

## **Hanford Advisory Board Draft Letter**

**Topic:** Environmental Restoration and Disposal Facility

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**Originating Committee:** River & Plateau

**Version #1 packet**

Dear Ms. Charboneau and Mr. Faulk,

The Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies announced that they were proceeding with a vertical expansion approach for the Environmental Restoration and Disposal Facility (ERDF) during the Feb. 2016 full Hanford Advisory Board (Board) meeting, and again at the Feb. 2016 River and Plateau (RAP) committee meeting. While the Board appreciated the information shared, members identified concerns regarding the permanent, additional waste load on top of ERDF. The Board also was concerned about the lack of public involvement in the consideration of vertical expansion and emphasized interest in bringing a broader conversation about ERDF before the Board and the general public.

ERDF, an enormous lined landfill, is the heart of Hanford's remediation plan and has been accepting low level waste since 1996. Located on Hanford's Central Plateau, ERDF is the permanent disposal site for much of Hanford's waste, including contaminated soil, contaminated equipment, and debris from demolished buildings. Since 1996, ERDF has accepted more than 17 million tons of contaminated material. During ERDF's 20 years of operation, there have been a number of changes to the performance assessment (PA); changes to various assumptions about future impacts; and changes to the limits on certain contaminants. Given that cleanup has several decades to go, and that additional huge volumes of waste will end up in ERDF, it seems an opportune time to take an overall look at ERDF and what additional changes (and their potential impact) may be anticipated for the next 15-20 years and beyond.

The Board requests that the TPA agencies work with the RAP committee to share information about ERDF, its past operations, its leachate collection and monitoring system, and the validity of the assumptions made in the Performance Assessment (PA) in light of 20 years of operational data. Assumptions about the next 15-20 years of operations, anticipated changes and their potential impacts are also of critical interest to Board membership. The Board requests that the TPA agencies also work through the RAP and Public Involvement and Communications committees to develop and share this information in a manner that will help build a more thorough understanding of ERDF's past, present, and future for the Board and the general public.

Equally important, the Board requests that the TPA agencies share this information in a manner that encourages dialogue and understanding, and that solicits input from the Board and the general public. These discussions may result in the necessity of developing a public workshop regarding ERDF and the Board is eager to help in that development.

Additionally, the Board is concerned about future decisions that may not legally require public vetting, but that could have lasting impacts on the Hanford site, both environmentally and culturally; the Board will look forward to expanding this conversation with the TPA agencies and the public as well.