



Confederated Tribes and Bands
of the Yakima Indian Nation

0074758

Established by the
Treaty of June 9, 1855

March 9, 1994

Mr. John Wagoner, Manager
Richland Field Office
Department of Energy
P.O. Box 550
Richland, WA 99352

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Dear Mr. Wagoner:

On February 17, 1994, Mike Bauer attended a meeting of the CERCLA natural resources trustees at Hanford. This was the fourth such meeting and a clear turning point in the relationship between the trustees and DOE.

Mr. Bauer informs me that John Bascietto and Bob Holt did an excellent job in clearing the air with their open and frank discussions about the statutory provisions pertinent to the trusteeship. It is Mr. Bauer's opinion that the trustees may now be able to work with DOE, instead of constantly butting heads over basic understandings as to the group's direction and potential liabilities. He told me that the trustees and DOE personnel worked together to come up with common goals, and the entire relationship changed. None of the other meetings had gone like this one, as the participants found common ground. The adversarial atmosphere created by the statutory empowering language that requires a trustee to assess damages and make a claim was dispelled. Mr. Bauer believes there is now the potential to work with DOE in restoring natural resources, rather than using this law as a club to ensure remediation.

One final point Mr. Bauer brought up is a suggestion that Bob Holt made that DOE-RL develop a Division or Department of Natural Resources that would be responsible for the overall management of all of the natural resources within the boundaries of the Hanford Site. This is a proposal that we would heartily endorse.

If it would be of any assistance to you, we could discuss this further at what I hope will be regular meetings between the two of us. I look forward to meeting with you on some kind of a regular basis in the near future.

Sincerely,

Russell Jim, Manager
ER/WM Program
Yakama Nation

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Richland Operations Office