



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY



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Issuance of the Final Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement

Richland, WA - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is issuing its *Final Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement Hanford Site, Richland, Washington* (Final TC & WM EIS, DOE/EIS-0391), prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State Department of Ecology are cooperating agencies on this Final EIS, which analyzes alternatives for three programmatic areas relevant to future cleanup of the Hanford Site.

The three programmatic areas analyzed in the Final EIS include: retrieve and treat waste from 177 underground storage tanks at Hanford, including closure of 149 single-shell tanks; final decontamination and decommissioning of the Fast Flux Test Facility and its support structures; and ongoing and expanded waste management operations on the Hanford Site, including the disposal of Hanford's low-level radioactive waste (LLW) and mixed low-level radioactive waste (MLLW) and of LLW and MLLW from other DOE sites in an Integrated Disposal Facility.

NEPA requires federal agencies to ensure that high quality environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and actions are taken, and that agencies consider the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives. In preparing the Final TC & WM EIS, DOE considered all comments received on the Draft EIS issued in October 2009. DOE will issue a Record of Decision for the TC & WM EIS no sooner than 30 days after EPA publishes its notice of availability in the *Federal Register*.

"Ecology is pleased that the EIS has been released. As a cooperating agency, we have been very involved in this study and feel it was a positive experience. Ecology extensively reviewed the environmental modeling and agrees that the document is technically sound. It tells us important

information about managing waste at Hanford and how to mitigate effects to the environment over time. We have some concerns with the Department of Energy's choice to not select a preferred alternative for supplement treatment of tank waste, which we detail in Ecology's Foreword to the EIS. But the state looks forward to moving ahead with addressing the environmental hazards of Hanford's tank waste, and this EIS is a big step toward doing so," said Suzanne Dahl, Tank Waste Treatment Section Manager.

The Hanford Site is located in southeastern Washington State along the Columbia River, and is approximately 586 square miles in size. From early 1940 through 1980's Hanford's mission included defense-related nuclear research, development, and weapons production. Hanford's mission now is focused on the cleanup and ultimate closure of Hanford.

The Final TC & WM EIS will be available at: <http://www.hanford.gov/index.cfm?page=1117&> and at: <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>

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