U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DRAFT TANK CLOSURE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2010

6:00 p.m.

OWYHEE PLAZA HOTEL
1109 MAIN STREET
BOISE, IDAHO 83702

James Parham, Facilitator

PANEL MEMBERS:
Ms. Mary Beth Burandt, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection

Mr. Jeff Lyon, Washington State Department of Ecology, Hanford Project Office
ANDREA SHIPLEY: Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Department of Energy's plans for cleanup of the Hanford Reservation analyzed in the Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement.

My name is Andrea Shipley. I am the executive director of the Snake River Alliance. The Snake River Alliance serves as Idaho's nuclear watchdog and Idaho's advocate for renewable nuclear-free energy. We raise community awareness about the dangers of nuclear waste, weapons, and power while working to identify and promote sustainable alternatives.

We do our work through advocacy, collaboration, education, and grassroots organizing. I make the following comments on behalf of the Alliance's dues-paying members.

Before I address the plans to decommission the Fast Flux Test Facility, let me
first voice the Alliance's support for the
justifiable concerns of the people of Washington
and Oregon about the long-term health, safety, and
environmental threats posed by Hanford.

Radioactive and hazardous pollution
there have made it the most contaminated place in
the western hemisphere. At the same time, it sits
on the banks of the Columbia River, one of the
most valuable water resources on the planet. This
is a perilous combination.

That peril could only be made worse by
the importation to Hanford of more nuclear waste
from other DOE sites. The DOE must abandon that
misbegotten plan, particularly in light of the
draft EIS summary's acknowledgement that "there is
substantial uncertainty associated with the
sources, volumes, and potential long-term
performance of radiological and chemical offsite
waste inventories forecast for disposal at
Hanford."

It is certain that abandoning the plan
will mean something like 3 million cubic feet of
radioactive and hazardous materials stay off the
Northwest's major transportation corridors, such
as I-81, which runs right through Boise.
We understand that cleanup of Hanford's high-level wastes tanks faces immense, intractable obstacles. Those obstacles have not been lowered by years of mismanagement. Nonetheless, the Alliance is convinced that lowering the goal posts cannot be substituted for lowering the obstacles.

The DOE must remove 99.9% of the waste or to the limits of technical capability from the tanks, pipes, and ancillary equipment. After all, the waste that can be removed has been removed. The DOE must evaluate the contaminated soil around the tanks and, if appropriate, remove it.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, plutonium was buried at Hanford and at the Idaho National Laboratory under the assumption that it would remain essentially immobile for tens of thousands of years.

That assumption was proven wrong in a couple of decades. INL has been successfully exhuming plutonium-contaminated waste for a number of years, and the Snake River Alliance is puzzled by the DOE's decision to abandon, so close to groundwater, the plutonium at Hanford.

We read with interest a newspaper account of the Richland, Washington, hearing on
the tank waste draft EIS. Half the commenters
called for saving the Fast Flux Test Facility.
That led an Alliance member to compare the FFTF's
fan base to a nuclear National Rifle Association.

    We urge the DOE to go ahead. Tear that
reactor away from their cold, stiff fingers.

    It is our understanding that the
Washington State standard for nuclear reactor
decommissioning requires removal and site
restoration. That was the course taken for the
Trojan reactor in Oregon.

    As part of FFTF decommissioning,
alternatives in this draft EIS call for shipping
radioactively contaminated bulk sodium or remote
handled equipment to INL for treatment and then
shipping it back to Hanford or shipping
remote-handled special components to INL and then
shipping them back after treatment.

    The Alliance has objected to these
proposals in the past, and with the support of our
allied organizations in Washington, we do so again
today. The risks of shipping radioactive sodium
or remote-handled equipment are simply
unacceptable and the benefits of treatment in
Idaho are relatively modest.
There are no licensed shippings casks that could be used for the large special components envisaged for shipment. The FFTF waste should be stored and treated as safely as possible at Hanford. Thank you.
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Roxanne K. Patchell, Court Reporter, a Notary Public, do hereby certify:

That I am the reporter who took the proceedings had in the above-entitled action in machine shorthand and thereafter the same was reduced into typewriting under my direct supervision; and

That the foregoing transcript contains a full, true, and accurate record of the proceedings had in the above and foregoing cause, which was heard at Boise, Idaho.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand April 29, 2010.

[Signature]

Roxanne K. Patchell, RPR, CSR No. 733