



# HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

A Site Specific Advisory Board, Chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act

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US Dept. of Energy  
US Environmental  
Protection Agency  
Washington State  
Dept. of Ecology

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November 13, 2017

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Richland, WA 99354

Dear Mr. Shoop, Mr. Vance, Ms. Buelow, and Ms. Smith,

## **Background**

Hanford State of the Site meetings (SOS) have successfully provided regional opportunities for open, meaningful dialogue about Hanford site issues, progress, and path forward among the general public and Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies decision-makers and affected tribes. The practice of holding regional State of the Hanford Site meetings has occurred since 2002 and has been supported by the TPA agencies<sup>1</sup>. The most recent Regional Hanford State of the Site meetings led by the TPA agencies occurred in 2014. The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) recommends that the agencies begin planning for a series of regional in-person SOS meetings to take place in the spring of 2018.

The Board believes that in-person meetings with decision makers demonstrate a true commitment to the goals of transparency and public policy deliberation. The SOS meetings create a unique environment, unlike more formal public comment periods, to establish healthy working relationships between the agencies and members of the public through discussion of Hanford issues. The SOS framework allows the public to get involved, to learn about Hanford, to ask questions, and to share values and concerns with decision-makers.

As the Board has observed in previous advice (Board Advice #137, #169, #191, #222, #239, #261, #291; see attached), the success of public meetings, including SOS meetings, relies in part on active facilitation, accessible meeting sites in a variety of locations, and adequate publicity. The Board has also observed that SOS meetings must be regularly scheduled and must provide sufficient lead time to allow planning time for community organizers and the public.

## Advice

- The Board advises the TPA agencies to schedule a series of regional, in-person SOS meetings for the spring of 2018 and to do so in a manner consistent with the goals, expectations, and values identified in previous pieces of SOS BOARD advice.
- The Board advises the TPA agencies to seek Board and local citizen groups' collaboration and involvement in the SOS scheduling and design process, starting in autumn 2017, in order to ensure adequate community and Board membership support.
- The Board advises the TPA agencies to work with the Board's Public Involvement and Communications committee to develop and publish an SOS protocol that clearly addresses SOS meeting outcomes, format, and methods of meeting evaluation.
- The Board advises the TPA agencies to hold future in-person SOS meetings annually, consistent with past Board advice on this matter.

Sincerely,



Susan Leckband, Chair  
Hanford Advisory Board

Enclosures

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*This advice represents HAB consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.*

cc: Jim Owendoff, Assistant Secretary of Environmental Management, U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters  
Kyle Rankin, Co-Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office  
Dawn MacDonald, Co-Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection  
David Borak, U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters  
The Oregon and Washington Delegations

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<sup>1</sup> Agency response to advice #191, June 2006: "The Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (Tri-Party Agreement [TPA]) agencies have found the SOS meetings to be a valuable forum for sharing information on the status of cleanup and hearing first-hand the public's values, issues, and concerns. We believe that opportunities for candid and meaningful dialogue between Hanford's decision-makers and the public are an important component of our public involvement efforts." [http://www.hanford.gov/files.cfm/HAB\\_TPAREsponse191.pdf](http://www.hanford.gov/files.cfm/HAB_TPAREsponse191.pdf)