box 35290  
(206) 543 4664  
ATTN: Eleanor Chase

#### **SPOKANE**

Gonzaga University  
Foley Center  
Tri-Party Public Information Repository  
E. 502 Boone  
(509) 328 4220, Ext 3844  
ATTN: Tim Fuhrman