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FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT) REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT
ON THE DECOMMISSIONING OF THE)
FAST FLUX TEST FACILITY)

PUBLIC HEARING
Thursday, September 30, 2004, 7:00 p.m.
Idaho Falls, Idaho

Katherine McCoy
CSR No. 678

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PUBLIC HEARING

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Hearing for the Department of Energy's intent to do an Environmental Impact Statement on the Decommissioning of the Fast Flux Test Facility took place at the Shilo Inn, 780 Lindsay Boulevard, Idaho Falls, Idaho, before Katherine McCoy, Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Idaho, on the 30th day of September 2004, commencing at the hour of 7:00 p.m., in the above-entitled matter.

A P P E A R A N C E S

Facilitator: WENDY LOWE
JASON ASSOCIATES CORPORATION
545 Shoup Avenue
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83402

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1 September 30, 2004 September 30, 2004

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 MS. LOWE: This is my maiden voyage using my
4 readers in public so I hope I can actually see what I'm
5 trying to say to you tonight.

6 Hello. And I'd like to welcome you to tonight's
7 public meeting. My name is Wendy Lowe. And -- there we go.

8 (Microphone was turned on.)

9 Hi. My name is Wendy Lowe and I am a public
10 participation specialist with Jason Associates here in Idaho
11 Falls. Jason is a small environmental consulting firm with
12 headquarters in San Diego, California.

13 For the record this is -- tonight's meeting is
14 being held on Thursday, September 30, 2004. And this
15 meeting is being held at the Shilo Inn in Idaho Falls,
16 Idaho.

17 The U.S. Department of Energy asked me to serve
18 as the meeting moderator for tonight's public meeting which
19 is being conducted as a formal hearing. It is part of the
20 public scoping process for an environmental impact statement
21 that will be prepared to address proposed decommissioning
22 activities at the Fast Flux Test Facility at Hanford near
23 Richland, Washington.

24 An environmental impact statement is required
25 under the National Environmental Policy Act whenever a

1 federal agency is proposing an action that could result in
2 significant environment impacts. In preparing an
3 environmental impact statement the federal agency must
4 consider more than one reasonable alternative course of
5 action, including what's referred to as a no action
6 alternative.

7 They must evaluate potential environmental
8 impacts that would result from each of these reasonable
9 alternatives and present the impacts in an environmental
10 impact statement.

11 Under the National Environmental Policy Act the
12 federal agency must also provide opportunities for the
13 public to participate in the development of the
14 environmental impact statement.

15 The first required public participation activity
16 is conducted during the scoping period. Public -- public
17 scoping provides interested members of the public as well as
18 other agencies and organizations with an opportunity to
19 suggest additional alternatives that should be evaluated and
20 impacts that might occur as a result of implementing any of
21 the alternatives.

22 The scoping period for this effort began with a
23 publication in the Federal Register of a notice of intent to
24 prepare an environmental impact statement on Friday, August
25 13, 2004. Copies of the notice of intent, that look like

1 this (indicating), are available on the back table if you'd
2 like to take a look at that.

3 The second required public participation
4 activity will occur when the Department of Energy has
5 completed its draft environmental impact statement. At that
6 point in time the department will release copies of the
7 draft document for public review and comment.

8 It's my understanding that the Department of
9 Energy intends to complete the draft environmental impact
10 statement in the spring of next year. And they plan to come
11 back to Idaho Falls during that public comment period,
12 during the public comment period on the draft environmental
13 impact statement to provide you with another opportunity to
14 comment.

15 In support of its public participation program
16 for this environmental impact statement, the Department of
17 Energy has set up a toll free telephone number. And I've
18 recorded it on the flip chart paper for you here
19 (indicating). If you have questions about the environmental
20 impact statement or want to be put on the mailing list to
21 receive documents related to the environmental impact
22 statement, feel free to call that phone number.

23 As you will hear tonight the decommissioning of
24 the Fast Flux Test Facility will generate hazardous and
25 radioactive materials and waste, some of which could be

1 treated at facilities at Argonne National Laboratory West.
2 Because treatment at Argonne facilities is considered to be
3 a reasonable option, the environmental impact statement will
4 evaluate the potential impacts of treatment here in Idaho
5 under at least one alternative that will be considered in
6 the document.

7 This meeting is being held here in Idaho to
8 provide local stake holders with an opportunity to suggest
9 additional alternatives that should be considered in the
10 environmental impact statement as well as impacts that could
11 result from implementation of one or more of the
12 alternatives.

13 When it's released for public comment, the draft
14 environmental impact statement will include a comment
15 response summary describing the comments that are received
16 during the scoping period and how the department responded
17 to those comments.

18 On the flip chart back here (indicating), I have
19 a summary agenda for tonight's meeting. We're going to
20 start with the presentation by Doug Chapin from the
21 Department of Energy's Richland operations office. He is
22 the Department of Energy's document manager who will oversee
23 the development of the draft environmental impact statement.

24 Actually, we hope he does the final as well, but
25 anyway. Following Mr. Chapin's presentation you will have

1 an opportunity to ask any questions that you might have that
2 will help you understand the information that he's
3 presented. The amount of time that we spend answering
4 questions tonight is flexible. It's my goal to make sure we
5 have as much time as possible to take comments from the
6 public.

7 Once you've asked whatever questions you need
8 to, we'll then begin accepting oral comments from those who
9 wish to do so tonight. If you would like to provide
10 comments, we'd like to you sign up at the registration table
11 just outside the room and that will help the Department of
12 Energy prepare a complete and accurate record of all of the
13 people that have attended this meeting.

14 I will call names from the list and it's a first
15 come, first serve basis. And if you are here tonight
16 representing an organization or an agency, we'd like for you
17 to share that with people before you begin your comments.

18 In order to allow everyone who is interested in
19 providing comments a fair opportunity to do so, I would ask
20 you to conclude your remarks with five minutes, if possible.
21 Judging from the size of the crowd, I don't think we're
22 going to have to worry a lot about that.

23 Some of you who are here this morning may need
24 to take a little more time to think about what you want to
25 say to the Department of Energy. There is a -- the scoping

1 period will end next Friday on October 8. And comments can
2 be submitted in writing, by mail, by fax or by e-mail. You
3 can also record your comments on this public comment form,
4 which is also available in the back of the room or at the
5 table back here (indicating), or you can send your comments
6 to Mr. Chapin at the Department of Energy. And the address
7 for submitting written comments via e-mail, mail or fax is
8 on the comment form.

9 Both oral and written comments will become part
10 of the formal record for the meeting and then weighted
11 equally so don't feel like you have to make your comments
12 from the microphone tonight.

13 There is a couple of other items I thought I'd
14 mention that are available as handouts at the back table,
15 one of is fact sheet on the environmental impact statement.
16 And the second is a copy of the presentation that was
17 provided to the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental
18 Laboratory Citizen's Advisory Board last week. And they'll
19 both provide you with additional information about this
20 environmental impact statement.

21 Tonight's meeting is being recorded. Our court
22 reporter is Kathy McCoy and she works for T & T Reporting
23 here in Idaho Falls. It's her responsibility to create an
24 accurate, verbatim transcription of tonight's meeting so
25 when you're called upon to speak, we would like you to do so

1 from a microphone to help her do her job.

2 So at this time I'd like to introduce Doug
3 Chapin. He's here tonight to tell you about the Department
4 of Energy's proposed approach for developing the
5 environmental impact statement to look at alternatives for a
6 decommissioning of the Fast Flux Test Facility.

7 It's my understanding that he expects to be able
8 to finish his remarks in about fifteen minutes. We would
9 like to ask you to hold your questions until he finishes his
10 prepared remarks.

11 So with that --

12 MR. CHAPIN: Thank you, Wendy.

13 On behalf of the department I'd like to thank
14 everybody who came tonight to the meeting. To start off, as
15 Wendy indicated, the department is preparing an
16 environmental impact statement for the proposed
17 decommissioning for the Fast Flux Test Facility, the FFTF.
18 In recent days we had an FFTF closure project contract
19 awarded earlier this week.

20 That project is comprised of completing ongoing
21 deactivation work and future decommissioning work. And the
22 latter, the decommissioning is the scope of the EIS. And
23 this is the reasonable why we're doing the EIS. I wanted to
24 give that perspective up front.

25 Next slide. Some background on FFTF. It was

1 built in the 1970's. It operated from 1982 to 1992. It was
2 a nonbreeder nuclear test reactor. It was a 400 megawatt
3 thermal sodium liquid metal reactor. It was used to develop
4 nuclear materials and test fuels, and also produced some
5 isotopes relative to international research.

6 The former work was done for the liquid metal
7 breeder reactor program. The -- since 1995, the reactor has
8 been shut down and is undergoing deactivation. We had some
9 standby for a couple of years while the department evaluated
10 possible use of FFTF during the programmatic EIS as an
11 irradiation services facility, also evaluated was the ATR's
12 here and the High fer (phonetic) reactor in Oakridge.

13 As a result of that EIS which concluded in the
14 2000 time frame and the record of decision early in 2001,
15 the department decided to resume its permanent shutdown and
16 deactivation of FFTF. And we have been doing that work
17 essentially since the late 2001 period, although we started
18 deactivation work in the 1995 time frame.

19 The deactivation work, which I will explain in a
20 minute, is essentially our no action alternative. It's
21 basically we have defueled the reactor. We are now getting
22 the fuel prepared for dry cast storage.

23 Within that overall inventory of FFTF fuel, we
24 have less than .5 heavy metal metric tons of sodium bonded
25 fuel, which the department will evaluate the possible use of

1 the fuel conditioning facility here to process that fuel
2 with the EBR-2 fuel.

3 And then the last part of the deactivation work
4 is essentially taking systems out of action and putting them
5 into a layout for long-term surveillance and maintenance.

6 Next slide, please.

7 So I've given some background on the scope of
8 the decommissioning EIS. The deactivation work that is
9 ongoing was addressed in previous NEPA decisions, in
10 particular the 1995 shut down environmental assessment for
11 FFTF. That and other relevant NEPA decisions to this EIS
12 we've indicated in the back part of the notice of intent and
13 we are going -- and in the process of making those reference
14 documents available in the local reading room here.

15 Back to more of the scope of the EIS. Basically
16 we're going to look at decommissioning the facility. We're
17 encumbered or included within the alternatives that we're
18 looking at, we're going to also disposition sodium, the
19 Hanford site radioactively contaminated sodium inventory,
20 the regulated and nonregulated waste relative to the
21 entombment removal process.

22 In particular, I'll touch on the so-called
23 special components the -- of sodium filters. And then the
24 -- to essentially get the facility where we are reducing our
25 long-term surveillance and maintenance costs. And that is

1 the essence of proposed decommissioning.

2 I want to also add, and we mentioned that
3 up-front in the notice of intent, the management disposition
4 of the FFTF fuel, including the sodium bonded fuel has
5 already been decided upon in previous DOE NEPA decisions, in
6 particular, the high -- I mean, the programmatic spent fuel
7 environmental impact statement and record of decision, and
8 the sodium bonded fuel EIS and record of decision. We're
9 going to document or just remind people of those decisions
10 in the EIS, but we're not going to analyze new pathways and
11 accident analysis, et cetera, packaging, transportation, in
12 this decommissioning EIS. Decisions have already been made
13 programmatically by the department.

14 Next slide, please, Kathy.

15 I wanted to just highlight geographically the
16 areas on the Hanford site in Richland. The FFTF is in the
17 400 area, which is in this (indicating) area. It's about 13
18 miles north of downtown Richland. There are other -- some
19 other support facilities we would be looking at.

20 We have some other sodium here, besides the FFTF
21 sodium that is presently stored out here in two different
22 areas. That sodium with the FFTF is the Hanford site
23 radioactive sodium inventory.

24 We also have the central waste complex, and the
25 environmental restoration disposal facilities. These are

1 facilities that we would potentially utilize for disposition
2 of regulated waste. We also have an integrated disposal
3 facility which is to be constructed. That is going to be a
4 mixed waste facility similar to the environmental
5 restoration and disposal, another facility we use for waste
6 disposition.

7 And the canister storage building is where the
8 FFTF fuel will go and the option of the FFTF sodium bonded
9 fuel. Going there is an intermediary location prior to
10 coming to Idaho.

11 Next slide, please, Kathy.

12 This is the main boundary of the 400 area. This
13 boundary here (indicating) is really the relevant area to
14 the FFTF decommissioning EIS. This (indicating) is a blown
15 up scale. This (indicating) is the FFTF reactor containment
16 building. And this (indicating) is the main area of issue
17 relative to the alternatives of entombment removal. And
18 these are support facilities.

19 I was able -- authorized to show these in
20 public, but unfortunately this information will not be
21 available to the public for security reasons, but I wanted
22 to show it anyway.

23 Next slide, Kathy.

24 Now I want to describe the proposed alternatives
25 for this EIS. The first one as Wendy indicated was no

1 action. It does not mean doing nothing. It sort of means
2 the status quo. We have defined it in terms of, again,
3 completing the ongoing deactivation work that I described
4 earlier.

5 The two reasonable decommissioning alternatives
6 that we're looking at is entombment and removal. And a very
7 important part of the scoping process is to consider any
8 other additional decommissioning alternatives. And
9 alternatives can change, be changed, modified, added,
10 deleted, whatever, that arise during the scoping and during
11 the preparing of the draft EIS.

12 One point I wanted to make is to restart is not
13 considered a reasonable decommissioning department by the
14 FFTF because of the prior DOE NEPA decisions and a legal
15 ruling that reaffirmed the decision to shut down and
16 permanently deactivate the FFTF.

17 For the proposed alternatives we wanted to try
18 to provide a little -- a bit more public friendly scenario
19 so that people can see the no action as I described is
20 completing the ongoing deactivation consistent again with
21 this shut down environmental assessment. And this document
22 will be available in the reading room. And then we get the
23 facility into a state for long-term surveillance and
24 maintenance.

25 And entombment essentially we would take, within

1 the reactor containment building, we would remove the above
2 grade structures and any of the regulated debris or waste
3 that would become -- we would dispose of it at Hanford. And
4 then we would grout and fill below grade, including the
5 reactor vessel and the radioactive and contaminated
6 structures, piping, et cetera, with an immobilization kind
7 of grouted matrix.

8 The removal would be doing the same thing as the
9 no action. Oh, by the way, on this entombment we would
10 entomb with an engineered, a regulatory compliant engineered
11 barrier cover. For the removal we would do essentially the
12 same work as the no action, plus the above grade work, but
13 the below grade, we would basically take out the reactor
14 vessel where the hot components are and potentially
15 disposition up in the central waste complex. And then we
16 would backfill, not necessarily with a regulatory compliant
17 -- we'd just backfill and revegetate.

18 And that's really the differences of the
19 alternatives. We have a little more detail in the notice of
20 intent. And I have a graphic, I think, next slide.

21 This (indicating) is the main area that I was
22 talking about, the reactor containment building. This is
23 basically ground level. And this is what I was talking
24 about. This (indicating) would be demolished and the waste
25 dispositioned.

1 This (indicating) would be filled during the
2 entombment, but for removal essentially this and the
3 ancillary components would be extracted out and removed.
4 That's really the differences between the entombment and
5 removal alternatives.

6 In concert with all of the alternatives we're
7 going to evaluate the disposition of the management of the
8 special components, the sodium filters. This is of concern,
9 we realize, to the State of Idaho.

10 We're going to evaluate the interim storage and
11 treatment at the Hanford site. Another option we'd look at
12 is storing on-site at Hanford, treating at the proposed
13 remote treatment plant project. And I understand there is
14 an environmental assessment in progress for that to
15 evaluate, accommodation in the processing of our special
16 filters.

17 And another option we'd look at is disposition
18 at Hanford or an off-site facility, that means off-site of
19 Hanford. This is not a decommissioning alternative. I
20 wanted to make that clear. This is just a resource category
21 that we have to manage and deal with, so as to not get
22 confused with that.

23 Another thing, a relative to, like when I was
24 talking about the regulated debris and waste from the
25 demolition of above grade structures and stuff, we were

1 looking at the low level radioactive and mixed waste going
2 to the two facilities that I mentioned earlier at Hanford
3 out in the 200 area out north.

4 I already talked about the sodium bonded fuel.
5 That's a second important issue, we realize, for the State
6 of Idaho. And then the main -- one of the main elements
7 that we'd be dealing with, relative to Idaho, is we would
8 take the radioactive sodium inventory from Hanford, which
9 includes FFTF and two other locations. We have about
10 300,000 gallons; 260,000 gallons from FFTF and about 34,000
11 gallons stored in an area, the 2727 "W" building, and about
12 7,000 gallons in storage modules.

13 All of that would be packaged and transported to
14 Idaho and potentially converted to fifty percent by liquid
15 caustic by the sodium processing facility. And then that
16 material, once converted, would be packaged and transported
17 back to Hanford for use by the Office of River Protection.
18 And this is all as reuseable product, not as waste.

19 We have -- our -- basically our consent decree
20 milestones in place, we call the tri-party agreement, the
21 Department of Energy, the EPA, and the Washington State
22 Department of Ecology have agreed to. That would
23 potentially allow us to do this, but we're going to analyze
24 this in the EIS.

25 Next slide, please.

1 The relevant facilities I've already mentioned
2 relative to the Argonne National Laboratory is the sodium
3 process facility and the proposed remote treatment plant.
4 And that's in that (indicating) area.

5 The -- one of the key things that we're going to
6 evaluate for the special filters and the sodium is obviously
7 transportation, principally truck haul. And this is the
8 (indicating) corridor that we would evaluate relative to
9 packaging, transportation, risks, in particular, accidents,
10 to the sodium coming to Idaho and then going back. The
11 special filters coming to Idaho, processed, and then being
12 dispositioned by DOE Argonne. And then the sodium bonded
13 fuels would be dispositioned after it's processed in the
14 fuel conditioning facility at the high level repository.

15 So this is not germane to that. I did get a
16 question in the original meeting, you mean it's going to
17 Seattle? No, no. This is just for schematics. This is
18 what we're talking about (indicating).

19 Next slide, please.

20 We wanted to remind people that the schedule for
21 the EIS is -- we have the scoping period which Wendy
22 identified. It concludes next Friday. And people are
23 welcome to convey their comments outside this meeting.
24 They're not just excluded to this meeting.

25 The draft EIS in the spring of next year, there

1 will be another comment period where we will come back to
2 Idaho Falls at that time frame. Final EIS in the fall and
3 the record of decision in late 2005.

4 And one thing I wanted to point out in terms of
5 this FFTF closure project contract. The contractor can do
6 the ongoing deactivation work. The first part of that work,
7 they are not authorized to do the decommissioning until we
8 get the EIS and the record of decision done. So we would do
9 like a contract modification, whatever, but that was all
10 stipulated in that procurement process.

11 I wanted to remind people how to convey
12 comments. You can send them to me, fax them, e-mail. As
13 Wendy indicated here, this (indicating) number is really for
14 the purposes of getting additional information documents,
15 whatever, although we've noted we are going to provide them
16 in the reading room.

17 And then the last -- we have just provided
18 perspectives, some definitions so people get a better
19 understanding of the deactivation, surveillance, maintenance
20 and decommissioning.

21 And I thank you.

22 MS. LOWE: That's still on. I suppose you might
23 want to it for question and answer?

24 MR. CHAPIN: Yes.

25 MS. LOWE: Okay. Thanks, Doug.

1 Before we get into the question and answer
2 portion, you can see that my agenda is falling off the wall
3 so I'll just tell you. We finished the presentation. Now
4 we're going to start the question and answer portion of
5 tonight's meeting.

6 I wanted to introduce two people that are going
7 to help Doug with answering questions. Nicole Brooks is
8 here from the Department of Energy Idaho operations office.
9 And she may be called upon to help answer questions.

10 And we also have Greg Bass (phonetic) from the
11 DOE Argonne operations office, Argonne area office. I
12 apologize -- to answer questions specific to the facilities
13 and capabilities at Argonne National Laboratory-West. There
14 are some other people here that may be called upon to answer
15 questions, but they'll introduce themselves when we get to
16 that point.

17 I'd like to remind you that this portion of the
18 meeting is the question and answer session. It's not part
19 of the formal record for the meeting. So if you make a
20 comment when you're asking a question, we'll need to ask you
21 to remember to submit the comment either during the oral
22 portion of the meeting or submit it in writing for it to be
23 able to be considered as a comment.

24 I will do my best to help make sure they keep
25 their answers short.

1 Let's see. We have a standing microphone here
2 (indicating) and I'll let Doug handle who's responsible for
3 answering, getting the microphone to them. We would like to
4 get your questions from the microphone, if you have those.
5 So why don't we go ahead and open it up for "Q" and "A."

6 Okay. Go ahead, John.

7 MR. TANNER: Remind me. What is the final waste
8 form from treating the sodium bonded fuel, the FFTF fuel.

9 MR. CHAPIN: Greg, do you want to address that
10 question?

11 MR. BASS: Sure. The approximate 300 kilograms
12 of the FFTF sodium bonded fuel at Argonne is being looked at
13 to treat would be treated using electro metallurgical
14 treatment process, which we are currently running to process
15 the EBR-2 sodium bonded spent nuclear fuel.

16 The result of that process, were we to treat the
17 FFTF sodium bonded fuel, would be three products. One, some
18 extracted uranium metal that we would -- down blend into
19 enriched uranium. And then the waste product in the FFTF
20 spent nuclear fuel would be made into one of two high level
21 waste forms. One is a zirconium stainless steel metals high
22 level waste form that we produce. The other one is a
23 ceramic high level waste form.

24 The FFTF isotopes would most likely be mixed
25 with those from the EBR-2 spent nuclear fuel. They would be

1 inseparable with our current technology. And so right now
2 the planning for the two high level waste forms is to send
3 them to the National Geologic Repository at Yucca Mountain.
4 And the extracted uranium, no decision has been made on what
5 to do with the extracted low risk uranium, other than either
6 to store it or possibly find a customer for making it into
7 low risk fuel. That's what would happen.

8 MS. LOWE: Does that answer your question?

9 MR. TANNER: Thank you.

10 MS. LOWE: Other questions, Beatrice?

11 MS. BRAILSFORD: I think I just have two
12 questions. What contractor just got this project?

13 MR. CHAPIN: I have -- I don't know. There are
14 several names, but I don't know right offhand. I can give
15 you a newspaper article that will have it. There is a
16 record. It was basically announced on Monday and I just
17 really found out about it yesterday. So I apologize for not
18 knowing, but there was four or five firms that were named.

19 MS. BRAILSFORD: So it's not folks who have been
20 working at the site before at Hanford?

21 MR. CHAPIN: As far as I know, yes.

22 MS. BRAILSFORD: They are?

23 MR. CHAPIN: No, as far as I know --

24 MS. BRAILSFORD: They're new.

25 MR. CHAPIN: -- they're new.

1 MS. BRAILSFORD: And then I didn't understand
2 when you were making the distinction now, understand that
3 this isn't part of the decommissioning. I didn't understand
4 what distinctions you were making. And I guess I would like
5 you to go over that again.

6 And if different parts of this plan, you were
7 thinking of -- in those different ways, I'd like to hear
8 that.

9 MR. CHAPIN: Were you talking about -- okay, a
10 restart decommissioning?

11 MS. BRAILSFORD: No, no, no.

12 MR. CHAPIN: Are you talking about waste,
13 disposition of waste?

14 MS. BRAILSFORD: Right.

15 MR. CHAPIN: Fuel?

16 MS. BRAILSFORD: Right.

17 MR. CHAPIN: And special filters. Okay. I
18 talked about the no action, the entombment and removal.
19 Those are basically describing what we would do to
20 decommission structures, piping, equipment, et cetera.
21 Whether or not any of those, particularly the entombment or
22 removal alternatives are selected, we are still going to
23 look at -- and I don't want to really call them
24 subalternatives -- we're going to look at management
25 disposition of the radioactive sodium inventory, the special

1 filters, the sodium filters, and the fuel. That is really,
2 you know, what is of interest to the State of Idaho.

3 So we're going to look at that whether we decide
4 on entombment or removal or it could be a hybridization of
5 either alternative. That's going to be looked at in detail
6 in the EIS.

7 So when I'm talking about entombment or removal,
8 I'm talking mainly about the reactor containment building,
9 what we do above ground level, what we do below ground
10 level, grade level.

11 MS. BRAILSFORD: But you are regarding what
12 you're now calling subalternatives. You are regarding them
13 as part of the decommissioning process?

14 MR. CHAPIN: Absolutely, yes. However, the
15 sodium bonded fuel is not within the scope of the EIS. We
16 already have a NEPA analysis and records of decision in
17 place that allow us to do that, even if we decide to still
18 go in to deactivation, the no action alternative. The
19 sodium still can go to the northern part of the Hanford
20 site, the sodium bonded fuel, and eventually to Idaho. That
21 still can happen whether we do no action, entombment or
22 removal. It is not -- we don't require a NEPA decision in
23 this decommissioning EIS to allow us to do that. That's for
24 the sodium bonded fuel.

25 Sodium, likewise, we really need to analyze it

1 going to Idaho or doing it onsite. And it would still be
2 used by the Office of River Protection. So we'd look at
3 that during the entombment or the removal options. Because
4 right now "deactivation" means simply drain the sodium. And
5 we have it in a sodium storage facility in the 400, or right
6 next to FFTF. That's deactivation.

7 MS. BRAILSFORD: So the sodium has already been
8 drained?

9 MR. CHAPIN: It's in the process. We have
10 completed secondary sodium drain. We're in the -- we've
11 done the first phase of primary sodium drain. The second
12 Phase II and Phase III of secondary sodium drain is -- we're
13 planning to do that now until next year. And we have the
14 milestones in place that we have to meet to do that.

15 Now, with the new closure project contractor,
16 there could be some changes or differences, but I don't know
17 what those are at this point. I'm going to find out more
18 when I get back to the office.

19 MS. LOWE: Did that help, Beatrice?

20 MS. BRAILSFORD: Yes.

21 MS. LOWE: Did you want to add something, Greg?

22 MR. BASS: What was the question?

23 MS. LOWE: Did you want to add anything, Greg?

24 MR. BASS: No, Doug did just fine.

25 MS. LOWE: Any other questions? Bob.

1 MR. SPEAKER: How would the sodium in the
2 filters be transported to INEEL? Would that be by truck or
3 by rail, and what kind of containers would be used?

4 MR. CHAPIN: Right now our current planning in
5 the EIS is to evaluate a new DOE certified T3 cask shipment
6 process by truck. And that's really all I know at this
7 point.

8 And I believe that the preference would likely
9 be truck haul as opposed to rail. Maybe Greg could add
10 something a little bit more about the rail, but that's the
11 current planning as I understand it. I don't know if rail
12 is a viable alternative or not.

13 It's really going to be analyzed here in the
14 next few months as we do the EIS. We're looking at it right
15 now with your waste management folks at Hanford. So it's
16 really to be fleshed out as we do the draft EIS. But from a
17 transportation and packaging standpoint, that's our current
18 planning at this point.

19 MS. LOWE: Any other questions? Okay. We'll go
20 ahead.

21 For the record it is 7:37 and we're going to now
22 begin the formal public comment portion of tonight's
23 meeting. As a reminder, if you would like to provide
24 comments, we'd like you to sign up at the registration
25 table. And when I call your name, we'd like you to come

1 forward to the microphone before you begin your comments.

2 If you are representing an agency or
3 organization tonight, we'd like you to tell us that before
4 you get started.

5 I don't think we're going to have a problem with
6 time, but if somebody has had more time than we think fair,
7 I'll hold up a time card. If I do have to ask you to stop
8 before you finish delivering your comments, I'll try to get
9 you back up here again. And we'd like to invite you to
10 submit your comments in writing, if that's happens as well.

11 As I said earlier both oral and written comments
12 will be weighted equally in the record for the environmental
13 impact statement. So I have four names so far. The first
14 is Willie Preacher.

15 SPEAKER NO. 1: WILLIE PREACHER,

16 MR. PREACHER: Hello, my name is Willie Preacher
17 and I'm a member of the Shoshone-Bannock tribes here in
18 Idaho. And the comments that we have is, I guess, really
19 concern with, why is the fuel coming to Idaho, why isn't
20 there a way that they could dispose of it at Hanford. Once
21 it comes to Idaho, it's going to go through the reservation.
22 The tribes are concerned with the safety issues, whether
23 it's going to be liquid coming, whether it's going to be
24 liquid going back.

25 That's something that we never had in

1 transportation issues that we had before. So there is a
2 concern with safety, not only for the environment, but for
3 the tribal people.

4 There is also a concern here once it gets here,
5 we always talk about Yucca Mountain being opened up, but
6 that's not officially yet. So the concern is, are we
7 bringing something here that's going to stay here?

8 The other concern is, what's going to happen to
9 the uranium that's here, is it going to be used for other
10 uses and another was the spent -- or the settlement
11 agreement where it said that there was only shipments that
12 were allowed to come.

13 If the shipments come here and then they go
14 back, does that equal out the shipments from Hanford? I
15 think there was 12 shipments that was allowed to come to the
16 State of Idaho.

17 But like I was saying, the biggest concern is,
18 why are we having shipments coming through here? And if the
19 shipments do come, what is going to happen for the tribe in
20 being -- preparation for the -- whether it's going to come
21 by rail or whether it's going to come by truck or I-15
22 corridor.

23 Is there going to be any type of training that's
24 going to be provided to the tribes in case of any accident?
25 And keep in mind the tribes are right now working on a

1 transportation agreement between the Department of Energy
2 and the Shoshone-Bannock tribes. And this issue was brought
3 up today when I mentioned I was coming up here. They said
4 the transportation agreement has never been signed and still
5 being in the works. This continual -- shipments coming
6 through the state of Idaho, into the state of Idaho through
7 the reservation and which the settlement agreement doesn't
8 have anything to do with the reservation. Thank you.

9 MS. LOWE: Thank you, Willie. Next is Beatrice
10 Brailsford.

11 SPEAKER NO. 2: BEATRICE BRAILSFORD,
12 Thank you. My name is Beatrice Brailsford. I'm
13 the program director of the Snake River Alliance. The Snake
14 River Alliance is an Idaho-based grassroots group working
15 through research, education, and community advocacy for
16 peace and justice, the end to nuclear weapons production
17 activities, and responsible solutions to nuclear waste and
18 contamination.

19 My comments this evening are on behalf of our
20 dues paying members.

21 I'll note that I've been assured that the
22 scheduling conflict between this hearing and the first
23 presidential debate here was inadvertent, but I have my
24 doubts. You guys just don't want me to make up my mind who
25 I'm going to vote for.

1 At any rate, we laud the decommissioning of the
2 Fast Flux Test Facility, but question the necessity for some
3 of its steps. We have limited most of our recommendations
4 for the scope of the FFTF decommissioning draft EIS to
5 concerns about the plans Idaho alternative.

6 The draft EIS should include a thorough
7 discussion of the need for each and every step in the
8 decommissioning process and a very thorough comparison of
9 the impacts of each stage occurring at Hanford versus ANLW.

10 There must be a complete analysis of the
11 relative risks and benefits of treating the radioactive
12 sodium at both sites versus not attempting to treat and
13 reuse it. This analysis should include a thorough cost
14 comparison.

15 There must be a complete analysis of the
16 transportation risk, particularly of the transport to
17 Hanford of liquid sodium hydroxide, which I understand will
18 be radioactive.

19 MR. CHAPIN: (Witness nods head). Yes.

20 MR. BRAILSFORD: There should be a thorough
21 survey of current shipments of radioactive liquids. There
22 should be a complete discussion of shipping container
23 integrity. The transportation analysis should include
24 consideration of accidents on bridges.

25 As the NEPA process goes forward, we urge the

1 DOE to undertake an aggressive outreach to communities all
2 along the transportation route.

3 The next paragraph, I've got to tell you how
4 many times I've seen the government change its mind so when
5 you tell me the decision has been made, there should be a
6 thorough discussion of the need for treatment of the sodium
7 bonded fuel from the FFTF. There has never been a
8 convincing case for the unavoidability of treating sodium
9 bonded fuel before disposition. The discussion must make
10 that case.

11 It must explain why pyro processing is going
12 forward on any sodium bonded fuel before acceptance criteria
13 for a high level waste and spent fuel repository have been
14 developed. This discussion should include information,
15 including costs, on activities that proceeded to prepare
16 waste for the waste isolation pilot plant that ultimately
17 proved useless once WIPP's wax (phonetic) were finalized.

18 The urgent need for this discussion is
19 highlighted by the fact that the waste streams produced by
20 pyro processing are not in the current license application
21 for Yucca Mountain.

22 The proliferation analysis for pyro processing
23 should be repeated in light of the concern about terrorism
24 and dirty bombs. What is the projected operating life of
25 ANL-West's fuel conditioning facility with and without the

1 addition of FFTF spent fuel.

2 An analysis of the plan to clean FFTF system
3 components should include a discussion of impediments to
4 eventual direct disposal. It is unwise for the Department
5 of Energy to prepare this draft EIS simultaneously with an
6 EA on the remote treatment project which has yet to be
7 approved.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. LOWE: Thank you, Beatrice. The next
10 commenter is John Tanner.

11 SPEAKER NO. 3: JOHN TANNER,

12 MR. TANNER: I'm John Tanner. I'm president of
13 Coalition 21, a local nuclear advocacy group. Inasmuch as
14 the decision has been made to decommission and take down
15 FFTF, it ought to be done in an efficient and economical
16 method. And we certainly agree with salvaging for later use
17 whatever is salvageable.

18 One example, of course, is the uranium.
19 Certainly if it's at all enriched, which it is, it can find
20 a future use. All of the proposed activities, none of them
21 seem really basically new. As far as hauling sodium around
22 is concerned, that's been done. A lot of it was hauled
23 around when they first built the reactor and had to fill it.

24 Sodium hydroxide solutions and liquids of all
25 kinds are all hauled on U.S. highways. If there somehow

1 were a spill, it would be a big mess locally, but it won't
2 be a vapor cloud that would drift around.

3 As has been said, Argonne certainly has
4 experience working with sodium, both in the construction of
5 the reactor and its operations, and in the various
6 activities that they have pursued since they started taking
7 down EBR-2, the pyro processing for the fuel, the
8 disposition of all the sodium they had for sodium coolant,
9 and also their various sodium-contaminated materials.

10 We expect that much of the waste will be removed
11 by the year 1995, unless a variance is given by the State of
12 Idaho.

13 We point out that there would be precedence for
14 such a variance, Governor Andrus, after all, did not object
15 to bringing in all kinds of spent nuclear fuel that created
16 the calcine waste and various mixed and low level waste,
17 provided that something was done with it, that something
18 useful was done with what was brought in. He only objected
19 when it was brought here simply to sit and nothing more.

20 So to conclude, we think the proposed
21 alternatives -- alternative which involves processing at the
22 INEEL is a good idea. We like the idea of the different
23 sites collaborating and handling waste, each doing what it
24 is best equipped and best trained to do.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. LOWE: Thank you, John. The next person is
2 Linda Alexander.

3 SPEAKER NO. 4: LINDA ALEXANDER,

4 MS. ALEXANDER: Hi, I'm Linda Alexander and I
5 come from Richland, Washington. A lot of what I'm concerned
6 about is they have these scoping meetings for
7 decommissioning environmental impact statement, when the
8 original environmental impact statement, which was ordered
9 February 28, 2003, by Judge Shay to be started in 2003, took
10 a year to start, has not even been finished. And when we
11 have an EIS, you're supposed to consider all alternatives.

12 For instance, this reactor was offered a one
13 billion dollar contract to privatize it and to use it for a
14 multitude of things. And also Japan put an offer to buy it
15 for five billion. The reason that they wanted to use it was
16 to, rather than cost tax payers the expenditure of having to
17 prematurely bury this material, they can use the reactor to
18 burn up the materials to create medical isotopes which could
19 save lives.

20 We're losing Americans at the rate of 1500 plus
21 per day to cancer-type related illnesses. And if we were to
22 lose that many people in Iraq every day, there would be an
23 extremely large reaction to that. But we say, oh, this is
24 cancer. It's in America. It hasn't hit me yet so I'm not
25 going to worry about it.

1 What they have done is denied people a health
2 care benefit rather than having to go through very toxic
3 chemotherapy, spend a couple of hours and get a treatment.
4 And people, I saw video of a woman in her forties had
5 non-Hodgkin's type lymphoma, was given a treatment. And
6 within 30 days it was not even detectable in her bone scan
7 or the bone marrow.

8 And what we're doing is denying the tax payer
9 the benefit, the medical benefits from this facility. And
10 also a reliable source.

11 We can import radioisotopes for medical
12 treatment of diagnosis, but a lot of times by the time they
13 become available, their strength is no longer of any value
14 to us.

15 I spoke to a lady from South Africa. And they
16 have really old sources that they're using for treating
17 their patients. And the problem with them is they have to,
18 instead of using it for a real tiny amount of time to get
19 the diagnosis and treatment, they have to have these people,
20 you know, exposed to some of these sources for a long time,
21 which causes other side effects.

22 And one, they have no hope of getting anything
23 else to help them. So it's not only impairing the United
24 States, but it's also impairing other people that could be
25 helped by this.

1 And on the 28th of February 2003, Judge Shay had
2 asked specifically of Al Ferabee (phonetic) what their
3 intention was for the reactor. We're just planning to plan.
4 And he said that they were not expecting to do anything that
5 would be called an irretrievable action.

6 And to date Al Ferabee says that it is and can
7 be recoverable but because they are -- have not honored
8 Judge Shay's sentence of asking that it be kept in a no
9 action alternative state until the EIS was continued, it
10 will most probably be damaged to the point where it will
11 cost the tax payers money to have to bury it, disposition
12 it, rather than actually use it for usable means.

13 And what a lot of people don't understand is
14 that a reactor of this type can take spent fuel and they
15 can, when it's no longer good for any other reactor, and
16 they can take that power off of that and reduce the amount
17 of waste to a fraction by factors of practically ten.
18 And which would mean that there is less material that has to
19 be dispositioned.

20 And the other exponent is that it also reduces
21 the intensity of the radioactivity which makes it a
22 different classification, no longer high level. It's
23 usually a lower level because it has been essentially spent
24 up and turned into usable energy.

25 And what people don't understand is that

1 currently our reactors in the United States provide between
2 16 and 19 percent of our electrical power. However, without
3 new licensing that is very soon going to become a different
4 scenario because we are no longer becoming -- or as
5 President Bush said, he wanted to become energy independent.

6 Well, destroying a reactor that has the
7 capability of this one to do the testing, and the capability
8 of extracting this energy, you're crippling yourselves.

9 It's -- and the other concern I have is, why
10 hasn't it been considered to turn FFTF into a museum like
11 they have done to the B reactor. The B reactor is a very
12 symbolic reactor, but FFTF is as well, is one of a kind in
13 the world.

14 Other reactors that are of the general nature
15 are similar to it, but none are of its same awe-inspiring --
16 I've watched people come in and, you know, it looks pretty
17 plain on the outside. They come in. Their jaws drop
18 because they're amazed at the complexity and the beauty of
19 this beautiful instrument.

20 And to just destroy it prematurely without using
21 it for all that it's capable of is, I would say, fiscally
22 irresponsible.

23 I have a concept that anybody who has identified
24 themselves as a Christian, I have kind of a heart to heart
25 talk with their creator and savior and ask what his purpose

1 for this technology is. Because it was provided through
2 him. It was not something that man came up entirely on
3 their own. And I truly believe that if they were to ask,
4 that he has a purpose for.

5 And I think that while we may be the
6 administrators and bring into fruition, that we also each
7 have our jobs. And part of our job is not to just say,
8 well, this is one of the benefits of having this job. Some
9 of our jobs are to be accountable for the difference we can
10 make in our lives and in our contributions to mankind.

11 And I think that essentially to not seriously
12 consider the other possibilities is -- it's an insult to the
13 -- to the privilege.

14 And also some serious questions need to be asked
15 about the NRC green fielding because if that were to happen,
16 the pristine area above Richland at the Hanford site would
17 become a high level waste dump instead of the well-run,
18 basically uncontaminated operating facility that it is today
19 with a whole lot of promise yet.

20 I reserve the right to add comments and submit
21 them before the closing of this.

22 MS. LOWE: This meeting?

23 MS. ALEXANDER: Submit this.

24 MS. LOWE: Of the scoping period. Okay.

25 MS. ALEXANDER: Yes.

1 MS. LOWE: Thank you very much.
2 Were there additional people that wanted to make
3 comments tonight? Okay. Let the record reflect that it's
4 about three minutes to 8:00 o'clock. This meeting is not
5 scheduled to end until 10:00 o'clock p.m. We will now take
6 a recess. If someone decides that they would like to
7 provide oral comments between now and 10:00 o'clock p.m., we
8 will go back on the record and receive their comments.

9 Mr. Chapin and his colleagues will be available
10 during the recess if you'd like to talk to them informally,
11 but if you do that, you need to keep in mind that informal
12 discussions will not be reflected in the formal record for
13 the meeting. So we will take a recess now.

14 (Off the record from 7:58 p.m. to 9:34 p.m.)

15 MS. LOWE: Okay. We have two people that would
16 like to provide comments. For the record it's 9:35 and
17 we'll go back on the record.

18 Linda Alexander.

19 SPEAKER NO. 4: LINDA ALEXANDER (CONTINUED),

20 MS. ALEXANDER: I'm Linda Alexander from

21 Richland, Washington.

22 I'm Linda Alexander from Richland, Washington.

23 And one question I have is, why are they destroying this
24 reactor prior to having another test reactor up and running
25 like they were proposing in New Mexico because at this stage

1 it's just an environmental impact statement and they're
2 presuming they're going to be able to build one. And we are
3 talking about a gap from ten to fifteen years.

4 And I believe that right now the technology is
5 right to be developed, whereas, by ten years you'll have
6 lost your technology base, you'll have a disparate between
7 the original people's designs and perhaps someone who is
8 going to try and reinvent the experience they have in mind.

9 And I also want to put on the record I do not
10 remember exactly the name of the doctor who lived in
11 California. He was given a supply of FFTF's radioisotopes.
12 He had been given 52 patients whom they had done everything
13 they could for and they had basically anywhere from two --
14 to two weeks to live and there was no hope for them.

15 He gave them usually a small injection. And
16 anywhere from one to five treatments. And he was talking at
17 an American Nuclear Society meeting and all but two of the
18 people were alive five years later. And that's a testament
19 to his work with some of the radioisotopes.

20 It was a very interesting lecture. He talked
21 about how he used the radioisotopes to label certain
22 proteins that attracted the proteins that were the basis by
23 which the tumors were multiplying and growing on.

24 And I also witnessed when I worked for a Lyle
25 Batelle (phonetic), one of our doctors did a lot of work

1 with the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle. And I
2 was there when they were no longer able to get any more
3 supplies from FFTF. And they brought in a radioisotope from
4 Ohio. And it was unlike the radioisotopes from FFTF, which
5 were not extremely contaminated. They were very clean, easy
6 to work with.

7 And he just, you would just tell he enjoyed
8 knowing he was going to get the result. This radioisotope
9 came in. It was very contaminated. And also it had some
10 metallic residue that he was distressed at because he said
11 that what he needed to use it for to treat the cancer
12 patient, the toxins of the metallic residue would be too
13 toxic and would not be enough benefit for the health of the
14 radionuclide he was going to give to the patient. He was
15 very distressed.

16 And I also was there one time when he found out
17 one of his good friends at Fred Hutchinson Center had cancer
18 and he no longer had any access to radionuclides to help
19 him. And he was just totally dismayed that with his
20 knowledge and his connections that he was unable to help
21 someone he really treasured and cared for.

22 MS. LOWE: Thank you.

23 Okay. The next person is Dave McCoy.

24 SPEAKER NO. 5: DAVID McCOY,

25 MR. McCOY: Hi, my name is Dave McCoy. I live

1 in Idaho Falls. My name and address number is on the
2 record.

3 I'm not certain what the treatment is that's
4 proposed for this sodium waste that would come here to the
5 INEEL. It's not clear in looking at the record if this, at
6 least for me, if this is an existing facility that's already
7 in place, has a RCRA permit, has -- is included under the
8 environmental impact statement, or if we're talking about a
9 new treatment facility that is as yet unlicensed and has not
10 had an environmental scoping or assessment performed for it.

11 It seems to me that without a full EIS, to allow
12 300,000 gallons of highly toxic radioactive waste to come in
13 to Idaho after we've had tremendous problems at the INEEL in
14 processing the current wastes that are existing there would
15 be a major mistake to embark upon.

16 Also it's not clear to me that, from anything
17 I've seen in this literature, that the Yucca Mountain would
18 provide a waste acceptance criteria that would satisfy --
19 that INEEL would be able to satisfy in terms of sending this
20 waste to Yucca Mountain.

21 I kind of find a lot of the Yucca Mountain
22 discussion a waste of time in that there is so many lawsuits
23 about it and that it's not a done deal yet. And so if Yucca
24 Mountain were not available, where would this waste go?

25 I don't understand why this waste should be sent

1 to INEEL in the first place when it's being generated at
2 Hanford. And apparently this waste could be burned up in
3 the facility at Hanford to a lower inventory possibly of
4 waste. So it just seems to me another 300,000 gallons out
5 at our site is not, at least what I, as a resident of
6 southeastern Idaho, want to see coming into this state
7 again. So those are my comments.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. LOWE: Thank you, Mr. McCoy. Would anyone
10 else like to offer any comments? Okay. We were scheduled
11 to adjourn at 10:00 o'clock. It is not yet 10:00 o'clock.
12 We will take another recess until 10:00 o'clock.

13 (Off the record at 9:43 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.)

14 MS. LOWE: Okay. For the record it is now 10:00
15 o'clock. All interested parties have had an opportunity to
16 provide oral comments. And I will now adjourn the public
17 scoping meeting in Idaho Falls, Idaho on the 30th of
18 September 2004. Thank you for coming.

19 (Off the record.)

20 (The Hearing was adjourned at 10:01 p.m.,

21 September 30, 2004.)

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