

State of the Site Meeting
Wednesday, December 12, 2007
Hood River, Oregon

Opening comments made by Ken Niles, Oregon Department of Energy. State of Oregon has four Hanford cleanup principles:

1. Protect the Columbia River
2. Cleanup groundwater
3. Do no further harm
4. Move as quickly as possible.

**These are the comments the Tri-Party Agreement agency
decision makers heard in Hood River**

1. There are a lot of struggles; delays are coming. Cleanup at Hanford affects the Columbia River. The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) is tired. Believe the agencies (USDOE, Washington State Department of Ecology, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) are fighting a hard battle, but don't believe the funding is going down. We are here to protect Mother Earth, the Columbia River. The agencies are not proud of the delays. Something is wrong with the delays – no notice was sent out about the delays
2. 500 billion gallons of radioactive liquids were dumped in the central plateau. 600 waste sites have transuranic (TRU) waste and there are no plans to retrieve these sites
3. The Parties propose a 12 year delay for the Waste Treatment Plant; 19 year delay to retrieve high-level waste tanks; 22 year delay for the single-shell tanks – tanks will be in the ground for 100 years!
4. The recent Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) negotiation meetings were an opportunity to make changes. The USDOE knows they have problems with the TPA. They haven't negotiated TRU waste nor 618-10 & 11 milestones. The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant will be closed by the time Hanford gets around to sending their TRU waste. Continued delays with single-shell tank retrieval, need to build more double-shell tanks.
5. The USDOE is the "Department of Bombs." It has too many focuses. Out of an annual \$22 billion budget only \$5.2 billion is spent on cleanup and that is down from \$7 billion. We were told when the other (environmental management) sites were cleaned up more money would come to Hanford. It never happened.
6. There is a money shortfall, because the focus is lost. There is a loss of focus, because USDOE has too many other internal priorities (at USDOE Headquarters) like the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) and the Greater than Class C (GTCC) waste.
7. GTCC sticks it to mother earth! Now proposing to bury waste in shallow landfills at Hanford. Why Hanford?
8. The Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is to assess all the waste in the ground and all potential impacts. USDOE wants this EIS so they can bring more waste into Hanford. USDOE failed three times to complete an EIS. How can anyone propose to dump more waste at Hanford? USDOE cannot

- propose delays. We've been working the Hanford cleanup issue for 20 years. If we keep going down the path of delays, there will be no light at the end of the tunnel.
9. Out of crisis comes change. What is needed is a focus only on Hanford cleanup. USDOE changes its focus every four years. Propose we form a Hanford Northwest Cleanup Commission, which has a single focus. The commission would be made up of representatives from the tribes, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Oregon and Washington. They would set how clean is clean values, which USDOE has been debating for the last 20 years. Cleanup costs continue to grow with each passing year. The longer we wait, the more it will cost to cleanup Hanford.
 10. The commission would report to a Board comprised of skilled contract management professionals. They would identify what was going to get done and how it would be done. With a focus and clear goal the outcome would be accelerated cleanup at Hanford. There will not be any more successes unless we take control. It is not about USDOE individuals, it is about the management structure. Tonight (Hood River meeting) is a first step in a new direction for Hanford cleanup. We can get it done.
 11. Do appreciate the agencies coming and all the work that is getting done at Hanford. This is the third Hanford public meeting held this year in Hood River. I have two messages: 1) accelerate the timeline, don't delay. Please tell Governor Gregoire that delaying 5-10 years is completely unacceptable for those living in the Gorge; and 2). don't bring more waste until you clean up Hanford. The two messages are connected. The Bush administration through GNEP proposes to bring more waste to Hanford. What happened to our messages? Are we fools? We want acceleration, don't want extra waste. The money going to GNEP could be used to accelerate Hanford cleanup. This must be changed. Put pressure on political leadership to make that change.
 12. It's always about money. It is not about money, but a matter of priorities. There is a lot of money going to fund the Iraq war. A lesson learned in kindergarten – clean up after yourself. This mess is 65 years old. Doubt it will really be cleaned up by 2052.
 13. Sounds like the waste is already seeping into the river, it's an emergency! Funding Hanford cleanup should be a high priority. How much is needed to cleanup Hanford? I think the contractors are milking it. If they are not cleaning it up, then fire them and hire new ones.
 14. The concept of oversight and accountability are important. Cleanup does not appear to be a very accountable process. Increase accountability and public involvement in communication.
 15. Groundwater (contaminated) is seeping into the Columbia River. The top priority is to protect the River.
 16. Do not know if you have the money needed to cleanup Hanford. Congress sets funding priorities. If we as a community want money to go to Hanford, we need to get our community to tell Congress we want money to go to towards cleanup.
 17. Nuclear waste is not just toxic, but it is lethal in geologic time. Clean it up now.
 18. Consider nuclear power. They had 60+ years to refine the process. Still see concerns (nightmares) after 60 years. Tell them no more nuclear power plants. Need to cleanup; do not let the government create more (waste).
 19. Can't keep putting this off to the future. This is insane denial. Let's not let this government create any more waste.

20. Who has the authority to get this job done? What is the role of the Secretary of Energy? Need to find the continuity of the authority.
21. Insufficient Hanford budget is not the fault of Congress. USDOE failed to ask for the money they are obligated to request. You (USDOE) are liable. If USDOE does not ask for the money, it makes it nearly impossible for the citizens of Washington and Oregon to get more money. USDOE broke their promise to return money to the larger (environmental management) sites after the smaller sites were cleaned up. USDOE's budget is down 25%. If DOE does not ask for the money, it is hard for the stakeholders to fight for it. Our congressional delegation fights to add money to the cleanup budget. Ecology, are you going to ask USDOE to ask for the money or go to court? Who will be held in contempt?
22. How much of the cleanup budget goes to cleanup? How much goes to security? All costs will increase whether or not there is a delay. That is scary.
23. It seems like a light turnout at the meeting considering the gravity of the issue. If the public was informed there wouldn't be a place (big enough) to hold them all. Bringing about real change is a struggle against forgetting. We need to reach out to our relatives in other parts of the county and implore them to lobby their representatives. Perhaps we need to be writing sharper letters to the Department heads or forming letter-writing groups. We need to motivate our children and get them to write letters.
24. Letting the deadlines slide is unacceptable. Need to work hard to keep the TPA deadlines.
25. To the state of Washington: no more waste; cleanup now; get more funding. The use of the courts is ok. Someone is responsible for the money not coming. Take (USDOE) to court and get the funding. Use fines for timeframes not met. Let's put some teeth behind what the Governor can do to make this happen.
26. It seems all these years the Tribes have been working with USDOE, and the States of Washington and Oregon. All the money and time spent. There needs to be a product or result from all this work. It is frustrating when that product and result is only partially or not obtained at all. Tribes have been very patient with USDOE. We've been very patient in reminding them of their responsibilities to the tribes, particularly the resources USDOE is responsible for. We will continue to remind them. It's like any resource, if your livelihood is put at risk or jeopardized, you will do what you can to protect it. Often politicians don't realize the importance until the resource is gone (corporate officials, also.). Some corporate officials and politicians rather not deal with protecting something they know anything about. It is sad. I have generations before me that depended on the same resource we depend on today. Generations after me will depend on the same resource. We have a number of laws to protect these resources. Our efforts are what will be needed. My constituents tell me to protect the resources that we depend upon. This is where USDOE (and corporations) lack the foresight. They are not thinking about the resource or its importance or living without that resource or the consequences of that. We learn from memory, repeat that memory so we do not forget the history. If one does not know the importance of a resource, it is not a priority. People in USDOE, the State, federal agencies do not care about that resource – (they) lack foresight and looking back at history. Hope USDOE can establish some foresight – more than 20 years. This generation is living

at risk not only at Hanford, but everywhere (e.g., global warming). We have to work with each other to protect what is important to all of us. We have to work with one another to protect what is important to future generations. A good example of people coming together with a common voice, saying the same thing was “no more waste shipments to Hanford.” USDOE decisions will affect future generations. USDOE decisions need to be made in conjunction with us. Not just a job. Need to be part of the process. Cleanup is forever. We need to have a decision and be a part of that decision concerning cleanup. By you being here tonight shows this is important to you and we need measurable cleanup.

27. Like to believe the agencies care about the public. The stakeholders worked months to prepare for these public involvement meetings. Feel the (TPA) agencies do a dismal job at public involvement. In Seattle and Portland, very few people said they received notice about these meetings. The agencies say they want our input, they say we should write, but they don't tell us who to write and you don't give us any details. The agencies' mailings do not inform in layman's terms what the issues are. Why must public interest groups address these issues? It would be nice to know one month in advance before the next round of meetings rather than one to two weeks in advance. Would like to see 20 new faces at the next meeting that did not come because of the public interest groups.
28. Made agreements that are broken. Contractor costs are high. Why are contractors not fined to make cleanup happen? Great about all the groundwater cleanup work that has happened. Workers are risking their lives. Appreciate that. The tanks are leaking now. If they are left for another 20-40 years, they will leak more. They (the tanks) are up on the Central Plateau and leaking (down). How is the groundwater being protected? The whole place needs to be cleaned up to protect the groundwater. This work cannot be put off for another 20 years. It is ridiculous how long cleanup is taking. Only took 10 years to make the mess but over 50 years to clean it up. Cleanup groundwater as soon as possible. Message to the Governor: Need accountability in a manner that makes sense and is in our lifetime.
29. Been through four, five, six contractors. Talked about letting new contracts. Want to encourage USDOE to incentivize its contractors to get the costs down. USDOE can influence this.
30. Do you (the agencies) consider this an emergency? I've heard tonight about chromium contamination, tanks leaking, and the TPA milestone delays. If an emergency, how does this affect the way you approach the problems? Chromium is an emergency. Some things can wait longer.
31. The tearing down of some buildings is not critical. They can wait. Want Hanford cleaned up. Been working on this issue for 20 years. Inconceivable. Cannot wait another 19 years. There are large storage tanks that would not withstand a “seven” earthquake. By 2047, my great grandchildren will be too old to enjoy the River.
32. Thank you for all the times you have come to Hood River. Things are better at Hanford, because you have been coming. Idea of postponing cleanup is like seeing a house on fire and you're going to cut down on the water bill. This is an emergency. Some are an emergency waiting to happen. Act like you have an emergency. People working on Hanford have the best intentions. But USDOE, as an entity, is undertaking diametrically opposed tasks - nuclear energy vs. cleanup. Need to take

- back that people are really upset. People eat fish, swim in the river. It is important that cleanup happens on the timeline set. We know that many in USDOE are trying to do the right thing. Thank you. Need you to keep fighting for us. Keep it up.
33. If you have had enough delays, broken promises, raise your hands. Propose that the State start putting USDOE officials in jail. Time to see people go to jail. No more delays.
 34. No one has mentioned presidential election. Need to find a president that has stewardship and caring for our country. Need a president that knows there is a Northwest and it is important.
 35. The idea that money is scarce for this important work is ridiculous. If the government took a tiny portion of the money spent on the military, it could cleanup Hanford. You (USDOE) may not have immense power to do things fast, but you do have some. Do what you know is right and we will support you.
 36. Washington State: Tell the governor this is an emergency. Declare Hanford a disaster area; because this is a disaster and we would get the funding. If the governor needs to take USDOE to court, I would back her 100%.
 37. EPA: I looked at the groundwater document and saw the words practicable and reasonable related to cleanup of the groundwater. When is cleaning up the groundwater not practicable? Are you (EPA) setting the stage for Hanford to become a sacrifice zone where the land could never be used or lived on, where no food could be grown?
 38. Been to meetings for the last 18 years. I have the same message “get this done,” “clean it up.” Not need more money, but greater efficiency. Do the same thing that is not working. No one is being held accountable. Unacceptable. Who oversees USDOE? If it is the President, maybe we need to impeach President Bush and Vice-President Cheney. Need to get behind the new tactic, the Hanford Northwest Cleanup Commission. We are the people who have long-term investments and won't stop fighting for it. Is it really feasible to have this Northwest Commission? The main thing is gaining efficiencies.
 39. We know how clean is clean, but USDOE wants to ship more waste. There are all these representatives but the commission would filter through all of the garbage. There would be a Board (hired guns who manage huge conflicts) who would answer to the Commission and oversee the Hanford contractors. There is a \$5 billion shortfall anticipated over the next 10 years. Why? Because we haven't been efficient, there is a lack of focus and not defined how clean is clean. The Cleanup Commission can start immediately. Ecology could sue USDOE and as part of a settlement agreement the commission would be established. When the world learns of how bad it is, the money will be there. When we share our vision and efficiencies, the money will be there.
 40. Cleanup is a game we keep paying for. I am tired of being nice. We now have radioactive fish. Why is the salmon count down? Because contamination has now gone all the way down the river and down the coast? I would be so ashamed if I worked at Hanford. I don't believe there are any tanks left in the ground. Are you still using cribs and ditches to dispose of waste?

41. We are angry and sick to our stomachs. I would like to believe you (USDOE) are honest. We don't need medical isotopes. We can get all we need from Canada. What would your grandmothers think of you?
42. I am frustrated and tired of coming to meetings. You who are working to cleanup Hanford, I truly appreciate your efforts. When you get a directive to accept more poison (waste) do you hang your head? I would like you to think of organizing to agree not to accept more waste. You can affect change.
43. Have had emergency events (Washington floods, Katrina). The money was found. Perhaps could go to FEMA and get the money.
44. Hanford was created for building the bomb. Why not sue the Department of Defense? They were responsible.
45. Oak Ridge is a comparable cleanup site, why not have a competition to see which site could get cleaned up the quickest? A little competition might be an incentive.
46. Science got us into this mess; science needs to get us out. Believe nature is strong
47. Want to hear back on what you (the agencies) have gained from these State of the Site hearings. I haven't heard anything to make me confident. Don't believe my confidence has been rebuilt from tonight's meeting. I feel really hopeless.