

FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

April 28 - 29, 2005

Yakima, WA

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not fully represent the ideas discussed or opinions given. Examination of this document cannot equal or replace attendance and public participation.

Executive Summary

Board Action

The Hanford Advisory Board (HAB or the Board) adopted three pieces of advice: one regarding Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 and 2007 budgets; one regarding Department of Energy (DOE) contracts; one regarding Board Values on Central Plateau Cleanup Decisions. The Board also issued a letter regarding the Tank Retrieval Progress.

Board Values on Central Plateau Cleanup Decisions

The Board reviewed a new version of the values piece it worked on in previous meetings. The flowchart portion of the piece was condensed and adopted as advice. The River and Plateau Committee (RAP) is working on a follow-up piece to address further issues for consideration when a cap or barrier is deemed appropriate.

Fiscal Year 2006 and 2007 Budgets

Board members received updates on the 2006 budget and the 2007 budget proposal from both DOE-Richland (DOE-RL) and DOE-Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP). The United State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) offered their thoughts on the budget request.

Tri-Party Agency Updates

Howard Gnann, Department of Energy-Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), informed the Board that DOE-ORP is working on its priorities. The Tank Closure EIS is targeted for May 2006 public release.

Joe Voice, DOE-RL, stated that DOE-RL is working on the budget. The River Corridor contract was awarded in March, but it was protested, so they are addressing that. Shirley Olinger updated the Board on the upcoming 300-area workshop.

Nolan Curtis, Ecology, updated the Board on the budget meetings. Billie Mauss informed the Board about a breach in the box during a recent full scale test of the bulk vitrification demonstration system.

Nick Ceto, EPA, stated Steve Johnson was named as new EPA administrator. EPA has assessed DOE a \$75,000 penalty for missing the K-basin sludge containerization deadline.

Transuranic Waste Retrieval at Idaho National Lab

Nick Ceto presented the Board with an overview of several new technologies being used at Idaho National Lab to retrieve buried wastes.

Board Business

Todd Martin updated the Board on happenings at the Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) chairs meeting. Leon Swenson announced his resignation. Topics for the June Board meeting were discussed.

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Todd Martin, Citizens for a Clean Eastern Washington (Regional Environmental/Citizen Organizations) Chair, called the meeting of the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB or Board) to order. The meeting was open to the public and offered two public comment periods, one on Thursday and one on Friday.

Board members in attendance are listed at the end of this summary, as are members of the public. Four seats were not represented: Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (Hanford Work Force), Hanford Watch (Regional Environmental/Citizen Organizations), Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) (Ex-Officio) and one Public-at-Large seat. Two seats were empty awaiting new membership: one University seat and the Local Environmental Interest seat.

Welcome and Introductions

Martin Yanez welcomed the Board to Yakima. This was the first time the Board convened in Yakima. A public open house was held at A.C. Davis High School on Thursday evening.

Gwen Luper was introduced. She is the new alternate representing the Benton-Franklin Regional Council (Local Government) seat.

Jane Twaddle, Yakima Valley Community College, was introduced as the new University seat representative. She has been involved with environmental issues for about 20 years and has been the head of the engineering department at the college for the past five years.

John Stanfill introduced Gabriel Bohnee, new member representing the Nez Perce tribe.

Approval of March Meeting Summary

The Board approved the March meeting summary. No changes were submitted.

Board Values on Central Plateau Cleanup Decisions

Maynard Plahuta presented the re-worked Central Plateau Remedial Action Values Flow (the Flow). He noted this is not the final product on this topic, but rather part of a larger piece. The Board will also provide input on considerations for barrier application at a later time.

Todd asked the Board to consider what this document represents. He suggested it might be advice sent with a cover letter noting this is the first in a series of advice on this topic.

Regulator Perspective

Dennis Faulk noted in the narrative at the top of the chart, the words, "... ideal is total characterization, retrieval..." may be taken too literally by some. He suggested either bolding "ideal" or otherwise changing the sentence, as characterization is never "total". Nick Ceto concurred with Dennis.

Board Discussion and Questions

Betty Tabbutt stated she is impressed with the progress made on the Flow since the last meeting. She thinks leaving the word "total" out of number one in the narrative at the top is a good idea, as there are many instances where total characterization is not necessary.

Jim Trombold concurred that "total" should be removed as it is a very absolute word. He noted number two in the narrative begins to modify the idea of "total characterization".

Paige Knight stated she would like to see either “total” or “thorough” used in number one in order to keep discussion with the Department of Energy (DOE) open.

Rob Davis noted using “total” had been discussed in committee and it was decided that leaving “total” in would be appropriate for the Board in its advisory role. The details of what “total” means would be worked out by the Tri-Party agencies.

Jerry Peltier stated he thinks removing “total” lowers the bar on how the characterization is executed, especially since the sentence refers to the Board’s “ideal”.

Other Board members suggested “thorough” or “appropriate” as replacements for “total”.

Todd reminded the Board that the purpose of the Flow is that it is a values based piece. It basically says, “Don’t make a default decision and just cap everything.” He suggested that using “appropriate” in place of “total” would be a good solution. This would set the bar at applicable environmental laws.

Betty suggested a new sentence, “The Board’s ideal for remedial action for all Central Plateau waste sites is to first characterize and then remove, treat, and dispose (RTD) of all waste.” This places the importance of characterization out front, but still lays out the Board’s priorities.

Al Boldt stated his ideal is RTD and complete characterization is not necessary with RTD; some characterization is done when a site is remediated under RTD.

Pam stated she thinks box number six contradicts the statement that the Board’s ideal is RTD. Todd disagreed stating the narrative states the Board’s ideal meaning, “in a perfect world”. Box number six acknowledges the world is not ideal. Jim Trombold noted the paragraph after the numbered items in the narrative also acknowledges that the world does not operate under ideal conditions and states the Flow is to be used as a policy tool to assist with decision making. Paige further clarified this statement noting that the narrative states the vision and the flowchart spells out the steps of the vision.

Rick Jansons suggested using the Flow as a values piece for the entire site. Dennis stated applying this site-wide might re-open the question of capping along the river. Todd noted that the Flow could be used as a starting point in the future, but generalizing it without thorough deliberation might be imprudent.

Board members discussed whether or not a response from DOE was necessary. Pam suggested asking the agencies to let the Board know how this format works for them. Joe noted that previous versions of this document have already been useful.

The Board decided to adopt the Flowchart as advice, including a cover letter stating that this is the first part in a series and that it outlines the Board’s priorities on Central Plateau remediation.

Ken stated that the Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board has spent a lot of time working on capping, too. He expects a white paper on this within the next two months.

The flowchart was adopted as advice.

Introduction of draft Caps and Barriers – Issues for Consideration

Rob Davis and Gary Petersen were assigned the task of developing a first draft of the values and policy document to support the Flow. Rob stated there are questions and considerations that should be pointed out. He listed these considerations, including:

- The possibility of new/emerging technologies
- Special considerations for barriers in the Hanford Reach and Monument areas
- Authority and funding once the site is turned over to Legacy Management (LM). Will LM become a de facto member of the Tri-Party agencies?

- All risks associated with barriers should be considered, including the possibility of failure
- All possible failure scenarios should be analyzed. Failure while the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) is open and active is different than failure once it has been sealed.
- Caps and barriers should have long-term monitoring in place and detailed actions plans, in the event of intrusion, natural catastrophe or failure.

Todd stated that the Flow states the Board's policy on when to consider a barrier. This piece says what to consider. He asked Board members for input. Dick Smith and Gerry Pollet have submitted comments that had not yet been incorporated.

Board Discussion and Questions

Paige stated she would like to see it made more user friendly.

Betty stated that she is concerned about situations where a cap or barrier might preclude future treatment of the covered waste. She would like to see this concern spelled out in the Issues document. Todd clarified that she was referring to the irretrievability of capped wastes. Rob responded that they had discussed the possibility of taking advantage of new technologies, but they were concerned by the interim barrier mentioned in the Flow. The drafters of the Issues document did not want to sacrifice protection in the near term on the chance that there might be better technology available in the future. Todd added that the Tank Waste Task Force addressed this by advising that the capped waste form not preclude future treatment. This is implied in the Issues document, but could be made explicit. He suggested reviewing the Tank Waste Task Force values for items that might be reused.

Nick Ceto commented that Betty has a valid concern, as it is fairly certain that, the more time, money and rigor that are invested in a cap, the less likely it is that anyone will go back and either update the cap or tear it up to further remediate the waste beneath. This also alludes to a problem related to the consolidation of waste sites. EPA has said that they want the absolute minimum number of capped sites, so that there are not large areas just taken up with caps. The problem is that when waste forms are mixed together, in order to consolidate the sites, it may make it harder to find a treatment technology that will work for all elements in the resulting combined waste. He suggested thinking about the Board's views on permanence versus the temporary nature of remedies. He acknowledged that there is the potential for conflict when caps are designed to address long-term stewardship needs. It would be difficult and even undesirable to dig up a cap built to such rigorous standards.

Jim Trombold stated that it seems every cap should be approached as if it were permanent. It seems implausible to think that you would cap an area and just assume that new technology will be available before the lifetime of the cap is expired. He does not believe that uncapping and applying new treatment will ever really happen. He asked if there is such a thing as a temporary cap. Nick said he was not sure. He noted that, if a rigorously designed cap is applied, then it is possible that the cap could preclude achievement of the Board's RTD ideal. He stated that it could be possible to have a site where in situ treatment would be appropriate, but the technology isn't quite ready. A cap could be designed that was good enough to keep environmental intrusions out, but would not withstand long-term exposure. If a more rigorously designed cap were used, people may just lose interest.

Paige noted the danger of using the term "permanent". She postulated that when people hear permanent, they may not even wonder what is beneath the cap or bother to investigate whether new technology could better remediate a "permanently" capped area. Dick stated that, if it has been determined that a cap is appropriate, the risk should already have been evaluated. If it is too risky to cap permanently, then it is too risky to cap at all and should be RTD. Al noted that all barriers are temporary, it is just a matter of design life. Barriers are currently designed for 1000 year performance, but there will come a time when even the 1000 year barrier is compromised.

Norma Jean Germond stated that she is concerned the government will not stay around long enough to keep an eye on these barriers. She is thinking about how the sites will be maintained once the government is gone and whether there will be funding to continue to monitor and maintain the site in the long-term.

Gary Petersen noted that many structures deemed temporary end up being more permanent. He agreed that DOE does not have the funds to come back and re-remediate sites.

Paige asserted that she is hoping for a new world. She would like to see all data about cleanup archived, so that in the future the really bad stuff that is capped can be remediated using new technology. Using the word permanent makes people think that everything has been completed and the bad stuff is taken care of. She would like to keep the language open to a new paradigm.

Rob stated that he was troubled by two points. First is whether or not Legacy Management (LM) would become a de facto member of the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) and second, what the vehicle for public review and involvement will be once LM takes over the site. Todd noted that LM is still part of DOE and DOE is a member of the Tri-Parties, so LM is automatically a member of the Tri-Parties. Whether or not this is good enough to hold them to the standards in the TPA is currently being discussed by the site specific advisory board (SSAB) chairs. Rocky Flats and Savannah River sites are undergoing this change in management now. Rob reiterated that the likelihood of there being problems with ERDF once it is closed is very real. The consequences of failure need to be evaluated with respect to time.

Pam mentioned that local government has learned that, in terms of closure, long-term stewardship and monitoring have to be in the Records of Decision (ROD) at the time of cleanup. This means that the Board must be especially diligent in reviewing these. She stated that she understands that Rocky Flats has managed to keep their advisory board through its transition to LM. She would like to see Hanford's long-term steward involved in site cleanup soon. Todd replied that the SSAB chairs have mentioned this to LM, but they have basically responded that, to them, Hanford does not exist. That to them, Hanford has so many huge problems and they have such limited funding, they will deal with it in about 30 years. They are more concerned with the sites that they are closing now.

Todd pointed out that when the Flow says "consider a barrier" it is just that. It is possible that, after considering the barrier the conclusion may be that a barrier is not appropriate.

Hanford Cleanup Video

The Board viewed the State of Oregon's newly revised video on Hanford cleanup. The video's target audience is the general public.

Fiscal Year 2006 and 2007 Budgets

The Board received presentations from the Department of Energy-Richland (DOE-RL), the Department of Energy-Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), the Budgets and Contracts Committee (BCC) and Gerry Pollett regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 budget update and FY 2007 budget request. Before the presentations Rick Jansons asked the Board to look for consistency with Board's policies.

Greg Jones stated that DOE-RL has submitted the FY '06 budget and they hope to have that back by October 1st. For FY'07, DOE-RL was given permission to go above target for specific areas. The over target funding request is needed to initiate new safeguard and security measures, construct a new special nuclear material (SNM) storage facility, recover Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) funding and fund technical assistance to DOE by the Hanford Natural Resource Trustees. All of the baseline operations of the site are within the target, but DOE-RL believes that they will need the over target amount in order to ensure compliance with design basis threats and to cover keeping the special material on-site. Greg added that, when the budget request was submitted, they included comments from the public. They also sent a letter to Environmental Management (EM) to advise them that advice would be forthcoming from the Board.

Howard reminded the Board that due to the timelines of the budget process, they are typically working three budget years at a time. He stated that at the time of the Board meeting there was not new information on the FY '06 budget request. He did note that the FY '06 budget is currently \$155 million below the approved baseline. The FY '07 budget is about \$93 million less than the approved baseline. However, they are planning to submit an over target budget to DOE-HQ at the end of April. Howard provided the Board with a list of possible activities to be deferred in 2006. This list included, W-211 Double Shell Tank (DST) Retrieval Systems; B-200 and T-200 tank retrieval, packaging and certification; installation and

operation of U-2090 retrieval system; single shell tank closures; and Integrated Disposal Facility (IDF) operations. These activities would be included as part of the over target budget submission.

Regulator Perspectives

Nick stated that he thinks the pace of cleanup at Hanford is budget constrained. He thinks the rate of cleanup can now be based on the rate at which the project receives funding. As an example he stated that they have recently become aware of groundwater contamination that is deeper than initially thought. In order to characterize and begin restoration of the aquifer, funding is needed. He noted that, while they acknowledge the need for the new safety and security measures, the funding for these measures should not come out of the cleanup budget. EPA does not intend to settle for less cleanup because of budget constraints, but it has caused them to prioritize and focus on activities that will have a greater overall impact at the site. Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF) cleanup may be pushed out as a result, so that funding can be redirected to activities with higher environmental priority. He is glad to see the over target FY '07 request. He recognizes that DOE may not get the over target amount, but at least they have made the request and justified it. He remarked that he does not think that overall there will be less cleanup, it may just take longer.

Mike Wilson referred to a letter from the governor to the secretary that outlined specific problems with the FY '06 budget. He noted that Ecology is particularly concerned with the fact that Hanford is taking a proportionately larger budget hit than other DOE sites. They are also concerned that the budget reductions disproportionately impact cleanup work. He is also concerned that security funding is coming out of the cleanup budget. He stated that he is somewhat cynical about the over target request, as he does not expect the over target amounts to be approved.

One budget reduction that is of particular concern is the reduction from the tanks budget. This reduction was attributed to the fact that there was regulatory uncertainty at Hanford. The fact that Washington isn't included in the language of the budget bill that purports to solve the problem of high-level waste (HLW) definition is being used as an excuse to delay tank work. There was an article in the National Academy of Sciences on high-level waste (HLW) classification and how it is currently done by DOE. There are a number of places in the report where it refers to an entity other than DOE deciding on HLW classifications and deep geologic repositories.

Pam stated the FY '07 budget is TPA compliant, but the FY '06 budget was deficient. She asked if the FY '07 budget makes up any of the deficit in '06. Greg clarified that the FY '06 budget is TPA compliant for 2006, it is the out-year budgets that could be at risk. Jeff added that the site's life-cycle costs have increased, but there may be changes to the system that could provide some relief.

Pam asked Howard if he had considered how the '06 layoffs will affect milestones. She also noted it is her understanding that bulk vitrification is not fully funded for FY '07. Howard refuted the last statement, noting that bulk vitrification is funded at target in '07. He stated that he does not believe the layoffs to be a problem for meeting milestones. He believes the workers will return as the back log is built back up. He did note that DOE-ORP is interested in life cycle costs. Part of the process will be to line up the baseline to match DOE-Headquarters (DOE-HQ).

Bob Parks asked what the money for RL-0100, Richland Community and Regulatory Support is used for. Greg responded that these funds are earmarked for the Department of Health, Ecology, Oregon Department of Energy and Washington military grants. Earmarked funds are funds that are designated by congress for a specific purpose.

Mike Keizer stated he is interested in the construction workforce for the waste treatment plant (WTP). They have taken the biggest hit on the budget. He noted that, while Howard thinks these workers stay in the area, he is wrong. It will be increasingly difficult to hire and maintain a qualified workforce, as the word will get out that the work may be cyclical. He is also concerned about the impacts these fluctuations can have on worker safety, noting that large jobs like Hanford require a safety culture. Howard noted that Bechtel brought in a new safety manager. He is working hard to improve the safety culture at Hanford.

With regards to stability of the workforce, Howard thinks that ultimately this will produce a more planned and stable workforce.

Gerry asked if DOE does not get the over target funds, will the funding earmarked for safeguards and security take priority over target cleanup activities. Greg responded that the current assumptions also include keeping the special materials on the site until 2035 along with the design basis threat and homeland security changes. They were asked to rewrite the proposal with new assumptions, which may reduce the overall request. Greg stated that DOE-RL is operating under the assumption that they will get all funds requested and they will not prioritize these until it is clear that they will not. He noted TPA compliant items are all within target. Gerry asked about groundwater and well decommissioning. This is an on-going dialog and is the one issue that remains questionable as far as TPA compliance.

Jim speculated about the on target amount budgeted for safeguards and security. He asked how this number has changed over the last couple of years and where the additional money is coming from (Homeland security versus EM). Greg said that he supposed the on target amount for safeguards and security probably escalated over time, but he does not have the exact numbers. He confirmed that currently those funds come out of cleanup funding.

Pam stated that there is money given to the counties, by the Washington Department of Health, for a planner to help work with issues at DOE. The funding for this position has been flat for years. She stated that she is troubled to hear that this cut in funding does not impact the schedule and it does not help those who are trying to get the funding restored. Jeff Fry responded that there has been a slow down due to the budget reduction, the reason there is no discernable impact to schedule is that not all activities are tied to milestones. Those activities that are not tied to milestones are the ones that start to slip first. Because these activities are delayed, they must be picked up later in the life cycle of cleanup. This will cause an overall increase in costs, in order to maintain schedule. Nick noted that part of the problem is that there aren't as many milestones as might be expected. He explained that, if you aren't doing cleanup activities that affect a deadline in 2008, then it will not show up as affecting the schedule until 2008.

Maynard asked if DOE-RL and DOE-ORP were making the pitch to other agencies, i.e. Homeland Security, and acknowledging that they need an increase in funding to cover the increased safeguard and security costs. He stated that he is not concerned with where the funds come from, as long as they are not coming out of cleanup funding. Todd responded that he is certain the agencies are doing this, but he guessed that the money just isn't there. He stated that the new safeguard and security protocols are likely to impact cleanup in some way. Nick noted that the EPA does get some Homeland Security funding, although it is not earmarked for Hanford.

Gerry's presentation illustrated an alternative perspective on the 2006 Budget Cleanup activities. He noted that there is a total decrease of \$267 million (or 18.7%) plus another \$27 million that is diverted for Safeguards and Security funding. He asserted that the Safeguards and Security funding either comes out of cleanup funding or from other activities, but ultimately the government is playing a zero sum game. There is no extra money laying around waiting to be used for this. He noted that one way to get additional funding would be for DOE to declare the plutonium on-site an asset and have the associated cleanup and storage activities funded under atomic energies defense activities. Gerry's presentation then detailed the net changes between the FY '04 and FY '06 budgets.

Jeff replied that the comparisons need to be kept to comparing like activities and assumptions. In 2005 some of the costs for projects were shuffled. The work scope contains a lot of maintenance and liabilities and they moved some of the dollars around, hoping to spread these costs around the project. They tried to align these expenses with the funding sources for capital projects, to better the distinction between what funding was actual cleanup work and what was simply operating costs. Gerry and the BCC would have liked to have this information prior to this discussion.

Budget Advice

During the discussion of the budget advice from BCC, several points were raised about contracts. The Board felt that these points were valid and timely and produced an additional piece of advice during the course of the Board meeting. These discussions are captured below, under Contract Advice.

Rick stated that the advice takes a larger perspective look at the budget. It ignores the over target requests and only addresses the target requests. He noted that the concerns listed are only examples.

Ken Niles stated that one of the justifications given by DOE headquarters for reducing Hanford's budget is that several high priority projects have been completed. They ignore the fact that important work at Hanford has been deferred while these other projects were under way. He would like to see that reflected early in the advice. He also suggested a modification to the cesium capsule recommendation. Rick clarified that there are two different proposals for the cesium capsules as well as the concept that the Board does not think that Yucca Mountain will be ready, so DOE should be considering what to do if that happens.

Leon pointed out that in item number five, the Board is advising the regulators to take preemptive action when they anticipate a clear likelihood that DOE will miss TPA milestones. He stated that he was not sure that the regulators are likely to do this. Mike Wilson said this would be called anticipatory breach and typically they are not inclined to do this. They have used it in the past though, when the tanks program decided not to fund the interim stabilization of the single shell tanks. He said that the regulators have been bandying the term about lately, so they may be more inclined to use this measure in the future. Leon also noted that he does not think sufficient funding has been identified to carry out the bulk vitrification or alternative technology treatment of the low-activity waste (LAW) that will not be vitrified in the WTP. Gerry replied that bulk vitrification is not called out in the advice as the committee did not want to seem as if it were endorsing bulk vitrification. The primary thought that was captured is that the current funding schedule does not provide funding to treat all of the tank waste.

Rob stated that he is disappointed with the response from Howard, Greg and Jeff. He is concerned that the advice is not addressing what DOE considers a problem. They apparently do not view loss of skilled workforce at the WTP as an issue to be addressed. He noted that, in the past two weeks, TWC received information on the seismic issues facing the tank farms and DOE has not addressed how that funding will be recuperated. Howard acknowledged that they have made a significant reduction in the craft workforce and are planning a reduction in the engineering workforce. He stated that he may have oversimplified DOE's ability to reacquire the craft workforce, but he thinks that they will be able to offer a more stable environment for those workers who do return. Doing some of the engineering and design before the craft is on-site and ready to work will help increase the stability and workflow. Regarding the budget reduction for the tank farms, he acknowledged that it will hinder cleanup work in 2007. Fluor is not as far along as DOE thinks they should be, but they are hoping to make up some time and funding in the out years. They are still optimistic that they will get at least part of their over target requests.

Pam stated that the advice does not stress strongly enough the problems with the source terms and the shortfall in the tanks budget. Jerry replied that this had been part of the advice, but the committee had consensus problems on that point, so it was dropped.

Gerry stated that the River Corridor contract changed a major milestone. It moved the 2012 commitment to 2015. Joe replied that the 2012 was an accelerated cleanup goal, but not a new milestone. The change did not impact TPA milestones.

The advice was adopted.

Contract Advice

Gary Petersen stated that he had some concerns surrounding upcoming contracting activities at Hanford. These concerns include:

- Fluor Hanford and CH2MHill Hanford Group contracts expire in September 2006, which means the bid process should begin in 2005;
- DOE announced it is taking initial steps to determine how to divide up these new contracts, which will be a major contracting change for work underway;
- The Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council labor contract is due for renegotiation;
- The River Corridor contract award is being protested;
- FFTF demolition contract award is being protested;
- The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory contract is due to be bid next year;
- The proposed FY '06 Hanford budget reductions will require major oversight efforts for rescheduling and budgeting at a time when the local field offices are undergoing staff reductions;
- WTP faces challenges in the management of seismic and cost issues.

Gary stated that, with DOE looking at changing the contracting structure, it is a good time to advise that extending existing contracts may be a better course of action.

Jerry Peltier stated in his 20 years of experience, there is no way to measure the dollars and time lost during contracting changes. He noted that every time there are contract changes, money is not saved due to greater efficiencies; it is lost as the new contractor comes up to speed. The workers and their benefits pay the biggest price during contract changes.

Jeff Luke agreed with Jerry, stating that the workforce suffers and benefits are decreased during contract changes. Extension of contracts is the best mechanism to ensure retention of the skilled workforce and minimize perturbation of on-going cleanup activities.

Dick would also like to see existing contracts extended. He does not see why DOE is so set to change things when activities are running smoothly. Contract changes always cause a significant rough spot. He stated that, unless there is a legal reason for re-bidding the contracts, DOE should seriously consider extending them.

Leon reiterated that the cost of contractor changes cannot be quantified in time or dollars spent.

Maynard stated he believes the requirement for re-bidding contracts is related to DOE's commitment to community development. Unfortunately, recent contract changes have been dismal failures, which does not help DOE support economic development. He noted that extending the upcoming contracts could also save time and money during a time when the field offices are experiencing staffing reductions.

Margery Swint pointed out that Hanford is the only site with such a revolving contracting schedule. She cited Rocky Flats and Savannah River, whose contractors have been on-site for many more years than any contractor at Hanford. One thing she has noticed, with all the contract changes at Hanford, the big, old contractors do not re-bid once they have been on-site. This causes more accidents and contaminations, as small businesses are not geared up for work with big contracts like Hanford.

Gerry was initially opposed to generating this advice without full committee vetting. He stated that there is no assurance that existing contractors will not re-win their contract and he has no reason to expect mass destruction with a contract change. He asked how the Board could justify giving Fluor a "free ride" when Bechtel did not receive the same courtesy. If these contracts are extended now, what will the policy be in the future? Jeff Luke stated that, it might have been good to produce this advice when Bechtel's contract was up, but this is timely now, as DOE is considering changing their contracting practices now. Todd noted that Bechtel had already been extended to its legal limits.

Maynard pointed out that DOE could extend the contracts, but that doesn't mean they are extended as they currently exist. Typically, contracts are modified upon extension.

Betty stated that the Board should not miss the opportunity to tie contracting concerns to a dollar amount. She would like to ask DOE to estimate the cost of getting and training new workers under a contract change.

Howard stated that all contracts are five year contracts with up to five one year extensions. The federal government is a competitive pricing environment that tailors its contracts to fit the work anticipated for the life of the contract.

Betty would like the advice to address how to streamline the process or better proceed while diminishing the anticipated disruptions.

Gerry was opposed to the advice explicitly stating “extend the contracts”. Pam suggested that the advice be produced with Gerry writing a minority report. He asked Howard what the contracts provide for at this time. Howard replied that all the contracts have had their maximum number of extensions exercised at this time. If the contracts are extended now, legally it could only be for another year. Joe added that the contracts are structured in such a way as to foster competition. DOE is looking at the contract structures. Changing or extending the contracts could inhibit DOE’s ability to compete.

Jeff Luke stated that the Board has repeatedly said they support the workers. Producing this advice is the best way the Board can support the workers during these contract changes. Todd reiterated that if Gerry blocks the advice it will not be considered consensus advice and Gerry’s minority report will be attached.

A self-selecting group convened after the Thursday meeting to work on this advice. They managed to come to consensus on the resulting product.

Ken stated that it seemed awkward to say, “explore other options” and only list one. Jeff Luke stated that this was part of the compromise reached during drafting.

Joe Voice stated that the Pacific Northwest Nuclear Laboratory (PNNL) contract is not under Environmental Management (EM) control and should not be included in this list. Todd noted that the Board does not advise outside of EM, but the inclusion of the PNNL contract is a demonstration of how many DOE contracts are changing at this time. It is a heavy load for DOE to handle all at once.

Betty stated that she is concerned number seven is not clear. The budget reductions are causing their own stress. Joe noted that DOE-RL is considering staff reductions as a result, while DOE-ORP is not. Both offices are under consideration for privatization.

Rick pointed out that this is just the beginning of contract advice. There will be more discussion over the structure and frequency of contract changes.

The advice was adopted with full Board consensus.

Tank Retrieval Progress

Leon presented a proposed letter from the Tank Waste Committee (TWC) regarding the progress DOE has made on retrieval activities. Based on reports from Ecology, they are pleased with this progress.

Board Discussion and Questions

Dick asked how the Appendix H submittal fits in with the letter, as he considers Appendix H to be the easy way out. Leon stated that the letter is focused on the significant tank waste cleanup that has been and is being accomplished. The committee recognizes that there are still issues to be resolved, but they want to let the agencies know that the Board approves of the progress made to date and encourage them to continue working together. Todd noted that recently the ideas of retrieval and closure have been melded together,

but they are actually separate. Board priorities state that retrieval is a high priority as it reduces risk, but closure is not a high priority.

Rob noted that the letter does not congratulate the craft for their contribution to the success. Leon stated that the committee does not want to downplay the work of the craft, but the letter is focused on the cooperation between DOE and Ecology that has allowed the craft to do their work. Todd noted that the letter is more about bureaucratic cooperation than technical execution.

The letter was approved.

Bulk Vitrification Demonstration Project

Billie Mauss presented the Board with an update on the Demonstration Bulk Vitrification System (DBVS). She showed the Board computer models of the facility as it is planned and actual pictures of the current construction. They are currently laying the super-flat pad for the box to sit on. The box is put into position and as it is filled with raw melt, it is maneuvered on an air palette to help eliminate air pockets. The palette only lifts the box about four inches off the ground, so if there is a loss of power, it settles slowly to the ground. The pads are super flat to avoid the boxes sliding off.

The current schedule for DBVS is as follows:

- January 2005
 - Research Development and Demonstration (RD&D) permit went into effect
 - Design review started on Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) systems
 - Construction began
- May 2005
 - All RCRA system reviews completed
- July 2005
 - Construction completed
- August 2005
 - Cold tests started
- December 2005
 - First radioactive box completed

Billie stated they did perform a full scale test in March. The box used in that test had been updated with engineering modifications indicated in earlier tests. The changes included bottoms-up melting, use of a solid refractory and utilization of a feed while melt system, which allows for a fuller box. The primary objective of this test was to confirm the thermal performance and design of the box with the engineering changes. The test box had over 300 thermal couples. A little over three days into the test melt a dull red spot was observed to be glowing around a thermal couple insertion point. The spot disappeared after a period of observation. Another hot zone appeared and, since the first one disappeared, they allowed this one to go undisturbed, too. This one did not disappear, however. There was a breach and small self-sealing leak. Less material leaked than was expected in this type of situation. A full investigation was conducted and the evaluation pointed to several causes including separation of the bottom and side refractory panels; molten metal from reduction of iron oxide in soils; insulation in the box did not allow for heat exchange; and the thermal couples allowed for electrical short circuiting to the box. These findings will be used to change the box further. They hope to conduct another test in May.

Ken Niles asked if the fact that Hanford soils cannot be used, due to high iron content, will increase the cost of bulk vitrification. Billie stated that it may increase the cost some, but not significantly.

Transuranic Waste Retrieval at Idaho National Lab

Nick Ceto presented a video created by Bechtel in Idaho then presented information on retrieval that is happening in Idaho. The Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC) was the burial site for

radioactive and hazardous waste from 1952 to 1970. They had very good records and detailed inventories of what was put into the ground and where. They started retrieval in Pit 9, as that was supposed to be easier to retrieve, as it contained the least amount of Transuranic (TRU) waste. Unfortunately the retrieval has been delayed, disputed, renegotiated and rescheduled multiple times. They are currently using a Glove Box Excavator (GEM) project to retrieve waste from Pit 4. The objectives of GEM are to demonstrate waste retrieval; core sample the underburden to ensure removal of most highly contaminated materials; characterize waste for safe and compliant storage; and package and store waste on-site, pending decision on final disposition. They intend to retrieve the highest levels of TRU and send it off to Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The GEM operators are actually outside the waste area. They operate the backhoe by remote control while receiving instructions from an operator who is watching the excavation by camera. The backhoe is fixed in place. The GEM project site utilizes very different technology than the Accelerated Retrieval Project (ARP) Site. The ARP site uses a large enclosure with a filtered air system. The telehandler rolls on wheels and moves about the enclosure freely. The driver enters the equipment through a specially constructed room.

Initially there was a lot of debate over what to dig up and how to tell what was being dug up. Ultimately it was decided that visual inspection and comparison to historical data will be the standard. Because there is groundwater contamination beneath the site, they wanted to be sure to retrieve as much volatile organic compounds (VOC) as possible. They found workers who were involved in the original packaging of this material and had them train workers to identify it by sight. There are observation stations who are in contact with the remote handlers. They help to ensure the retrieval of the targeted material.

To date, 300 drums have been retrieved. They have compared what they have dug up to the historical records and are generally within 30 feet of the targeted material. There is currently a debate regarding what material should be put back in the holes. Of the 300 drums retrieved, over 275 of them contained TRU materials. Nick stated that this means that they are doing a good job of hitting the targets, but that they are probably missing some, too. He noted that these are removal actions, not remedial actions.

Gerry asked if all the material that is pulled out is examined. Nick responded yes, but not all material at a site is dug up. The material that is dug up is examined visually and for radioactive content. Gerry stated that is not practical for worker safety. Nick stated that there are some materials that stay in the hole as there is no way to handle them if they are retrieved. For example there is a large piece of activated steel that does not have VOC associated with it. It will stay in place.

Dick asked if they were simply pulling drums out and putting them into the packages, and if so, how were they demonstrating that they contained TRU. Nick said the drums are ripped up when they are retrieved.

Tri-Party Agency Updates

DOE-ORP

Howard stated that DOE-ORP is working on its priorities. The Tank Closure Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is targeted for May 2006 public release. Bulk Vitrification demonstration, tank waste retrieval and design and construction of the WTP are still high priorities. They are working on completing the optimization plan for tanks.

Pam asked when the information about the seismic issues from the Army Corp of Engineers will be available. Howard replied they hope to have it out sometime in May. Todd said that it should be on the schedule for the June Board meeting.

DOE-RL

Joe Voice stated that DOE-RL is currently working on the budget. He did not have any new information on the K-basin sludge removal. They are still working on FFTF competition. The River Corridor contract was awarded in March, but it was protested, so they are addressing that.

Shirley Olinger reminded the Board that there will be a 300-area workshop on May 19th. The format of the workshop has been changed to match the previous two workshops, including possible post-cleanup land-uses both inside and outside the area and what sort of institutional controls are appropriate. The workshop will also cover groundwater opportunities and alternatives for cleanup and what considerations are important for groundwater remedy selection. There is a lot of information to share. The first 45 minutes will be introduction. EPA and Ecology will present, then there will be a detailed presentation on 300-area contamination and the state decision-making process. There will be a discussion of land-use opportunities and then the group will break into four small groups to go through a set of questions. The break-out sessions will each have a note-taker. This is where the questions and feedback will be gathered.

Todd noted that there was some controversy over this workshop in the last River and Plateau Committee (RAP) meeting. He asked how this was resolved. Pam stated that the controversy was related to the fact that the City of Richland received a grant from DOE-RL and EPA to evaluate possible future industrial use in the 300-area. The City questioned if industrial use is a realistic expectation. EPA was reluctant to get into the discussion as it could evolve into a discussion of cleanup levels rather than future land-uses. Nick noted that there are applicable RODs already out there. The RODs for the area around the 300-area have already been changed and now this was looking at the core 300-area. EPA was worried that there would be a desire to change the ROD and cleanup levels immediately. They did not want to raise the expectation of a possible ROD amendment. He did not want confusion on possible timing for a ROD amendment, as PNNL will not be out of the area until 2009.

Gerry stated that he intended to skip the meeting, as it would not address the reasonable maximum exposure scenarios. Todd informed him that they have changed the structure of the meeting so that participants can suggest any scenario, just like the previous two meetings.

Rob suggest that the Ports be involved in this meeting as, historically, they are the ones involved in industrial land-uses. Shirley stated that they are invited and DOE will be doing follow-up calls. Bob Parks asked who the land will be going to, the City of Richland or the Ports. Shirley replied that has not been decided yet. That will be part of the workshop discussion. After cleanup is complete, EM will turn the land over to LM. What they have done in other areas is varied.

Washington State Department of Ecology

Nolan Curtis stated Ecology participated in the budget meetings in Washington and Oregon. He thanked everyone for taking the extra effort to make sure people had copies of the budget and videos. Ecology will also participate in the upcoming state of the site meetings in Richland, Portland and Seattle. These meetings are scheduled in conjunction with the Board meetings and will be held the Wednesday before the Board meetings. He advised the Board that Jay Manning and Rob McKenna may be at the June 16th State of the Site meeting.

Nolan stated that the bulk vitrification testing is underway. He noted that the point of testing the process is to find problems and improve the process and the breach was a learning opportunity. The Integrated Disposal Facility (IDF) determination of non-significance (DNS) will be out on May 6th. The comment period will be 45 days. As Mike Wilson stated, Ecology is encouraged by the over-target budget request, but they are wary about how the budget will actually end up.

EPA

Nick Ceto stated Steve Johnson was named as new EPA administrator. One of the vacancies in the EPA office has been filled by Alisha Boyd, who will start on Monday. The EPA office has moved into its new space across from the Shiloh Inn. He noted that EPA did asses a \$75,000 penalty for missing the K-basin sludge containerization deadline. The penalty included a notice of violation, too. There were some sampling protocols that were not followed. This work is currently under review. Nick stated that EPA continues to be frustrated by the rate of removal of sludge from the basin, which continues to jeopardize other milestones. The penalty was EPA's way of telling DOE they need to figure out what the best way is to move this sludge and stop changing procedures mid-cleanup.

Committee Reports and Issue Manager Updates

Leon Swenson reported the Tank Waste Committee learned some interesting things at their April 14th meeting. They received a report on the seismic impacts to the tank farms and are hoping to get cost and schedule figures soon. Howard stated that these would probably not be ready until mid to late May, but should be ready for the June Board meeting. The committee also received a briefing on the melt-through experienced during the bulk vitrification tests. They believe they have a handle on it now.

Maynard Plahuta reported that the River and Plateau Committee has been working on the Flow and the Principles for Caps and Barriers document. There will be a meeting on May 11th, on the 200-U1 proposed plan.

Amber Waldref stated that the Public Involvement Committee (PIC) has been working on Thursday's Open House. She stated that there were about 25 non-HAB participants at the Open House. She stated that everyone did their best to reach out to the community and get the word out. There were a few newspaper representatives and a TV camera at the Open House, too. PIC may look into holding smaller scale meetings next. Martin stated that there will be a follow up article in el Mundo the week following the Open House. Todd pointed out that the Board will have a role in the State of the Site meetings, too. Amber noted the committee has talked about having a Tri-Party quarterly public involvement meeting. This may be discussed at the June Board meeting.

Harold Heacock stated that the Budget and Contracts Committee (BCC) has been working on the Budget Advice presented at this Board meeting. They will also be following up on the suggestion of contract extensions and will continue to follow the 2006 and 2007 budget requests as they mature.

Board Business

Announcements

Leon announced that he will be resigning from the Board. He has an opportunity to do non-Hanford consulting in an area of great interest to him. This new opportunity, coupled with his other volunteer activities, will not allow him the time necessary to participate as an active member of the Board.

Todd stated that this means the Board needs to decide if the seat is opened for the agencies to advertise and find a new person or if one of the alternates is moved into the member seat. It was determined that the alternates are not interested in becoming the member seat, so the regulators will advertise, as with the other recently opened seats.

June Board Topics

Todd noted the following as possible topics for June's Board meeting:

- Schedule issues for the Waste Treatment Plant
- Central Plateau barrier considerations
- BCC advice on contracts
- RAP advice on U-area proposed plan for soil sites cleanup
- Update from leadership retreat
- Update from SSAB chairs meeting

Todd reminded the Board that the June meeting will coincide with the State of the Site meeting. Al mentioned the IDF designation of non-significance will be within the comment period during the June meeting. RAP and TWC may consider commenting.

SSAB National Forum Update

Todd had an update from the SSAB chairs meeting. In the past, the Board has requested a national forum on waste. Last fall the SSAB Chairs sent a letter to DOE headquarters requesting a forum. They received a

response from Paul Golan stating that DOE believes that these sorts of forums already exist. Initially, DOE had been supportive of the idea and requested the Chairs draft a more specific proposal. The SSAB Chairs have decided to submit this proposal, in spite of Paul Golan's response. By submitting the proposal they will officially go on record recommending a specific format for the forum along with all the applicable public involvement. The Chairs are also issuing a product recommending continuation of the site specific advisory boards at sites transferring to other parts of DOE. The recommendation states that boards established at sites under environmental management should continue at those sites.

Public Comment

There was no public comment offered at this meeting.

Attendees

HAB MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Madeleine Brown, Member	Keith Smith, Member	Dan Simpson, Alternate
Larry Clucas, Member	Leon Swenson, Member	Dick Smith, Alternate
Jim Curdy, Member	Margery Swint, Member	John Stanfill, Alternate
Rob Davis, Member	Tim Takaro, Member	Art Tackett, Alternate
Greg deBruler, Member	Jim Trombold, Member	Betty Tabbutt, Alternate
Norma Jean Germond, Member		Amber Waldref, Alternate
Harold Heacock, Member	Kristie Baptiste-Eke, Alternate	Dave Watrous, Alternate
Mike Keizer, Member	Al Boldt, Alternate	Charles Weems, Alternate
Pam Larsen, Member	Shelley Cimon, Alternate	Helen Wheatley, Alternate
Jeff Luke, Member	Dirk Dunning, Alternate	Steve White, Alternate
Todd Martin, Member	Rick Jansons, Alternate	
Bob Parks, Member	Wanda Munn, Alternate	Earl Fordham, Ex-Officio
Jerry Peltier, Member	Nancy Murray, Alternate	Debra McBaugh, Ex-Officio
Maynard Plahuta, Member	Wade Riggsbee, Alternate	
Gerald Pollet, Member	Dave Rowland, Alternate	

AGENCY, CONTRACTOR, AND SUPPORT STAFF

Steve Chalk DOE-RL	Rick Bond, Ecology	Gwen Luper, BFCOG
Joe Voice DOE-RL	Nolan Cutis, Ecology	Dru Butler, CH2MHill
	Laura Cusack, Ecology	Brad Smith, CH2MHill
Howard Gnann DOE-ORP	Dib Goswami, Ecology	Tammie Holm, EnviroIssues
Eric Olds DOE-ORP	Ron Skinnarland, Ecology	Stacey Howery, EnviroIssues
	Mike Wilson, Ecology	Lynn Lefkoff, EnviroIssues
		Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues
	Nick Ceto, EPA	Julie Atwood, Fluor Hanford
	Dave Einan, EPA	Jeff Hertzal, Fluor Hanford
	Dennis Faulk, EPA	John Lang, Fluor Hanford
		Jan Williams, Fluor Hanford
		Barbara Wise, Fluor Hanford
		Kim Ballinger, Navarro
		Sharon Braswell, Nuvotec-ORP
		Janice Parthree, PNNL

		Mike Priddy, WDOH
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MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Julie Longenecker, CTUIR	Doug Sherwood, Rivers Edge Env.	Mike Sobotta
Ted Repasky, CTUIR	Annette Cary, Tri-City Herald	Anthony Smith