



December 5, 1997

Al Alm, Assistant Secretary
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Subject: Timeline for Public Input to FY 2000 Budget Prioritization (IPL) & 2006 Plan Process for 1998

Dear Messrs. Alm and Wagoner:

The Board urges USDOE to extend the deadline for input to the sites IPL until after the April 4, 1998, Board meeting. The Board expects USDOE to consider its advice on the 2006 Plan from that meeting. The timeline for submission of Hanfords FY 2000 budget would seriously/ominously compromise public involvement with the FY 2000 budget and 2006 Plan.

USDOE-RL has, in past years, significantly opened the budget prioritization process, including a day-long workshop on the draft Integrated Priority List (IPL). The Tri-Party Agreement requires USDOE, with USEPA and Ecology, to hold public meetings to obtain public comment on Hanfords budget priorities.

For 1998, the review and comment period for both the 2006 Plan and IPL are so interrelated that the Hanford Advisory Board and public must be afforded the opportunity to review and comment on them simultaneously. However, USDOE Headquarters has set a deadline of March 15, 1998, for submission of the sites IPL, while the comment period for the 2006 Plan extends to March 30.

Because USDOE will embargo its FY 99 budget until it is submitted to Congress, meaningful review cannot begin until February. Thus, USDOEs timeline for submission of the sites IPL should allow adequate time for:

1. The Board to issue advice regarding the IPL and 2006 Plan;
2. Holding the required public meetings for public comment on the budget priorities;
3. Holding public meetings at a time when the views of the Board on the budget can be shared with the public;
4. Holding those public meetings in conjunction with public comment on the 2006 Plan;
5. USDOE-RL to respond to, and dialogue with, the Hanford Advisory Board regarding the Boards advice prior to finalizing the IPL and forwarding it to Headquarters.

We look forward to your response and to periodic progress updates on this matter.

Very truly yours,

Merilyn B. Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

cc: Tom Fitzsimmons, Washington Department of Ecology
Chuck Clarke, Environmental Protection Agency
Alice Murphy, Designated Federal Official
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations
Randy Smith, Environmental Protection Agency
Dan Silver, Washington Department of Ecology

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.

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HAB Consensus Advice #80

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