

Cleanup, Constraints and Challenges to Hanford Cleanup Workshop III

Background:

On January 25, 2002, Hanford leaders met to continue discussions on the future of Hanford cleanup in a workshop at the Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Washington. This was the third workshop held in the past seven months to discuss the leading constraints that hamper progress with Hanford Site cleanup and to identify opportunities to move cleanup forward more efficiently and cost-effectively in the future. The first workshop was held June 26, 2001. At the first workshop participants agreed unanimously to collectively tackle four key issues that have the potential to significantly enable Hanford cleanup progress. Those issues include:

- Development of a collective and widely accepted vision of the future end state for Hanford, including the areas where such agreement largely already exists and those areas where the vision still needs major work.
- Renewed commitment to the Tri-Party Agreement as the governing document to Hanford cleanup. Contracts and other important cleanup mechanisms will be aligned with the TPA. The procedures embodied in the TPA provide the flexibility to accommodate the widely accepted vision of the future end state for Hanford.
- Evaluation and appropriate reduction of unnecessary layers of requirements and procedures being applied to cleanup activities.
- Development of an "investment strategy" to ensure national support for vital Hanford cleanup activities.

Progress Between June 2001 and January 2002:

At the October 5, 2001 workshop (Workshop II) a commitment was made to develop a path forward for resolving major issues on future endstates and with issues associated with alignment of contracts and baselines to the TPA. Key activities became focused on:

- **100 Area and 300 Area River Corridor Cleanup:** An Agreement-in-Principle [AIP] for cleanup of the River Corridor was signed on Oct. 31, 2001. TPA changes are to be complete by April 30, 2002. Finalizing the AIP ensures that the scope and the schedule of this cleanup activity result in alignment between TPA milestones and the River Corridor Request for Proposal for which DOE now has an open procurement.
- **200 Area Central Plateau:** An Agreement-in-Principle [AIP] was signed on December 26, 2001. Negotiations are expected to be completed by January 31, 2002, with public comment to follow. This AIP aligns non-tank waste cleanup and remediation schedules with the River Corridor and the River Protection Project efforts. For example, key 200 Area facilities are needed to support cleanup of the River Corridor.
- **PFP Negotiations:** Negotiations for an AIP for completing PFP cleanup are expected to be completed by February 28, 2002. Public comment is scheduled to

begin on March 15, 2002. This AIP transitions the PFP and closes existing RCRA-regulated units under TPA provisions for key facilities that will undergo D&D.

- **M-91 Negotiations:** Negotiations are currently in progress on this activity and include the majority TRU related milestones within the M-91 series.
- **ORP Recovery Plan:** The ORP Recovery Plan is being revised by ORP to reflect Ecology's November 16, 2001 comments on the plan. This Recovery Plan will cover the actions needed to maintain the December 2007 hot commissioning of the Waste Treatment Plant.

Workshop III: Targets of Opportunity for Near-Term Action:

At this most recent workshop held January 24th, "targets of opportunity" were identified for immediate action. These "targets" represent significant life cycle savings, schedule accelerations and/or better ways of doing business. The 5 targets include:

- **Cs/Sr Capsule Disposition:** A multi-agency team will be formed to examine alternatives to the current baseline plan of vitrifying the 1936 Cs/Sr capsules that currently reside in underwater storage at WESF. The intent of this activity will be to examine options that reduce near-term storage costs, avoid longer-term processing and vitrification costs, and avoid the hazards inherent in repackaging materials that are currently contained in a "good" waste form.
- **Tank Closure Demonstration Project:** Current plans would close the first SST in 2014. A joint ORP-Ecology team has been chartered to initially develop a work plan for conducting tank closure demonstrations and determining the requirements for establishing tank closure. The intent is to operationalize the closure process as currently articulated in the TPA M-45 and Appendix H.
- **ORP Baseline Opportunities:** A joint ORP-Ecology team has been chartered to examine opportunities for enhancing the ORP baseline through alternate low-activity waste (LAW) treatment and disposal methods. The intent is to examine possible means for completing the ORP mission as quickly as possible while avoiding the very large investment in a second vitrification plant.
- **Integrated Groundwater Monitoring, Assessment and Protection:** Develop an integrated approach to groundwater monitoring on the Central Plateau. This approach will define the most efficient approach to meeting the monitoring requirements of RCRA, CERCLA, and AEA. It will ensure that monitoring information is defined and collected to inform decisions -- source remediation and eventually groundwater remediation.
- **Central Plateau Vision and Strategy:** Discussion on this fifth target of opportunity had to be deferred due to time constraints. This activity is focused on developing an overall strategy for making CP decisions that would ensure consistency, protection of human health and the environment, and efficiency.

Participants in the workshop included senior officials and representatives from the Department of Energy's Richland Operations Office and Office of River Protection, Washington State Departments of Ecology and Health, Oregon Office of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, and Hanford Site contractors.