

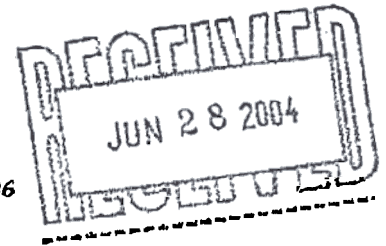


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STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

P.O. Box 47600 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7600
(360) 407-6000 • TDD Only (Hearing Impaired) (360) 407-6006



June 25, 2004

Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
1933 Jadwin Avenue, Suite 135
Richland, WA 99352

Dear Mr. Martin:

RE: HAB Advice No. 164, Tank Closure EIS Alternatives

Thank you for the Board's recent letter of advice outlining their concerns with the scope of the upcoming Tank Closure Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Ecology has been involved in the scoping of the Tank Closure EIS and we are generally supportive of the scoping direction to date. We understand that one of the functions of an EIS is to examine many alternatives - some of which may not be compliant with current regulations or the HFFACO. However, please be assured that Ecology, in commenting on the document, will point out alternatives that fall short of legal requirements.

It is true that only one alternative meets the obligation of vitrifying all the waste through conventional Waste Treatment Plant technologies (with 99 % retrieval). However, there is another alternative that vitrifies the waste through a combined use of Waste Treatment Plant technologies and Bulk Vitrification technologies (with 99 % retrieval).

We understand your concern that neither of the above alternatives is projected to meet the HFFACO date of completion of vitrification of all tank waste by 2028. The environmental impacts of these alternatives, however, are comparable whether treatment is completed in 2028 or 2032. Therefore, this analysis will give us adequate information to move forward on tank cleanup decisions. Regardless, Ecology remains committed to the HFFACO end of tank waste treatment date of 2028.

Sincerely,

Linda Hoffman
Director

