

To: K. McCombs!

**SUMMARY NOTES FROM JOINT NUCLEAR WASTE BOARD/NUCLEAR WASTE
ADVISORY COUNCIL INFORMATION MEETING**

JUNE 16, 1988

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Warren Bishop, Chair
- Curtis Eschels, EFSEC
- Dr. William Funk
- Representative Shirley Hankins
- Russell Jim
- Aaron Katz
- William Lingley, DNR
- Representative Dick Nelson
- Sam Reed
- Eugene Rosa
- Robert Rose
- Representative Nancy Rust
- Betty Shreve
- Gus Simpson
- Michael Spranger
- Shirley Tucker

Introductory Remarks

Chairman Bishop opened the joint information meeting of the Board and Advisory Council for a presentation on the Hanford Defense Waste Cleanup Plan. He introduced Ron Gerton, Director of the Waste Management Division at the USDOE Richland Operations Office. Mr. Gerton introduced Mike Talbott from the USDOE Richland Office of Communications, Dr. Ron Lerch, Ed Freddenburg, Joe LaRue, and Mike Janske, from Westinghouse Hanford Company, and Steve Stein from Battelle Seattle Research Center.

USDOE Hanford Defense Waste Cleanup Plan

Mr. Gerton made a presentation which included discussions on the USDOE Richland Operations Office reorganization and how the new organization addresses defense waste cleanup, USDOE plans for implementing the Hanford Defense Waste EIS Record of Decision, Hanford's current waste management activities, an overview and status of single-shell storage tanks, and current environmental restoration activities. Copies of the presentation overheads are enclosed.

Current schedules call for a start up of the grout facility in early July, transuranic wastes stored at the Transuranic Storage and Assay Facility will be shipped to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) as soon as the disposal facility is ready to accept wastes, the Waste Receiving and Processing Facility (WRAP) is scheduled to begin operating in 1999, and the Hanford Waste Vitrification Plant (HWVP) is scheduled to begin operations in 1999. Strontium and cesium

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capsules are now stored in water pools and packaging and disposal operations are scheduled from 2005 to 2010. In response to a question by Mr. Eschels, Mr. Gerton indicated that the capsules contain cesium chloride and strontium fluoride which are both water soluble. He described how helium gas is used as a leak detector.

Mr. Gerton indicated that interim stabilization/isolation of single shell-shell tanks is scheduled for completion in 1996. He described the surveillance methods used to determine if tanks leak. Representative Nelson asked if USDOE had a cost/safety ratio to determine when tanks should be stabilized. Mr. Gerton responded that NRC had looked at such an approach but nothing is now in place. There was considerable discussion about the free liquid and interstitial liquid in single-shell tanks. Mr. Gerton indicated that the maximum possible leak from a filled million gallon tank would be about 2-300,000 gallons but the probable leak would be in the 20-30,000 gallon range. In a response to a question by Mr. Simpson, he indicated that the wastes from the estimated 115,000 gallon leak from 106-T tank in 1973 did not reach groundwater. Mr. Gerton indicated there is a risk from single-shell tank leaks but there is not an urgent and immediate risk. Double-shell tank space is the bottleneck which now limits how fast the stabilization program can be conducted. A timely grout program is the key to making tank space available and RCRA permits will be required before the hazardous and mixed waste streams are routed to the grout facility. The grout program could be accelerated if additional funding were available. Mr. Katz indicated he would be interested in what the cost trade offs would be to move stabilization ahead by 2-5 years.

Representative Nelson indicated that he was originally interested in the Hanford economy but he is now interested in safety of single-shell tanks. He would like to know the risk of leaks and he believes allowing wastes to leak to soil is improper.

Mr. Gerton indicated that approximately 1,400 inactive hazardous waste sites at Hanford have been grouped into four aggregated waste areas (100, 200, 300, and 1100 areas) for listing on EPA's national priority list. In a response to a question from Representative Nelson about the radiation protection program, Mr. Gerton indicated that the ratio of wastes left in place versus wastes removed is about 99%.

The Tri-Party Agreement is an effort by USDOE, EPA, and the Department of Ecology to define and prioritize Hanford RCRA and CERCLA activities and to define roles and responsibilities of the parties. Mr. Gerton indicated that the parties are working hard and cooperatively and an agreement is key to Hanford cleanup. Russell Jim indicated that a government to government relationship had been established in the repository program and he would like to maintain that relationship. He would hope the Yakima Indian Nation could be involved in the Tri-Party Agreement process. Mr. Bishop asked staff to work with Mr. Jim to develop a proposal for the Council and Board meetings.

Representative Nelson expressed concern about cleanup strategies and the possibility of lost opportunities if a less than adequate cleanup is conducted. Ron Lerch indicated that grouping the sites into operable units and ranking the units by hazard will minimize lost opportunities.

Chairman Bishop asked if citizens had questions or comments. Chris Stevens representing Greenpeace asked Mr. Gerton if USDOE had back up plans in case WIPP or the high-level repository are unavailable. Mr. Gerton indicated that long term storage would be available for both wastes. Mr. Bishop then adjourned the meeting.