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Department of Ecology
NWP - Richland

06-ESQ-156

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Ms. Jane A. Hedges, Program Manager
Nuclear Waste Program
Washington State
Department of Ecology
3100 Port of Benton Blvd.
Richland, Washington 99354

Dear Ms. Hedges:

EXTENSION REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD TO DECEMBER 18, 2006

Reference: Ecology letter from J. A. Hedges to R. J. Schepens, ORP; K. A. Klein, RL; and W. S. Elkins, BNI, "Draft Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) Dangerous Waste Permit," dated October 4, 2006.

This letter requests the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) extend the public comment period for the referenced permit modification to December 18, 2006.

On October 4, 2006, Ecology issued a draft WTP dangerous waste permit for a 45-day public comment period (October 9, 2006, through November 27, 2006). While the draft permit was prepared in response to an application submitted by the permittees, it contains several additional new permit conditions prepared by Ecology that represent substantial changes to the project's current plans. For example, permit conditions related to Interim Disposal Facility waste acceptance and performance, incorporation of mechanical handling systems, suspension of vessel fabrication, maintaining the capability to install a technetium ion exchange system and a third Low-Activity Waste melter, and Ecology's plans to incorporate additional design media in the permit documenting the design of support systems all warrant careful consideration and evaluation. Accordingly, the permittees request Ecology extend the comment period three weeks until December 18, 2006, to allow the project additional time to evaluate these conditions.

Ms. Jane A. Hedges
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If you have any questions, please contact us, or your staff may contact Lori A. Huffman, ORP, (509) 376-0104 or Brad G. Erlandson, BNI, (509) 371-3826.


Roy J. Schepens, Manager
Office of River Protection


W. S. Elkins, Project Director
Bechtel National, Inc.

ESQ:LAH

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