

**FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD  
TANK WASTE COMMITTEE**

*March 15, 2016  
Richland, WA*

**Topics in this Meeting Summary**

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*This is only a summary of issues and actions discussed at this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of represented ideas or opinions, and it should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.*

**Opening**

Bob Suyama, Tank Waste Committee (TWC) chair, welcomed committee members and introductions were made.

*Announcements*

Sharon Braswell, North Wind / U.S. Department of Energy – Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP) announced that this would be her final TWC meeting in her current role and introduced her replacement, Dieter Bohrmann. Dieter currently provides agency and technical support to the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB or Board) with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The staffing transition will occur in April 2016.

## Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) Progress and Communication Approach (Joint w/PIC)

Bob Suyama, issue manager, provided committee members with an updated draft WTP Progress and Communication Approach white paper<sup>1</sup>, a revised version of the section addressing the Consent Decree<sup>2</sup> in light of a recent judicial decision. Bob noted that the product is a white paper and not advice for how DOE-ORP operates their communication strategies regarding the WTP. The purpose of the committee discussion was to determine the readiness of this product for review with the full Board.

### *Agency perspectives*

Joanne Grindstaff, DOE-ORP, noted that she was pleased with the latest revisions, based on the discussion during the February TWC meeting. She explained that a final motion for the Consent Decree occurred on March 11, 2016 and it is currently under review by the U.S. Department of Justice. She noted that once the litigation involving the Consent Decree ceases, DOE-ORP would be able to practice greater transparency with the HAB on certain matters related to the WTP.

### *Committee Questions and Responses<sup>3</sup>*

*Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.*

C. Referring to the table on pages 3-5, add a new category labeled “local community” under the column titled “Audience”.

*C. Include a new category labeled “Press/Media” under the column titled “Audience”.*

*C. Include a new category labeled “Former Hanford Workers” under the column titled “Audience”. Employees have a diverse range of knowledge, but former employees may have technical knowledge that would be helpful for different communication approaches.*

Q. Referring to the Consent Decree, what is being addressed where it states, “...though the public should not be bombarded with too much information all at once.”?

*C. [DOE-ORP] People have varying levels in which they can absorb new information. If the TWC thinks this is an important communication consideration, it would be helpful to advise how often DOE-ORP should communicate new information to the public.*

*C. Information should be released from DOE-ORP, however the information should be packaged in a manner that is accessible to a range of public audiences.*

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**Attachment 1:** Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) Communications Approach (3/12/16, issue managers Bob Suyama, Liz Mattson, Ken Niles, Steven Hudson, Susan Leckband)

**Attachment 2:** Consent Decree (3/14/16, issue managers Bob Suyama, Liz Mattson, Ken Niles, Steve Hudson, Susan Leckband)

**Attachment 3:** Transcribed flipchart notes

C. [DOE-ORP] Referring to the Consent Decree, please remove the sentence, “The Consent Decree has provided an excuse not to share information.” DOE-ORP would like to share more information with the Board but restrictions exist due to the litigation.

C. The TWC needs to provide more clarity on where the information is derived from within the Consent Decree section. The items listed in the bullets can read as an opinion by an issue manager who assisted in drafting this product, when it may have been said by a committee member during a former TWC meeting or during a brainstorming discussion.

*R. A more neutral topic sentence can be created in order to introduce the ideas discussed by the Board regarding the resolution of the Consent Decree.*

C. The language within the revised Consent Decree suggests that the Consent Decree has been resolved. The language needs to reflect present tense.

Issue managers requested final comments from TWC members on the WTP Progress and Communications Approach and the revised Consent Decree section by March 25, 2016. The revised version will be distributed to Board members in early April, prior to the April Board meeting. The Public Involvement Committee (PIC) is scheduled to meet on April 12, 2016 and will revise the documents after committee discussion. The newest draft will be distributed to Board members during the April Board meeting, with a brief of presentation and discussion. The TWC will incorporate the feedback that was received during the April Board meeting at potential April and May committee meetings, in order to present a final version during the June Board meeting.

### **Issue Manager Update on Cesium Management Resulting from Low Activity Waste Pretreatment System (LAWPS)**

Bob Suyama, issue manager, provided TWC members with an updated draft of the HAB Cesium Management and Disposition white paper<sup>4</sup>. Bob explained that the latest revisions reflected the adjustments DOE-ORP requested during the February TWC meeting. David Bernhard, issue manager, explained the conclusion within the white paper, noting that the recommended option would be to dispose cesium as Class C Waste at a licensed commercial disposal facility, in an effort to not return cesium to double-shelled tanks (DSTs) located on the Hanford Site.

#### *Agency Perspective*

Joanne Grindstaff, DOE-ORP, thanked the committee for progress made on the white paper. She explained that the current plan is to use an elutable resin in the cesium removal process. She noted that DOE-ORP is searching for a company that produces the elutable resin and stated that the current

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**Attachment 4:** Cesium Management and Disposition Alternatives for the Low Activity Waste Pretreatment System (3/11/2016, issue managers David Bernhard and Bob Suyama)

unavailability of the resin should not discourage the Board from making particular recommendations in the white paper about cesium management and disposition.

### *Committee Questions and Responses<sup>3</sup>*

*Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.*

Q. What is the difference between a non-elutable and an elutable resin?

*R. Non-elutable resin is not regenerable. Elutable resin is regenerable and holds a greater quantity of cesium than non-elutable. However, elutable resin is not commercially available.*

*C. The types of resins that have been proposed are common resins and can be produced by a variety of companies. However, the selected resin requires technical qualification and production time, which may be a limit in moving forward with the disposition of cesium.*

Q. Wasn't it important to DOE Headquarters not to send cesium back to DSTs?

*R. [DOE-ORP] DOE Headquarters stated that they wanted to become informed of all the options for cesium management and disposition. Currently, there is not a location to dispose of or recycle the resin because such a facility does not exist. DOE-ORP cannot create waste that does not have a path for disposal.*

*Q. Why did DOE-ORP choose to return cesium to the DSTs?*

*R. [DOE-ORP] DOE-ORP has chosen to return cesium to DSTs due to cost efficiency. DOE-ORP is attempting to get the pretreatment system in production, while simultaneously running the Low Activity Waste Pretreatment System (LAWPS). The selected cesium disposition option is not meant to be a final step in completing the cleanup mission but it will be a stepping-stone for treating this high-level waste.*

C. The HAB should provide recommendations for cesium management and disposition based on science, logic, and what the best path forward for waste disposal is.

C. Referring to the table on cesium disposition options on page 2, remove the option to dispose cesium in deep geologic boreholes due to the moratorium that was placed on deep borehole drilling in Pierce County, North Dakota.

C. Referring to the table on cesium disposition options on page 2, the option to place cesium in spent fuel containers or in a cesium tank for future high-level waste disposal is not a viable option. The gamma and beta dose accumulations on the organic resin material will destroy the resin over time, causing a hazard if stored long term.

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**Attachment 3:** Transcribed flipchart notes

Q. Did DOE-ORP direct the HAB to select a cesium disposition option?

*R. [DOE-ORP] DOE-ORP was hoping the HAB would reach consensus regarding whether or not the current cesium disposition plan, which is to return the cesium to DSTs, was reasonable. Both the HAB and DOE-ORP have performed extensive research on available options. DOE-ORP is also looking to gather thoughts and opinions from the public about this issue and that is one reason for assigning this to the Board.*

*Q. The HAB is not a technical board. Would it satisfy DOE's criteria if the HAB presented the researched options for cesium disposition, instead of coming to consensus on one disposition option?*

*R. [DOE-ORP] The Board could state that they may not agree with DOE's decision to send cesium to DSTs. However, DOE would like to see the reasoning and research that the Board explored, which was the purpose of this white paper. The Board should approach this white paper from a policy perspective.*

C. The HAB has made their position clear of not being in favor of returning cesium to DSTs because it will result in long-term storage of high-level waste on the Hanford Site. There is time to make a decision on the disposition pathway for cesium because LAWPS is not in production.

*R. [DOE-ORP] The LAWPS facility is required in order to pre-treat the waste for direct feed low activity waste (DFLAW). The selection of the cesium disposition option is time sensitive because DOE-ORP is hoping to get the pre-treatment facility up and running in the next couple of years. However, one of the roadblocks is finding a repository to accept the resin.*

Due to a variety of viewpoints amongst members on cesium disposition options, the TWC will focus the white paper to include a summarized list of perspectives and opinions the Board has on the proposed cesium management and disposition options from a policy perspective. Issue managers will also provide a cover letter to the white paper, outlining statements on higher-level goals set forth by DOE for final disposition of waste from the Hanford Site, including the selection of a geologic repository.

Committee members tentatively plan to distribute the summarized options for cesium disposition to the HAB during the April Board meeting. TWC members will then produce a final draft of the white paper in April and May for presentation at the June 2016 Board meeting.

## **Committee Business**

### *Leadership Selection*

Bob Suyama was voted to continue his role as chair of the TWC and Melanie Magnuson-Meyers was voted to continue her role as vice chair of the TWC. Bob and Melanie will be seated during the April Board meeting.

*Fiscal Year 2016 Six-Month Accomplishments Review*<sup>5</sup>

Due to time constraints, the TWC did not have a chance to review and discuss the HAB Fiscal Year 2016 Work Plan table.

*TWC 3-Month Work Plan*<sup>36</sup>

Due to time constraints, the TWC did not have a chance to discuss the 3-month work plan. The TWC is tentatively scheduled to hold a call on Tuesday, March 22 at 3:00 pm.

The TWC plan to discuss the updated version of the WTP Progress and Communications Approach white paper during April or May.

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**Attachment 3:** Transcribed flipchart notes

**Attachment 5:** Fiscal Year 2016 Six-Month Accomplishments

**Attachment 6:** TWC 3-Month Work Plan

**Attachments**

**Attachment 1:** Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) Communications Approach (3/12/16, issue managers Bob Suyama, Liz Mattson, Ken Niles, Steven Hudson, Susan Leckband)

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**Attachment 4:** Cesium Management and Disposition Alternatives for the Low Activity Waste Pretreatment System (3/11/16, issue managers David Bernhard and Bob Suyama)

**Attachment 5:** Fiscal Year 2016 Six-Month Accomplishments

**Attachment 6:** TWC 3-Month Work Plan

**Attendees**

Board members and alternates:

|                        |                     |                        |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| David Bernhard (phone) | Gary Garnant        | Kristen McNall (phone) |
| Don Bouchey            | Becky Holland       | Jerry Peltier          |
| Jan Catrell            | Steve Hudson        | Emily Peterson (phone) |
| Shelley Cimon          | Alex Klementiev     | Dick Smith (phone)     |
| Shannon Cram (phone)   | Pam Larsen          | Bob Suyama             |
| Sam Dechter            | Susan Leckband      | Jean Vanni (phone)     |
| Dirk Dunning (phone)   | Liz Mattson (phone) | Helen Wheatley         |

Others:

|                            |                          |  |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Joanne Grindstaff, DOE-ORP | Dieter Bohrmann, Ecology | Todd Nelson, Betchel                   |
| Kris Holmes, DOR-RL        | Maria Skorska, Ecology   | Alex Nazarali, CTUIR                   |
|                            | Tom Rogers, DOH          | Samantha Herman, EnviroIssues          |
|                            |                          | Ryan Orth, EnviroIssues                |
|                            |                          | Sharon Braswell,<br>North Wind/DOE-ORP |
|                            |                          | Michael Turner, MSA                    |
|                            |                          | Katherine Bittinger, WSU               |