

HANFORD 2012:

Accelerating Cleanup and Shrinking the Site

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Richland Operations Office's approach to cleanup of the Hanford Site has changed. Today, we're harnessing our energy and determination to tackle three distinct "outcomes." Together, these outcomes represent a progress-oriented approach to cleanup that will protect the environment, maximize the return on the taxpayer's investment, and demonstrate our commitment to the community.

Embracing the priorities of our regulators, stakeholders, and area Tribal Nations — and understanding the absolute necessity to make real, visible progress sooner rather than later — we've reorganized our work and set our sights on completing key pieces of the Hanford cleanup by 2012. This will enable us to shrink the Hanford Site from 560 square miles to about 75 square miles.

Recognizing that some parts of Hanford cleanup are long term, this action plan lays out what we think is possible by 2012 and covers our strategies for:

- Restoring the Columbia River Corridor
- Transitioning the Central Plateau
- Preparing for the Future.

There is a distinct difference in our approach to each of these outcomes. In the River Corridor, the scope of work is well defined and we're clearly driving to complete most projects by 2012. In the Central Plateau, where waste treatment, storage, and disposal operations are expected to last for another 40 years, the plan is more strategic and long term. And finally, our section on preparing for the future lays out our guiding principles as we seek to support, but not lead, the local community's economic diversification efforts and derive the maximum taxpayer benefit from the nation's multi-billion dollar investment at Hanford.

While we can complete much of the work in the River Corridor by 2012, there are a few major items that will not be done. The first is cleanup of the 618-10 and 618-11 solid waste burial grounds. Located near the Energy Northwest complex, these sites will be remediated on a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved schedule that will be developed by 2002, but not completed until after 2012 because of safety issues and the technical complexity

of the project. We are monitoring these areas closely, and if we or our regulators determine sooner remediation should occur, we will.

The second issue is how to deal with groundwater contamination plumes. We have yet to make decisions on which plumes to remediate and which technologies to use. Until we do, we are containing or removing many sources that could further contaminate the groundwater. In addition, we are using various technologies to further restrict the plume flow or to remove contaminants from the plumes. The final plan for the plumes will involve an integrated effort between the DOE Richland Operations Office, the DOE Office of River Protection, the Environmental Protection Agency, the States of Washington and Oregon, the scientific community, area Tribal Nations, and other stakeholders.

There are several other items worth noting. The Secretary of Energy will make a final decision on the future of the Fast Flux Test Facility in January 2001 and that decision will be incorporated in the Hanford 2012 plan. Also, DOE will be working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, area Tribal Nations, and stakeholders to make land-use decisions within the Hanford Reach National Monument and other lands in the next two years. Finally, DOE will continue with a rigorous public involvement process, including steps required by the Tri-Party Agreement should we, in consultation with our regulators, find we need to change existing milestones.

How hard will it be to achieve the Hanford 2012 plan? We know it will be hard, but we believe we can do it. While large increases in funding beyond what's necessary for Hanford's other DOE office, the Office of River Protection, to build and operate a tank waste vitrification plant are not realistic, we will be working to get moderately increased levels of funding. A critical part of this plan will be to work closely with our regulators and others to factor Hanford's budget realities into further planning and commitments. With clear expectations, smart contracting, and supportive workers, regulators and regional communities, we can and will accelerate cleanup and shrink the Hanford Site.



RICHLAND OPERATIONS OFFICE

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