



Hanford Update

August
2002

A bulletin on Hanford cleanup and compliance

New Manager for the Office of River Protection

Roy Schepens became the new manager of the Department's Office of River Protection effective June 24, 2002, replacing outgoing manager Harry Boston, who accepted a position in private industry. As manager, Schepens is responsible for overseeing the River Protection Project, which will retrieve and treat Hanford's 53 million gallons of highly radioactive tank waste stored in aging underground tanks located seven miles from the Columbia River. The tank waste will be pumped to the planned Waste Treatment Plant, where it will be vitrified into a stable glass waste form. Roy has identified the following as his top priorities:



- Conduct safe operations
- Comply with the vitrification plant baseline and start construction
- Accelerate compliant tank closure demonstration
- Improve tank farm authorization basis, maintenance and reliability
- Explore alternative technologies to improve performance
- Pursue collaborative relationships with regulators and stakeholders and consult with area Tribes

Schepens was formerly the Assistant Manager for High-Level Waste and Materials and Facilities Stabilization at the Department's Savannah River Site.

Nick Ceto Named Manager of EPA's Hanford Project Office

Prior to joining EPA's Hanford Project Office, Nick served as Regional Mining Coordinator for the Pacific Northwest Office of EPA in Seattle. As Mining Coordinator, Mr. Ceto provided technical and policy consulting services for mining projects throughout the Northwest. In addition, Mr. Ceto served as co-chair of EPA's National Hardrock Mining Workgroup, the National Abandoned Mine Lands Team, and the National Lead Sites Workgroup. His experience in hazardous waste management and risk assessment led to assignments providing consulting services to a number of foreign governments, including Russia, Hungary, Ghana, Mexico, Trinidad, Tobago, and Thailand. Nick's work also included serving as project manager for Superfund sites in Idaho, Washington, Florida and Georgia.

Before joining EPA Region 10, Nick worked for CH2M Hill in Atlanta, EPA Region 4 in Atlanta, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Vermont. He has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies and a Masters in Science in Natural Resource Planning, both from the University of Vermont.



1-800-321-2008

Call the Hanford Cleanup Line to request information about Tri-Party Agreement cleanup and compliance activities at the Hanford Site.

Hanford Cleanup Line



Tri-Party Agreement

Tank Waste Remediation System Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

The Department of Energy's Office of River Protection is proposing modifications to the tank waste program. The proposed changes are:

1. Vitrify low-activity tank waste as monoliths (a single encased piece of glass) in a canister, rather than cullets (gravel-sized pieces of glass).
2. Permanently dispose of the vitrified (glass) monolith in six regulatory compliant trenches versus long-term storage in concrete vaults.

A 45-day public comment period to scope the draft proposal began on July 8 and ends on August 26, 2002. A public scoping meeting for the Supplemental EIS will be held on August 20, 2002, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the Red Lion Hanford House, Benton-Franklin Room, 802 George Washington Way, Richland, Washington. Regional public meetings on the draft proposal will be offered this winter.

To review the Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register on July 8, visit the Hanford website at <http://www.hanford.gov/netlib/eis.asp>. Written comments postmarked by August 26, 2002 can be sent to Ms. Gae Neath, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection, P.O. Box 450, Mail Stop H6-60, Richland, WA 99352. Or e-mail: Gae_M_Neath@rl.gov.

Hanford's Waste Treatment Plant Gets the "Go-Ahead" from the State

The Washington State Department of Ecology approved start of construction on the first phase of the Waste Treatment Plant that will stabilize millions of gallons of highly radioactive nuclear waste at Hanford by turning it into a safer glass form.

Following public comment on three draft permits related to the treatment facility, the state issued two air emissions permits, and a temporary authorization to proceed with construction while the dangerous waste permit was being finalized.

The temporary authorization was possible due to very few - less than 50 - comments received on the draft dangerous waste permit and none of the issues raised would have significantly changed the permit conditions.

The temporary authorization (followed by the dangerous waste permit) allow for construction of the first phase of the tank waste treatment facility. The first phase includes pouring "structural" concrete for the floors and walls of two of the three buildings that will make up the treatment complex.

The air permits, which regulate emissions of chemicals, toxic air pollutants, and Nitrogen Oxide Compounds (NOCs) were signed by state officials on July 8, 2002. The temporary authorization to proceed with construction was also issued July 8, 2002 with the final dangerous waste permit expected to be issued later in the month.

Approval of the permits and the temporary authorization to proceed allows the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of River Protection and its contractor, Bechtel National Inc., to begin building the waste treatment facility more than five months ahead of the deadline required by the Tri-Party Agreement.

Publications

A continuing goal of the Tri-Parties is to improve the readability of Hanford Site publications. These publications include the *Hanford Update* newsletter, fact and focus sheets, and other publications. The Tri-Parties understand that providing accurate, up-to-date and descriptive information is fundamental for active participation by the public in Tri-Party Agreement decisions.

Draft Hanford Solid Waste Environmental Impact Statement

A 90-day public comment period began May 24 and will run through August 22, 2002 on the Draft Hanford Solid (Radioactive and Hazardous) Waste Program Environmental Impact Statement (HSW EIS). This draft EIS evaluates the impacts of storage, treatment and disposal of three waste types at Hanford: low-level waste (LLW), mixed low-level waste (MLLW), and post-1970 transuranic (TRU) waste.

Five public meetings are being held. Please see the calendar of events in this document for dates, times and locations of the meetings.

To obtain a copy of the draft Hanford Solid Waste EIS (800 pages), the summary (24 pages) or a CD-ROM, call the HSW EIS information line: 1-800-426-9414.

Provide comments on the EIS to Michael Collins, NEPA Document Manager, U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office, P.O. Box 550 (A6-38), Richland, WA 99352, FAX (509) 372-1926 or e-mail: solid_waste_eis_-_doe@rl.gov.

Get Involved

The next meeting of the **Hanford Advisory Board** will be held in Seattle at the Radisson Hotel Seattle Airport on September 5-6, beginning at 9:00 a.m. each day. Public comment periods are provided two times during each day of the meeting. The Board encourages the public to attend its meetings and would like to hear from you about the issues and concerns you have about cleanup at Hanford. For more specific information on the Board meeting, please contact Yvonne Sherman at 376-6216.

Copies of consensus advice from the Hanford Advisory Board are available on the Hanford web page at: <http://www.hanford.gov/boards/hab/advice/adviceindex.htm> or by contacting EnviroIssues at (509)-942-1906.

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Proposed Schedule for Deactivation of Hanford's Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF)

The Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) Agencies, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington State Department of Ecology, are completing negotiations on a proposed schedule to deactivate Hanford's Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF). The draft TPA change package will re-establish TPA milestones and target dates for the shutdown of FFTF over the next nine years.

The agencies are planning a 45-day public comment period on these proposed changes is tentatively scheduled to begin August 26, 2002.



Proposed Changes to Cleaning Up Hanford's Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP)

The Tri-Party Agencies completed negotiations in May 2002 on the draft Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) change package that brings PFP into TPA compliance. The proposed changes identify work activities and schedules to clean up the PFP facility and tear down most of its buildings over the next 14 years. Some of the proposed activities include:

- Complete repackaging of plutonium waste residues left over from processing and ship the waste to the Hanford Central Waste Complex by April 2004;
- Clean out plutonium left in equipment from past processing activities by September 2006;
- Clean up and tear down most of the remainder of the facilities by September 2016.

The agencies sought public input through a 45-day public comment period from June 17 through July 31, 2002.

The proposed changes are available for review on the website address: www.hanford.gov/tpa/changelist.htm.

More Info:

The U.S. Department of Energy manages the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington State. Hanford was established during World War II as part of the top secret Manhattan Project to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. Weapons material production was halted in the late 1980s. The Hanford Site is now engaged in the world's largest cleanup effort to deal with the legacy of radioactive and hazardous wastes that resulted from the plutonium production era. Hanford's cleanup program is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington State Department of Ecology under a long-term compliance contract called the Tri-Party Agreement. This agreement sets the framework and timelines for the cleanup work so that Hanford can meet current environmental standards.

More Documents Available to Those on Hanford Mailing List

The Hanford Advisory Board's Public Involvement and Communication Committee advised the Tri-Party Agencies to add National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) information to members of the public on the "highly interested" mailing list. There are two Tri-Party mailing lists maintained. The lists are tailored to different levels of interest on Hanford Site activities. They distinguish between 1) those individuals who are "highly interested" and would like to be involved with cleanup and compliance decision-making, and 2) those individuals on the "general list" who would only like to be informed about the Hanford Site activities.

Individuals on the "highly interested" list could receive 25 or more mailings per year including fact sheets, meeting notices and schedules, the bi-monthly Hanford Update newsletter, the monthly Hanford Happenings calendar and now NEPA information. NEPA ensures that environmental factors are given the same consideration as other factors in decision making by federal agencies.

Individuals on the "general" list primarily receive the bi-monthly Hanford Update newsletter and the monthly Hanford Happenings calendar.

If you would like your name added to either list, call the Hanford Cleanup Line at 1-800-321-2008 and specify your mailing list preference. If you would prefer to receive information electronically, please include your email address.

Hanford FY 2004 Public Budget Process Meetings

The FY 2004 Hanford public budget process focused less this year on actual budget numbers and more on the strategic initiatives outlined in the draft *Performance Management Plan for the Accelerated Cleanup of the Hanford Site*. The plan can be found at website address:
<http://www.hanford.gov/docs/hpmp/index.html>.

Over 50 public comments on the budget and plan were received by e-mail, in writing, and verbally at four regional meetings held during May and June. Comments fell into eight categories including: budget/funding; tanks; TPA/Regulators; technology; groundwater; environment, safety and health; waste importation; and other. The final plan is scheduled to be published August 1, 2002.

Internet Addresses



Internet web sites are updated regularly with information that include schedules for Hanford Site public involvement and activities.

Ecology:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/htm

EPA:

www.yousemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/webpage/Hanford,+Washington

USDOE:

www.hanford.gov/pubinvolve.html

Hanford Advisory Board:

www.hanford.gov/hab/

Community Relations Plan:

www.hanford.gov/crp/toc.htm

Hanford Happenings:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/pdf/happenings.pdf

Hanford Update:

www.hanford.gov/rl/programs.asp.html

Link to Stakeholder Addresses:

www.hanford.gov/misc_info/stakehld.htm

Tri-Party Agreement:

www.hanford.gov/tpa/tpahome.htm

NEPA documents

<http://www2.hanford.gov/ARPIR/search/simple.cfm>



Calendar of Events

Tank Waste Remediation System Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

August 20, 2002
Red Lion Hanford House
802 George Wash. Way
Richland, WA

Hanford Advisory Board Meetings

September 5-6, 2002
Radisson Hotel
Seattle Airport
Seattle, WA

November 7-8, 2002
West Coast Hotel
1101 N. Columbia
Center Blvd
Kennewick, WA

December 5-6, 2002
Radisson Hotel
Portland, OR

Draft Hanford Solid Waste Environmental Impact Statement

August 6, 2002
Red Lion Hanford House,
802 George Washington Way,
Richland, WA

August 7, 2002
Mountaineer Club,
300 Third Avenue West
Seattle, WA

August 14, 2002
Best Western
1108 Marina Way
Hood River, OR

Public Comment Periods

- Hanford Site Solid (Radioactive and Hazardous) Waste Program Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Comments will be received until **August 22, 2002**
- Tank Waste Retrieval System Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. 45-day Public Comment Period July 8 - August 26, 2002
- Deactivation of Fast Flux Test Facility. 45-day Public Comment Period August 26 - October 10, 2002

If you are interested in receiving this and other Hanford materials electronically, rather than in the mail, please contact the Hanford Cleanup Line **1-800-321-2008**.

Department of Energy
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