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May 16, 1999

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Mr. Thomas W. Ferns
U.S. Dept of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550, MSIN HO-12
Richland, WA 99352-0550

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DOE-RL / DIS

Dear Mr. Ferns:

I am writing regarding the EIS for the Hanford Reach. I strongly support protecting the ecologically significant lands at Hanford, one of the last places in Eastern Washington with native shrub-steppe vegetation and wildlife.

I support the Preferred Alternative, but with some modifications. The surrounded DOE lands, including the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve, the McGee Ranch, the entire Wahluke Slope, the Hanford Reach and the Columbia River islands should be managed as a permanent National Wildlife Refuge. This would provide a large continuous area of protected lands surrounding Hanford. Additionally, there should be no agriculture, mining or livestock grazing allowed. This will allow long-term protection for these lands. To expedite a final decision on the management of uncontaminated lands, DOE should issue separate decisions for the above mentioned areas.

As we face placing more salmon runs on the Endangered Species list, it only makes sense to protect the Hanford Reach and the last undisturbed spawning grounds for the Chinook Salmon.

Thank you very much for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Geraldine M. Chambers
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