



U.S. Department of Energy
Hanford Site

18-HAB-0018

JAN 22 2018

Ms. Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
ProSidian Hanford Project Office
713 Jadwin Ave., Suite 4
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Ms. Leckband:

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD (HAB) ADVICE #294, HANFORD SITE BUDGET

Thank you for your November 13, 2017, advice regarding Board concerns about Hanford cleanup funding. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) appreciates the HAB's ongoing support for sufficient funding to ensure continued progress toward a timely and protective cleanup of the Hanford Site.

Please see DOE's responses below to each of the Board's advice points. For convenience, the HAB advice is listed in italics with the DOE response following.

Advice Point #1: Propose to Congress and the Office of Management & Budget a steady ramp up of Hanford's yearly cleanup budget and ask for the identified \$4 billion per year for five years needed to achieve near-term cleanup. It is the only way to help avert a major catastrophe, reduce overall costs and risks to workers, the public and the environment.

Response: Annually, both the Richland Operations Office (RL) and Office of River Protection (ORP) identify the amount of funding necessary to meet all legal obligations, provide that information to DOE Headquarters, and prepare to use the amount Congress appropriates. Field offices do not make proposals to Congress, but can and do answer questions raised by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as it develops the budget eventually proposed by The President. We document the sharing of this information by letter to the Office of Environmental Management (EM) of DOE and provide copies to Hanford's regulators, the Washington Department of Ecology and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The HAB's advice was also provided to the Acting Assistant Secretary of Environmental Management for consideration.

Advice Point #2: Ensure planning for contingency funding at a national level, so that when an incident occurs such as a leaking double-shell tank or the PUREX tunnel collapse at Hanford a range of potential mitigation and response costs can be offset through these funds, rather than impacting already planned and budgeted cleanup work.

JAN 22 2018

Response: DOE has provided the HAB Consensus Advice #294 to the EM, Budget Division for its consideration. The fiscal year 2019 Budget Request is currently under review by the OMB, and the fiscal year 2018 budget request continues to await Congressional action.

Advice Point #3: Develop an emergency plan, with funding identified for the contingency of a major tank failure. One million gallons of highly radioactive waste outside of its containment would require an immediate and highly challenging response.

Response: ORP maintains an emergency plan to be used in the event of a tank failure. The funding contingency is held at the DOE Headquarters level and not at the field office. There is an existing process in place for the field office to request additional funding in the event of an incident. In parallel, ORP would use existing funding and reprioritize work to support the response.

Advice Point #4: Secure additional funding for the tank waste program that will be designated to complete design work and address technical issues in order to commence construction of the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) High Level Waste (HLW) Facility years ahead of schedule.

Response: ORP has requested the funding necessary to meet legal requirements.

Advice Point #5: Provide additional funds to establish new storage capacity for tank waste.

Response: DOE continues to disagree with this advice and believes the best path forward is to begin operations of the WTP as soon as possible. This is being accomplished through the focus on the Direct Feed of Low-Activity Waste (DFLAW) to the LAW Facility. Building additional tanks for storage at this time is not necessary and would divert focus and resources from the ultimate goal of treating and disposing of Hanford tank waste.

Advice Point #6: Provide sufficient funding to allow for startup of Direct Feed Low-Activity Waste (DFLAW) by 2022.

Response: ORP has requested the funding necessary to start operation of DFLAW by 2022.

Advice Point #7: Continue funding for the safe storage of the cesium and strontium capsules in long-term dry storage.

Response: RL considers this effort a high priority and has requested necessary funds to support this project.

Advice Point #8: Share the proposed Analytical Building Blocks and the Project Baseline Summary with the public during future Hanford site budget development processes.

Ms. Susan Leckband
18-HAB-0018

-3-

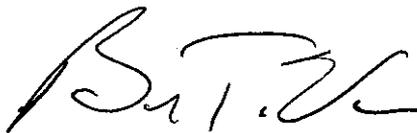
JAN 22 2018

Response: Both ORP and RL are committed to sharing data in various forms that best communicates the remaining cleanup effort and progress made to-date and do not believe providing the level of detail contained in Analytical Building Blocks and the Project Baseline Summary is appropriate. We provide annual briefings on work accomplished and work to be executed during the current year, seek priorities from the public, and consider comments received when developing budgets.

Thank you again for your input on this important topic. DOE is committed to keeping the Board informed on Hanford budget issues as cleanup efforts continue. If you have any questions, please contact Mark Heeter, RL, at (509) 373-1970, or Echo Dahl, North Wind supporting ORP, at (509) 376-7112.



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Administrative Record
Environmental Portal

U.S. Senators (OR)
Jeff Merkley
Ron Wyden

U.S. Senators (WA)
Maria Cantwell
Patty Murray

U.S. Representatives (WA)
Suzan DelBene
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