



December 23, 1998

Mr. John Wagoner, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations
P.O. Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

Dear Mr. Wagoner:

The Hanford Advisory Board appreciates your leadership in cleanup and stabilization of radioactive and hazardous wastes. As the first DOE manager responsible for the cleanup missions, you have set a high standard for future managers. We believe you deserve recognition for your long and distinguished service to the U.S. Department of Energy, particularly the work you have done during the past seven years to make Hanford a safer place.

Enjoy your retirement, but remember, we will miss you.

The Hanford Advisory Board was created during your tenure. Some have charged the Board was designed to fail. But, in spite of the difficulties posed by a 32-member board empowered to advise on all aspects of cleanup, you have remained supportive. Early on you recognized that information about cleanup must be available and understandable. This included the budget, the process for selecting priorities, and the expenditures.

Since the creation of the HAB, you have attended numerous Board and Committee meetings explaining issues, and, most important, listening to the views of members. You have taken time to listen when individual members call issues to your attention.

The Hanford cleanup mission has been plagued by some false starts, cost overruns, and unsolved technical issues. Countless investigators and technical oversight committees have occupied your time. Changes in leadership at DOE Headquarters and changes in contractors and contracts have posed challenges. But through all this you have had a strong and consistent message from Northwest Stakeholders: "Protect workers, the public, and the Columbia River; Get on with it."

We will remember that you coped with each crisis and the occasional turbulence with dignity. We will remember that you tried to keep the Board informed, and that you respected our advice, even when you could not accept it. We will miss you and hope that you come back sometime in the future to check up on the productivity and progress both on the site and within the work of the Board.

Sincerely,

Merilyn B. Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

cc: Bill Richardson, Department of Energy Headquarters
James Owendoff, Department of Energy Headquarters
Alice Murphy, Designated Federal Official
Chuck Clarke, Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA
Tom Fitzsimmons, Director Washington Department of Ecology
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations
Michael Gearheard, Environmental Protection Agency
Dan Silver, Washington Department of Ecology

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