

**FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

*February 6, 2013*

*Richland, WA*

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

**Welcome and Introductions**

Liz Mattson, Hanford Challenge and Hanford Advisory Board (HAB or Board) Public Involvement and Communications (PIC) Committee Chair, welcomed the committee and led a round of introductions. Liz reviewed the agenda.

The committee adopted the October 31 meeting summary.

**State of the Site (SOS) Meetings**

*TPA Agencies Update*

Dieter Bohrmann, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), said the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies have decided to hold a round of State of the Site (SOS) Meetings in October 2013. He explained that the TPA agencies hope to discuss with PIC the approach for the meetings, ways to work with stakeholders to build turnout, and identify ideas to make the meetings cost effective. Dieter

explained that the three SOS Meetings in 2011 cost around \$35-40,000. The bulk of the budget went to facilitation, advertising, and the venues. He said the TPA agencies are not tied to any specific locations for the meetings but were thinking of holding them in Seattle, Portland, and the Tri-Cities.

Emy Laija, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said that if an organization was interested in having an SOS meeting in their area they should let the TPA agencies know. If organizations will help with advertising and outreach to ensure turnout for a meeting, the TPA agencies are happy to hold meetings where there is keen interest.

Tiffany Nguyen, Department of Energy – Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL), added that due to budget constraints the TPA agencies feel that it will be important to identify strategies to hold the SOS meetings in the most cost effective way possible.

### *Committee Discussion*

The following are the key points noted during the Committee discussion:

- The group agreed on the importance of identifying the specific dates for the SOS meetings quickly so that organizations can start working on identifying venues and advertising.
- The Committee discussed what they felt were the goals for the SOS Meetings:
  - The audience should drive the agenda for the SOS meetings. SOS Meetings allow the public to show the decision makers what they should care about.
  - Have a big picture conversation about Hanford cleanup for a wide audience on a diversity of topics. By understanding the context for cleanup, the public can better engage on specific topic discussions by asking more informed questions and providing more informed comments.
  - Ensure the meetings are educational in nature and provide opportunities for the public to ask questions.
  - Allow the TPA agencies to provide a status update on the accomplishments and real challenges facing Hanford cleanup.
  - Attract a new audience to learn about Hanford cleanup. The meetings also allow DOE to counteract negative publicity and appeal to the public to support Hanford cleanup by helping secure continued and improved funding.
- The Committee discussed locations for the SOS Meetings:
  - Hanford Watch and Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) indicated their interest in helping set up a meeting in Portland. Nora Jean Germond, Public-at-Large, suggested looking at churches as possible venues for the meeting in Portland, in addition to the usual meeting locations.
  - Hanford Challenge indicated their interest in helping set up a meeting in Seattle.

- League of Women Voters (LOWV) indicated their interest in helping set up a meeting in the Tri-Cities. Susan Leckband, LOWV also volunteered to facilitate the meeting to reduce costs. She also suggested that the meeting could take place at the Richland Public Library, the Richland High School, or the Washington State University Tri-Cities Consolidated Information Center.
- Columbia Riverkeeper and ODOE indicated their interest in helping set up a meeting in Hood River. Ken Niles, ODOE, suggested the Senior Center at Hood River as a possible venue.
- The Committee discussed the possibility of using technology to broadcast the SOS Meetings to a wider audience. In 2011 one of the SOS Meetings was broadcast by webinar. The TPA agencies had looked into webcasting a meeting but found it to be cost prohibitive. One PIC member cautioned that it is difficult to mix in-person and web meetings and those attending in person could find the webinar distracting. Another suggestion was to host an additional webinar on its own as part of the SOS Meetings.
- The Committee began discussing potential formats for the SOS Meetings. One Committee member suggested using the Hanford Story video as part of the SOS Meetings as a way to engage the audience. The Committee briefly talked about whether the SOS Meetings should try and incorporate opportunities for smaller conversations and breakout groups similar to the River Corridor workshops. The Committee will continue to discuss options for formats at the April PIC meeting.
- One Committee member mentioned that there seemed to be a difference in how PIC members and TPA agencies define challenges for the Hanford cleanup. TPA agency presentations often focus on the larger problem of Hanford contamination as a challenge, when really the challenges that need to be discussed relate to the active cleanup. This topic may be something that the PIC discusses further in future meetings.

Susan Hayman reviewed topics for further SOS discussion at the April PIC meeting:

- Cost saving measures
- Ideas for potential venues and cost information for each location
- Format for the SOS meetings
- Refine the goals of the SOS meetings

Norma Jean volunteered to be the issue manager for the SOS Meetings.

## **Public Involvement for the 300 Area Proposed Plan**

### *Agency update*

Larry Gadbois, EPA, gave a brief overview of the 300 Area Proposed Plan. He said the 300 Area has a fair amount of active remediation to go before cleanup is complete. Most of the work is coming under

interim actions. The Proposed Plan looks at uranium in groundwater and its continued contamination and proposes a remedy to cleanup the uranium in the deep soil. The rest of the plan maintains the status quo for work along the River Corridor. The Proposed Plan is expected to be ready for public comment sometime in April or May.

Emy Laija explained that the EPA held a stakeholder call a few months ago to discuss 300 Area and public involvement activities. On the call, EPA heard that Oregon did not think there was much interest for a meeting on the Proposed Plan in Portland, so the tentative plan is to have a meeting in Seattle, and one in the Tri-Cities combined with a webinar.

#### *Committee Discussion*

The following are the key points noted during the Committee discussion:

- Theresa Labriola, Columbia Riverkeeper (CRK), indicated that while there might not be interested in having a public meeting on the 300 Area Proposed Plan in Portland that there might be interest in Hood River. There is concern that the 300 Area could affect groundwater, which would impact the river and the communities downstream. EPA responded that they have learned that the potential input of uranium from the 300 Area is completely dwarfed by uranium that is currently entering the river from agricultural activities. Theresa offered to check with CRK and let EPA know if they would like to help support a public meeting in Hood River.
- The Committee felt that these meetings should only require a few agency staff and be held in smaller venues. Additionally, it will be important to provide the context that the 300 Area Proposed Plan is the first of many decisions that will be coming out on the River Corridor. These meetings will be an opportunity to prepare for public involvement for the other River Corridor sites.
- The Committee identified the following potential discussion topics for the 300 Area meetings:
  - 324 building
  - 618-10 and 618-11 burial grounds
  - 300 Area as context for additional River Corridor cleanup
- The Committee agreed that it was worth offering a webinar option with the meeting in the Tri-Cities. In addition, they were encouraged by EPA's intent to develop a short video discussing the Proposed Plan. The Committee suggested sending a link to the video to the listserve along with the invitation to the webinar.
- The Committee requested that the comment period on the Proposed Plan allow the Board time to develop advice if necessary at the June Board meeting.
- The Committee suggested bringing in local organizations to provide local perspectives on the Proposed Plan as part of the public meetings.

Susan Hayman affirmed that continued discussion on public involvement for the 300 Area Proposed Plan will occur at the April PIC meeting. That discussion will focus on the format and topics for the public

meetings. Liz Mattson suggested checking in on the March PIC call to get further information on when the Proposed Plan will be released.

John Howieson, Physicians for Social Responsibility, volunteered to be an issue manager on this topic.

## **TPA Response to HAB Advice #251 (Hanford Public Involvement Plan)**

### *Introduction*

Steve Hudson, Hanford Watch and issue manager, explained that he reviewed the comment-response document developed by the TPA agencies on the Public Involvement Plan (PIP). Steve was surprised at how the TPA agencies bundled the HAB's advice bullets and responded to them holistically as if the advice statements dealt with the same principles. He took this to mean that the advice points may not have been as detailed or distinctive as they needed to be. He said, from his perspective, that 90 percent of the Board's advice was represented in the revised PIP and that the PIP was well organized, had first class appendices, and had improved graphics and readability. One area he felt needed additional attention was an explanation on the purpose of public involvement based on the principles of participation rather than participation as part of a process. Another area that the TPA agencies did not agree with was developing annual goals (expressed in an attached annual strategy plan) for public involvement.

### *Agency perspectives*

Emy Laija said that the TPA agencies tried to make the document easier to read and hoped that the PIP will be a useful reference on public involvement at the Hanford site.

Tiffany Nguyen remarked that she was pleased to hear Steve's comments and said the effort was very collaborative.

### *Committee Discussion*

The following are the key points noted during the Committee discussion:

- The Committee asked the TPA agencies their plan for updating the PIP in the future. The TPA agencies responded that they do not have a set time period for updating the PIP, but will look to revise it once it becomes outdated.
- The Committee repeated its interest in seeing annual public involvement goals developed and posted. The TPA agencies explained that the public involvement calendar is so fluid that it would be difficult and ineffective to spend time developing goals when the timeline for projects and public involvement is likely to change.
- One Committee member expressed surprise that in many of the processes outlined in the PIP there is only one identified public involvement opportunity. While the graphics show when public involvement can occur based on legal requirements, there are often more opportunities for involvement that are informal and it might be useful to show that in the diagrams.
- The Committee was very impressed with the TPA agencies comment-response document. One member said it was the most responsive comment-response document they have ever read. The

responses were direct and comprehensive in addressing issues and when the TPA agencies did not agree with a comment they gave rationale why.

- Comments previously emailed to the Committee by Gerry Pollet, Heart of America Northwest, were shared with the TPA agencies and the Committee. Gerry's email expressed disappointment with the lack of commitment for an annual strategic update/annual goals to accompany the PIP, lack of commitment to hold public meetings in underserved areas of the region (e.g. Spokane), and lack of formal commitment to extend comment periods when key documents are not available.
- One Committee member asked if a document under review for public comment references another document, does the referenced document need to be available in that review period. The TPA agencies responded that if a document is referenced it should not be difficult for the public to find and obtain it. If the document is not readily available, it would create a strong argument for extending the comment period. Additionally, the TPA agencies try and ensure that critical information is contained within the document so that the public do not need to go to outside sources for information.
- One Committee member suggested that the TPA agencies describe the comment analysis process to the public at the start of the comment period.

The Committee did not feel that any further action was required on the topic of the PIP at this time.

## **Public Involvement related to the Tank Closure and Waste Management Final Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM Final EIS) and Records of Decisions (RODs)**

### *Introduction*

Liz Mattson explained that the Tank Closure and Waste Management Final EIS (TC&WM FEIS) was released in December. An issue manager team is working on a plan to review the document. Originally, the issue managers had thought of holding a Committee of the Whole (COTW); however, the Executive Issues Committee, with input from the RAP, TWC, and PIC Committees decided instead to develop framing questions that would be discussed by different committees. Regarding public involvement, there were concerns about how the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process occurs and how it differs from the public process under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). During the February Board meeting, the issue manager team will provide an overview of DOE's response to HAB comments. For the PIC meeting, Liz explained that she wanted to get feedback on the framing questions that relate to public involvement and a draft diagram illustrating the difference between NEPA and CERCLA.

Liz briefly reviewed the list of framing questions relating to public involvement:

1. How and where has DOE responded to HAB and public comments on the Final TC and WM EIS?
2. How and where has DOE incorporated HAB and public comments into the Final TC and WM EIS?

3. How has the Final EIS responded to Oregon's proposed Alternative #7 either by incorporating it or responding to the reasoning underlying the proposed alternative?
4. Which of the HAB's/public's comments particularly influenced the changes between the draft and final?
5. Ecology: Please explain how the permitting process will work for decisions coming out of the Final EIS using an example from the Final EIS. How will the public will be involved in that process?
  - What is not going to be incorporated in the permit (e.g. second LAW, ETF)?
6. EPA: Please elaborate on your comment stating that since DOE has not identified a preferred alternative for low activity waste (LAW), additional NEPA analysis will be necessary to inform more specific decisions.
  - DOE: How is DOE planning to meet this request from EPA Region 10?
7. DOE: We understand that DOE has to develop a mitigation action plan. Will DOE provide opportunities for public comment as identified by EPA Region 10? (keep tracking)

### *Committee Discussion*

The following are the key points noted during the Committee discussion:

- One Committee member said that it is important but difficult to determine what changes were made to the Draft EIS based on the Board's comments. DOE explained that the comment-response section indicates specific sections of the document that were updated as a result of a comment when possible. Some comments were more general in nature and did not apply to a specific section.
- ODOE said they would share any response from DOE that they receive about why ODOE's suggested alternative was not considered in the FEIS.
- DOE explained that they reviewed and valued all of the comments they received on the DEIS. DOE accepted 49 of 54 advice points outlined by the Board. There were a lot of comments that made DOE realize that they needed to make their discussion clearer and more understandable.
- The Committee discussed that the next public involvement opportunity related to the TC&WM Final EIS will be decisions related to the permitting process. There is a need for additional clarification on how the permitting process will occur after the NEPA Record of Decision(s) (RODs) are issued. DOE mentioned that the FEIS discusses the permitting process and provides Waste Area C as an example scenario in Chapter 7. Ecology added that topics from the FEIS will require permit modifications. If the modifications are significant, which many of the topics are expected to be, then the modification will require a public comment period and public meetings.
- EPA said that they expect the rationale for a decision on low-activity waste (LAW) to be provided in the RODs and may not necessarily be provided in a separate analysis document. EPA stated that decision on how to share the information is up to DOE. DOE explained that when

DOE identifies a preferred alternative for LAW it will be subject to NEPA review and require a notice in the federal register.

- One Committee member mentioned that their impression after talking with an EPA representative is since DOE did not identify a preferred alternative in the FEIS they are required to do a supplemental analysis with an opportunity for public comment. Emy Laija (EPA) clarified that this was not EPA's stance. The Committee member reiterated that they have heard conflicting information from EPA about having an opportunity for the public to comment on any preferred alternative for supplemental treatment. They suggested the Committee continue to track this issue.
- The Committee discussed and commented on a draft diagram developed by Liz Mattson to show the difference between the NEPA and CERCLA process. The diagram was edited based on the Committee's feedback (Attachment 1) and will be presented to the Board during the February Board meeting.
- The Committee discussed the difficulty for the public in understanding the permitting process and when they can provide input. They suggested the PIC help identify ways to inform the public about the permitting process and when they can provide input. The Committee discussed developing a flow chart that would identify the different permitting modifications that come out of the TC&WM ROD(s) and how the public can provide input on those modifications. Jean Vanni, Yakama Nation, and Shelley Cimon, Public-at-Large, volunteered to draft a flow chart once further information about when the ROD(s) will be released is available.

Liz explained that the issue manager team will be working to get answers to continue to work with the framing questions and continue to review the TC&WM FEIS.

## **Communication Plan for the Revision of and Comment on the Draft Site-Wide Permit**

### *Introduction*

Liz Mattson explained that the purpose of this conversation is to learn about Ecology's plans to issue a revised draft Site-Wide Permit and release it for a second comment period. She said that the Committee will likely want to track the permit's process and provide insight on public involvement opportunities as the process moves forward.

### *Ecology Presentation*

Dieter Bohrmann said that he hopes Ecology and the Board will continue to collaborate throughout the permit revision process. He explained that Ecology originally issued the permit in 1994 and that last year Ecology held a public comment period on a permit revision. Ecology received nearly 5,000 comments on the draft permit, about 3,000 from DOE and 1,800 from the public. As Ecology began reviewing the comments, it became apparent that there were significant issues raised by commenters and that the draft permit could not be finalized without revising sections and allowing the public to comment on those revisions.

Dieter explained that Ecology expects it will take up to one year to analyze all the comments received on the draft permit and produce a comment-response document. After issuing the comment-response

document, Ecology will release a revised draft permit and open a second comment period with additional hearings. After reviewing comments from the second comment period, Ecology will make any adjustments and finalize the permit. Ecology estimates that this process will take about two years in total. Dieter said that there is not a definitive timeline but that Ecology plans to update its Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), provide frequent updates to the public, and will continue to engage the PIC and other stakeholders to get input on the public process. Lastly, Dieter remarked that the full permit will not go out for comment again. Only the areas of the permit where significant changes were made will be open for public comment.

### *Committee Discussion*

The following are the key points noted during the Committee discussion:

- The Committee asked for further clarity on what Ecology meant by providing frequent updates to the public. Ecology responded that they want the public to be aware of what is going on in the process and were thinking of sending out monthly updates on the progress of the work.
- One Committee member was not sure how Ecology could legally only seek public comment on specific areas of the revised draft permit instead of asking for comment on the entire permit again.
- The Committee is interested in hearing more specifics of which sections of the permit Ecology expects will need to be revised given the comments received. Ecology said that without reviewing all the comments from the first comment period it is not clear which sections they will be revising.
- The Committee discussed how Ecology defines significant revisions and what implications changing one section might have on other areas in the permit.
- The Committee expressed interest in learning more about the permit revision process and how the permit can integrate a final version when the current permit is continuously undergoing modification. Ecology said they would try and address this in the FAQ when discussing parallel permitting.
- The Committee asked if DOE could provide a summary of their 3,000 comments. DOE said they would look into getting a summary to the PIC committee.
- The Committee discussed the potential usefulness of Ecology holding a webinar explaining the decision to do a revised draft permit.

Liz Mattson and Jean Vanni volunteered to continue as issue managers for this topic.

### **Committee Business**

#### *Monthly update on HAB public involvement activities/contacts (round robin)*

Liz Mattson reported that Hanford Challenge has been working on the following:

- Evaluating Hanford Challenge's public involvement by offering a two-page survey at all their events. The survey asks participants which public involvement activities they go to and which they like. Hanford Challenge is waiting until they have a year's worth of data before compiling and analyzing the results. If anyone is interested in seeing or using the survey, Liz would be happy to provide it.
- Hanford Challenge has continued holding monthly discussion groups and happy hours. At the last discussion group they talked about Hanford in 2013. There has been a diverse group of people attending the events.

Sam Dechter, Public-at-Large, spent time recruiting individuals to apply for the open Public-at-Large seat.

Ken Niles, ODOE, indicated that ODOE has been working on the following:

- In January, ODOE gave a presentation at Linfield College. In February, ODOE gave presentations with two classes at Concordia University. Most of the students indicated that this was their first exposure to Hanford.
- The Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board will have a meeting on March 4-5 in Salem, OR.
- ODOE is talking with Washington Department of Ecology about extending their initial webinar series on Hanford.

Steve Hudson discussed a recent Portland Community College presentation by Ecology. The presentation was open to the entire science department and the Dean of the department was very enthusiastic and interested in continued presentations on Hanford. Over 150 individuals attended.

Norma Jean Germond said she has not done any formal public involvement but that she continues to talk with people she meets about being on HAB.

Mark Reavis, Central Washington Building Trades, says he has been talking a lot about the vitrification plant and the problems associated with construction, mixing and where to put the vitrified material in the end. He is interested in continuing this discussion in ways that the public can better understand the implication of budget cuts and the issues that are occurring.

Becky Holland, Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council, explained that she talks with her coworkers every day. Her co-workers know that they can go to her with question about key documents such as the Tank Closure and Waste Management (TC&WM) EIS.

### *Topics for the March Committee Call*

Susan Hayman reviewed topics for the March call:

- SOS Meeting status update
- 300 Area Proposed Plan public meetings update
- Plan for April Committee meeting

- Committee business

Susan Hayman reviewed topics for the April PIC meeting:

- Debrief on TPA public involvement survey
- SOS meeting planning
- 300 Area Proposed Plan public meeting planning

*Review follow up items*

Susan Hayman reviewed the follow up and action items:

- Columbia Riverkeeper will follow up with EPA on their interest in having a meeting in Hood River on the 300 Area Proposed Plan
- DOE will send PIC members a characterization of their comments on the Site-Wide permit (Tiffany)
- PIC members will provide feedback on the TPA’s public involvement survey by February 22
- Susan Hayman will send out the comment-response document on the TC&WM FEIS developed by the issue manager group

**Attachments**

- Attachment 1: DOE NEPA vs. CERCLA Process
- Attachment 2: PIC Meeting Transcribed Flip Chart Notes

**Attendees**

**HAB Members and Alternates**

Shelley Cimon	Rebecca Holland	Ken Niles
Sam Dechter	John Howieson	Mark Reavis
Gary Garnant	Steve Hudson	Jean Vanni
Norma Jean Germond	Susan Leckband	
Laura Hanses	Liz Mattson	

**Others**

Karen Lutz, DOE-RL	Madeleine Brown, Ecology	Theresa Labriola, Columbia Riverkeeper
Tiffany Nguyen, DOE-RL	Larry Gadbois, EPA	Mike Luzzo, Public
Carrie Meyer, DOE-ORP	Emy Laija, EPA	Daniel Brody, EnviroIssues
Dieter Bohrmann, Ecology	Sharon Braswell, MSA	Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues