

FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

March 3-4, 2005

Kennewick, 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 two pieces of advice: one regarding Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 budget public meetings and one regarding retrievably buried waste. The Board also issued a letter regarding the Proposed Amendment to the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF).

Proposed Amendment to the ERDF ROD

Julie Atwood, Fluor Hanford Inc., gave a presentation on the proposed amendment. The primary purpose of the amendment is to streamline Hanford site activities and support Hanford-only cleanup waste. The goal is to optimize use of existing disposal facilities at Hanford.

Caps and Barriers Symposium

A technical workshop covering caps and barriers was held on March 1st and 2nd. Board members who attended the workshop expressed their thoughts on the information presented at the workshop. Overall consensus was that it was a valuable tool to aid the Board in understanding the pros and cons of the use of caps and barriers.

Tri-Party Agency Updates

Howard Gnann, Department of Energy-Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), informed the Board that DOE-ORP is preparing for the Committee of the Whole budget meeting and working on the Cumulative Impact Analysis.

Joe Voice, Department of Energy-Richland Operations (DOE-RL), advised the Board that Mike Weis is on detailed assignment in Washington, D.C. for the next three months. DOE-RL is also preparing for the Committee of the Whole.

Nolan Curtis, Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), updated the Board on the leak at the Pacific EcoSolutions (PEcoS) facility. Laura Cusack, Ecology, updated the Board on the Integrated Disposal Facility (IDF) permitting schedule. Based on Board comments, Ecology made changes to the permit application.

Nick Ceto, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has filled one position. The EPA office will be moving in near the new Ecology office. EPA is concerned that the cost of increased security on site is going to come from cleanup dollars.

Board Practices Refreshers

Board members participated in a series of discussions examining Board rules, structures and common practices. Several suggestions for timing Board agendas and compiling Board packets will be incorporated by the facilitation team. No significant procedural changes resulted from the discussions.

Board Business

The Board heard an update on the upcoming Yakima Open House. The Board will be holding a Committee of the Whole meeting on the FY 2006 budget the week following the Board meeting.

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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 three public comment periods, two 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

No new Board members were introduced at this meeting.

Approval of January Meeting Summary

The Board approved the January meeting summary with changes.

Amendment to the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF)

Julie Atwood, Fluor Hanford Inc., stated the purpose of the Proposed Plan for an Amendment to the ERDF ROD is to streamline Hanford site cleanup activities and to identify a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) process for Hanford-only cleanup waste. The goals of the amendment are to optimize use of existing disposal facilities at Hanford, reduce existing and future waste storage inventory, meet long-term disposal objectives, and support long-term stewardship for protection of public health and the environment. The amendment does not change existing waste acceptance criteria at ERDF and does not affect existing RODs or other decision documents. The amendment does reduce the need for preparation of separate decision documents for disposal, especially for waste with the same disposal path. The proposed amendment uses a “Plug-in Approach,” where similar waste streams could be grouped by category and reviewed for eligibility for ERDF disposal. New waste streams are subject to the same ERDF disposal and approval process. Alternative treatment requirements and treatability variances will require supplemental decision-making. The proposed waste streams affected by this amendment include a relatively small amount of waste, approximately 300 containers per year over 20 years. (ERDF’s daily average is about 215 containers.) The benefits of the proposed amendment include: reduction of onsite waste storage, support of accelerated cleanup initiatives, completion of M91-42 and M91-43 milestones, and support of the decision to direct waste disposal to lined trenches. They are seeking the HAB’s input, consideration and support for the Proposed Plan.

Regulator Perspective

Ron Skinnerland, Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), stated the Proposed Plan gives access to a lined waste disposal facility. The Integrated Disposal Facility (IDF) will be coming online soon, but has not yet been permitted. He noted the Proposed Plan creates a disposal path to help reach milestones to have the backlog cleared up by 2009.

Dave Einan, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), noted that many of the drums that are under consideration contain the same contaminants, but were generated in different waste streams, which results in different disposal pathways. He stated that it is more efficient if these contaminants are cleaned up based on their contents, rather than on their source.

Board Discussion and Questions

Dirk Dunning, Oregon Department of Energy (State of Oregon), asked if the waste from the stack filters or tunnels would be included in the Proposed Plan. Dave stated those waste streams are most likely too hot to be included in the Proposed Plan, as they would not meet the ERDF waste acceptance criteria. He reiterated any waste being considered must meet the current waste acceptance criteria.

Al Boldt, Government Accountability Project (Hanford Work Force), stated the list of proposed Hanford-generated waste includes wastewater from the Effluent Treatment Facility (ETF). Al is concerned about the changes in waste traveling to ETF; the change may result in high levels of Iodine-129. The waste coming from ETF would meet the concentration limits, but would not meet the performance requirements for disposal. The performance requirements have not been demonstrated at Hanford, and there are severe restrictions on Iodine-129 at the other disposal facility. Al noted he is wary of setting a precedent by treating this waste as low-level waste (LLW) when it has not been demonstrated to qualify as LLW. If waste cannot be proven to meet the criteria for LLW, then it is considered high level waste (HLW). Ron replied that Ecology and EPA share Al's concern regarding this particular waste. The treatments for tank waste do produce a secondary waste stream that would go to ETF for treatment and would produce Technetium-99 and Iodine-129, which are both long-lived radionuclides. The waste that is going to ERDF now does not contain these constituents. The regulators plan to implement permit conditions on the treatment of the tank waste requiring a look at better methods of treatment if the secondary waste streams have these constituents at problematic levels. The regulators believe that the waste, as it exists now, does not contain these constituents and they are working to ensure that the permitting process will handle these issues as they arise. Al asked if the proposed modified amendment specifically requires additional performance assessments for wastes that do not meet the definition of the original. Dave replied they are not going to do performance assessments on the waste, but the waste has to be compared to the existing performance assessments. There is a limit in the waste acceptance criteria that considers concentration as well as class.

Todd reminded the Board that the proposed plan has not been released yet. However, the River and Plateau Committee (RAP) is acknowledging the pending release and anticipates having information to bring forward at the April Board meeting.

Letter from the Board on Proposed ERDF ROD Amendment

Maynard Plahuta, Benton County (Local Government), introduced a letter from RAP concerning the proposed ERDF ROD amendment. RAP agrees that it is a good idea to try and avoid "turf battles" between Ecology and EPA. The letter is meant to be a commendation to the regulators for working together, and with DOE, and coming to consensus.

Rick Jansons, Non-Union Non-Management Employees (Hanford Work Force), stated that, from a field worker's perspective, it appears the proposed amendment would make life a lot easier and more reasonable.

The Board approved the letter.

Board Practices Refresher #1

Board members took a brief quiz developed by EnviroIssues to test their knowledge of Board practices such as requirements for committee membership and resources available at Board meetings.

Following the discussion, Board members were encouraged to look at the Board web site, so they would know what information is available.

Advice on Buried Waste

Rick Jansons stated this advice is not referencing pre-1970 transuranic (TRU) waste, because that term mean something very specific to people. Instead, the advice is referring to materials that are contaminated with isotopes with a z-number greater than uranium. This clarifies what material the Board is referencing in the advice while avoiding the legal definitions attached to the term "TRU waste." The three main concepts covered in the advice are: the Department of Energy (DOE) does not have a thorough knowledge of the amount or content of waste buried before 1970; the condition of the contaminated materials is unknown; and, as the Hanford budget decreases, the site loses workers with the knowledge to address this problem. The draft advises DOE to characterize all areas on the site containing these materials; include all these materials in planning; and stabilize the budget, so that the workforce can remain and fix the problem. Rick clarified the advice does come to the Board with committee consensus.

Board Discussion and Questions

Greg deBruler, Columbia Riverkeeper (Regional Environmental/Citizen Organizations), stated that he is generally in agreement with the advice, but he would like to see the Board's position stated more directly. He asked that the quantities be specified to back up the fact that it is such a large volume outstanding. Greg pointed out that, if this waste is not retrieved, there will be groundwater and soil contamination. Lateral transportation is an issue and can cause many problems with the groundwater. He would like to see a full-scale Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) done on this waste. Leaving this waste in the ground is not acceptable. Rick stated the idea was that the RI/FS would be captured in future advice, but the committee did not want to try to redefine TRU with this advice.

Gerry Pollet, Heart of America Northwest (Regional Environmental/Citizen Organizations), pointed out while the waste may not be called TRU waste right now, the minute it is retrieved it will be designated TRU and DOE needs to be ready to dispose of it appropriately. He also commented that the National Academy of Science (NAS) recently published a report the Board should address. The report focuses on whether or not waste will be disposed of at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). Assessments must be made to determine how much of this material is in the ground and whether or not it will go to WIPP when it comes out of the ground. Gerry stated DOE has identified 152,000 cubic meters of pre-1970's TRU waste at Hanford, but the WIPP certification is only for 175,000 cubic meters total. Gerry also noted that he supports the advice, as the advice regarding the budget is crucial and timely.

Leon Swenson, Public-at-Large, expressed concern with the advice's emphasis on budget and policy with regards to TRU. Leon and Gerry conferred and asked the Board to consider narrowing the advice's budget focus to funding for this particular work, including the retrieval, treatment and disposal (RTD) of this volume of contaminated material and addressing any applicable environmental contamination. Maynard asked if this says that DOE must RTD all materials, regardless of the risk factor. Gerry responded the material must be available for characterization. After characterization, DOE should ensure safe disposition. Leon stated the real concern is making sure to take risk into account.

Al Boldt suggested calling the waste "retrievably buried," as opposed to TRU. He would like the advice not to be so TRU-specific, but to include other retrievably-buried hazardous waste, regardless of the nuclides it contains.

Dirk Dunning suggested spelling out transuranic, rather than using the TRU abbreviation, in order to clarify the material has transuranic elements, but still stay away from the legal definition of TRU waste.

Jim Trombold, Physicians for Social Responsibility (Local/Regional Public Health), commented it seems like the Board is always telling DOE to characterize the site. He asked what is new about this advice regarding characterization. Todd responded the new aspect of the advice is not the recommendation for characterization, but the uncharacterized materials that the advice is referencing.

Greg deBruler stated he thinks DOE tries to get out of RTD waste by doing inadequate characterization by using analogous waste sites. RTD is required unless DOE can demonstrate it is not necessary based on the characterization.

Madeleine Brown, WA League of Women Voters (Regional Environmental/Citizen Organizations), noted she would like to be certain the advice is clear on the fact that the skilled workforce is getting older and retiring and so the site is losing skilled employees and institutional knowledge. Jeff Luke, Non-Union Non-Management Employees, noted that, while it is possible to train new employees to be as efficient as the retiring employees, it will cost more in the long run in terms of training dollars and efficiencies.

Dick Smith, City of Kennewick (Local Government), expressed concerned that the discussion was missing the original purpose of the advice, which was to remind DOE that there is a large amount of material, called unsegregated waste, that was buried sometime between 1945 and 1969 and no one really knows what is there. A risk analysis and capping is not recommended without thorough characterization.

Nick Ceto, EPA, stated that, in his opinion, the language about an RI/FS is not necessary. The regulators will do their job and will only make a decision if they feel they have all the necessary information. He noted they have received drafts of RI/FSs in the past and have sent them back, due to lack of characterization. Nolan Curtis, Ecology, concurred with Nick, stating there is a process in place that offers the opportunity for review and comment.

Pam Larsen, City of Richland (Local Government), requested additional wording emphasizing the importance of planning for the expansion of WIPP. Rick Jansons replied that the WIPP and Yucca Mountain discussions should be separate advice. Todd noted the Board's energy behind a national repository discussion and Rob Davis, City of Pasco (Local Government), suggested it should be a topic for discussion at a future Board meeting.

Jeff Luke was reluctant to use the words "thoroughly and comprehensively." Nick agreed, stating that one of the incentives the regulators give DOE is they don't have to do as much characterization if they RTD as if they cap a site.

The advice was adopted.

Board Practices Refresher #2

Board members reviewed illustrations representing faux pas that typically occur during Board meetings, such as failure to sign-in or silence cell phones.

Caps and Barriers Technical Symposium

Todd explained that several Board members attended the two-day workshop. A few Board members summarized their thoughts on the workshop.

Kevin Leary, DOE-Richland Operations (DOE-RL), brought in six technical experts on cap design, modeling, etc., and Ecology and EPA made presentations on the regulators' views. The evapo-transpiration (ET) barrier was the focus of the barrier discussions. Dick Smith thought the technical presentations were excellent. A couple of important points raised during the technical presentations included lateral flow around the edges of caps and the importance of selecting the appropriate plants for re-vegetation of the caps to ensure adequate transpiration. The long-term monitoring of caps and barriers is important to ensure proper function and continued acceptable performance. Dick noted the many examples of failed caps, especially the clay-type caps. In some cases, the failed caps resulted in a worse situation than if a cap had not been used at all. The symposium concluded with a bus tour of natural analog sites.

Jerry Peltier, City of West Richland (Local Government), noted a few key themes. Use of a cap is a continual process, as it cannot just be installed and left alone. Jerry stated he left the symposium with the

feeling that caps and barriers is not a proven science. He would like to know what the monitoring plans would be for any caps at Hanford.

Maynard Plahuta is an advocate for research. He stated there are a lot of unknowns and research that needs to be done on these unknowns. He was impressed by the technical quality of the presentations and noted that, if you are going to cap something at Hanford, right now the ET barrier seems to be the best solution.

Madeleine Brown pointed out that the presentations were exclusively about ET covers. She is most concerned with the fact that, when thinking about the future of Hanford, she is thinking 50-200 years into the future and the barrier technology is relatively new by comparison. She also noted with the ET covers, weather is a huge factor as to how well they work. Possible weather/climate changes should be taken into account when considering a cover at Hanford.

Keith Smith, Public-at-Large, expressed concern that the life of the barrier seems somewhat short compared to the life of Hanford's waste. He stated while monitoring will be used, it will be important that caps not prevent possible future retrieval, should the caps fail.

Norma Jean Germond, Public-at-Large, attended the second day of the workshop. One thing that really stuck out to her is the fact that DOE's Office of Legacy Management must be involved early on, as they will be the ones monitoring and maintaining the caps.

Greg deBruler stated according to CERCLA regulations, RTD is the process of choice. If RTD is technically impracticable, then other alternatives can be explored. He asked why DOE is spending so much on caps when they have not identified the technical impracticability. He would like DOE to specify for the Board where RTD is technically impracticable. Joe Voice, DOE-RL, stated they are not trying to sell caps to the Board. DOE is looking at the nine CERCLA criteria. They will develop a remedial action proposal to take to the regulators and work on corrected action from there. Dennis Faulk, EPA, responded that the agencies are getting ready to make some major decisions. He pointed out while treatment is preferred, there are some contaminants at Hanford that are so deep, caps will have to be deployed. Dennis asserted the more decisions are laid out ahead of time, the better the decision will be in the long run. Greg asked to know exactly where caps have been proposed at Hanford. Todd directed him to the Plan for Central Plateau Closure, noting it is a contractor deliverable that will ultimately have to meet regulator approval.

David Watrous, Public-at-Large, was encouraged to learn that ET barriers will work in Hanford's climate. He noted that Mother Nature always wins in the end and ET barriers use that to their advantage. He thinks ET barriers will work at crib sites, an example of sites where the contamination is too deep for RTD. David did state he would be more comfortable with 20 more years of research on this technology.

Al Boldt stated barriers and caps are engineered systems and all engineered systems eventually fail. The performance of these systems is based on the assumption that they will fail at around 1000 years. He does not think there is much long-term performance improvement when a cap is used versus doing nothing. He is disappointed that DOE has not discussed in situ vitrification and would like DOE to consider it more thoroughly.

Charlie Weems, Physicians for Social Responsibility, stated the symposium was a well-produced educational event. There was a discussion of the impossibilities of long-term modeling, showing that any kind of modeling for a large cap is very difficult. When asked how they determine what to put a cap over, the experts stated they must have a thorough understanding of what will go under the cap. He would have liked more discussion regarding solutions to lateral flow issues.

Pam Larsen thought it was useful to talk to leaders in the field, especially in regards to the use of plants on ET barriers. She would like to see more research on the barriers, but overall she is less worried about the use of caps at Hanford. She thinks that the Board is now in a better position to discuss the issue.

Rob Davis asked if the consideration of caps was primarily because of the U-Plant situation. Dennis Faulk replied the cap at U-Plant is more visual; the caps reviewed at the symposium will be more applicable in the trenches, etc.

Dick Smith reminded the Board that the U-Plant Proposed Plan and Canyon Disposition Initiative (CDI) are coming up. He is interested to see which sites are proposed for capping and which for RTD. He is particularly concerned with the overall placement of caps and ensuring caps are placed in areas that are appropriate for all.

Greg deBruler stated capping has been used in place of in situ vitrification around the country. Caps have been used without adequate characterization with bad results. He stated the Board is not being given a lot of options to choose from, but rather is being steered towards a limited number of options, one of which is capping. He would like to have a workshop or educational conference regarding alternative technologies for dealing with in-ground waste.

Dirk explained that Oregon has a history with caps: there is a mining site that will be the first to have its cap replaced. Badgers and cows were creating an erosion path on the cap. He noted that people like to build houses on hills and that is what a cap creates, a hill. Houses on hills have the potential to create an erosion path. The ability and willingness for long-term monitoring is essential to ensuring the life of the cap. He also urged DOE to be vigilant when selecting the contractor for the cap; going with the low bid in this instance is not the best choice.

Caps and Barriers – Board Values

Todd stated the symposium was meant to be educational, a summary of what is known and unknown about caps and barriers, not about policy. The Board has been working on a policy piece for the better part of two Board meetings. Todd read the text of the piece regarding when it is appropriate to consider a barrier, then the Board reviewed the decision tree that goes along with the text.

The decision tree communicates two primary Board biases:

- 1) The Board's remedial action ideal is total retrieval, treatment and disposal for all Central Plateau wastes.
- 2) Barriers should be a "last resort" remedy.

Todd stressed that the decision tree must be accompanied by in-depth discussion with the public. It is a tool to facilitate discussion of the Board's policy.

Board Discussion and Questions

Dirk stated there should be an additional arrow and box for the instance where both treatment and a barrier are practicable.

Betty Tabbutt, WA League of Women Voters, requested the addition of the timeframe issue to the decision tree. She asked, if a site is being evaluated and retrieval is not possible, what is the hurry? She suggested an interim barrier might be a possibility if it can be demonstrated that there is no significant movement to groundwater over a period of time. The interim cap would protect groundwater until research on caps can be completed.

Wade Riggsbee, Yakama Nation (Tribal Government), asked where characterization fits into the decision tree. Todd replied the decision tree assumes adequate characterization has already been completed. Jim Trombold expressed concern regarding a sense that caps may be utilized in areas that are not characterized. He pointed out that characterization is an expensive and slow process.

Dennis Faulk noted the agencies are currently doing a similar exercise, so they may plagiarize some of the Board's work on this. He added that the Board's work on this is timely. The agencies are realizing that cleanup is not all or nothing and some options have been taken off the table. He noted that in situ vitrification had been discussed for use in the BC cribs, but there has not been much discussion on other types of technology for some time. He mused that it might be a good idea to look into spending more time and money on testing and research.

Dirk stated he would like to see a technology branch added to the decision tree. He pointed out the Board has often advised DOE to get on with cleanup and develop as they go. He now questions whether or not sufficient technology and knowledge have been obtained. Todd said it might be advisable to create another product that would be referenced when the decision tree leads to the "consider a barrier" box. He also asked that it be clarified that RTD and barriers are not mutually exclusive.

Nolan Curtis noted this will be a useful tool for making cleanup decisions on a site-by-site basis. He stated the agencies are concerned that the laws are being met and added they do have overriding principles of their own. This tool will be helpful in prioritizing these principles.

Several Board members suggested adding characterization as a key part of the decision tree and expressed appreciation for the visual and graphical presentation of the chart.

Jeff Luke noted the chart is a good idea, as it presents a visual representation of the Board's thoughts and helps ensure the Board is in agreement as to the path of these thoughts. He pointed out that if total retrieval is not practical, that presupposes that retrieval will leave something behind. Todd suggested changing the contents of that box, making sure it considers what to do with whatever remains after partial retrieval.

Dick stated he would like to see a wider range of analyses used in the technology selection process. It seems that frequently DOE has driven the Board towards the answer DOE was seeking. He would like to have a broader look at the possibilities.

On Friday, Todd presented an updated and more complex decision tree. Comments on the second draft follow.

Dirk suggested numbering the boxes in order to make it easier to talk about in meetings.

Helen Wheatley, Heart of America Northwest, suggested making the time element more explicit. She requested language that would be more specific as to leaving material in the ground while researching cleanup options. Helen also asked that a section on prioritizing sites be included.

Harold Heacock, TRIDEC (Local Business), noted he did not see anything mentioning risk. He suggested adding a section on what will happen if nothing is done. He also requested the addition of language specifying that, if the risk to the environment and human health is acceptable, the waste should be left in place. Todd agreed, stating there are some sites where workers cannot work safely or safety precautions would be so costly as to be prohibitive. In these cases, it may be best to leave the waste in place and deploy a cap or barrier.

Nick asked if the Board could do a similar piece on groundwater.

The Board decided to send the decision tree back to RAP for more work and review. The values statement will be included along with the decision tree.

Al expressed concern that the agencies will take this piece and modify it for their own use, but still present it as a Board product. Nolan responded that he did not think this will happen, as the agencies are aware and are eager to understand the Board's biases. He thinks this tool will help further the agencies' understanding and will aid them in further developing their own plans.

Board Practices Refresher #3

Board members looked at the composition of the information packet mailed in advance of Board meetings. Several Board members suggested placing the Board agenda at the front of the packet, so that it is easier to find. Other suggestions included revising the document request form so it is clearer what information is available electronically.

Advice on Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Public Budget Workshops

Amber Waldref, Heart of America Northwest, noted that this advice is a result of discussions during January's Board meeting. The advice does have committee consensus.

Board Discussion and Questions

Tim Takaro, University of Washington (University), stated he would like to put DOE on the spot. He would like to know if DOE plans to withhold these numbers again this year, or if they will be made available to the Board. Howard Gnann, DOE-Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), replied that he was not sure, but he thinks the new Secretary has been upfront with the budget, which is still before Congress. Howard did note they have not received FY 2007 budget numbers yet. Regarding the advice, Howard stated that DOE does try to do the first three things (sharing budget information early, allowing opportunity for public input early, and providing feedback to the regulators, Board and public on the input). He acknowledged that the number of meetings is an issue.

Joe Voice agreed with Howard that it is too early to tell if the policies on sharing budget information will change with this administration. Joe said DOE feels they are meeting the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) requirements for the number of meetings, but they are willing to talk about that. Howard suggested that those who wanted to should be involved in the Committee of the Whole that is happening the following week. This meeting will be covering the FY 2006 budget. He noted there is still time to be involved in shaping the FY 2006 budget and there will be a follow-up meeting for FY 2007. Dennis encouraged Board members to think in terms of the broader public at the Committee of the Whole meeting and suggested that the meeting might address some of the Board's concerns.

Leon Swenson expressed concern that the advice may not be timely, as two of the agencies seemed to imply that the Committee of the Whole meeting may address some of the concerns in the advice. Howard noted that managing to baselines is easier and better than the way that DOE used to manage the budget. There are many opportunities throughout the year for the scope of work, and therefore the baselines, to change. Having fewer meetings spread throughout the year helps to keep everyone informed of these changes.

Greg deBruler stated he would like a response from the agencies on the letter that Steve White, Columbia Riverkeeper, read at the January Board meeting about the decision not to hold any budget meetings in Oregon. He also noted that the meeting schedule fails to meet the expectations of the TPA Community Relations Plan.

Maynard Plahuta also expressed concern about the timeliness of the advice. Decisions have been made for FY 2006 and the Board should be focusing on the major issues that need support. Dennis stated that this advice is critical right now. DOE has stated there would be a \$200-\$300 million cut for FY 2006, but there is still plenty of room for discussion and this is especially important, as FY 2006 sets the stage for FY 2007. While the agencies are not allowed to lobby, Dennis thinks that this is a critical time for getting the Board's values on the table.

Howard agreed that the timing of the advice is good. He reminded the Board that all the work done on Central Plateau closure and caps and barriers policy will also shape out-year budget requests.

Nolan stated that the number of planned budget meetings is an issue. DOE knows that it is meeting the written requirement, but the written requirement may not always meet the public's expectations. He does think that the budget meetings should be held in a variety of public venues. Nolan noted that several participating organizations have taken the initiative to invite the agencies into their communities for meetings. He also requested more specifics as to the Board's expectations for meetings.

Jerry Peltier commented that when the Board issues advice, generally they expect the agencies to be able to do something with it. He questioned what input the Board could give if DOE already has the budget cuts. He suggested adding a comment on the possibility of being able to shuffle money around within the site.

Pam Larsen stated that she had the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C. in February. Hanford has taken 50% of the budget cuts for the entire DOE complex. The reason is the lawsuits with the State of Washington. Pam said it is the Board's job to be vocal about the importance of proceeding with the Hanford contracts and cleanup. She urged the Board members who could be politically active to do so.

The advice was adopted.

Nick commented on the addressee and response processes. Including DOE on the "To" line will garner a response from DOE. Putting all the agencies on the "To" line will generate a joint response from the agencies. The agencies have had a lot of discussion on this process and they want to be sure to generate a unified, or at the very least a coordinated, response.

Board Practices Refresher #4

Todd reviewed the path of a piece of advice using the HAB version of Candyland ®.

Local Environmental Interests Seat Representation

The Board and regulators are currently recruiting for the University seat per discussion at the January Board meeting. The Board now needs to consider filling the local environmental seat that has been vacated by the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society.

Board Discussion and Questions

Jeff Luke would like to see the seat filled with another local environmental interest group. He asked why the Board had not been involved in the selection process in the past. Dennis replied that the guidelines were taken from the Federal Facilitation Dialog draft report, which made the recommendation that the regulators select members of the Board. He noted that this seemed like an uncomfortable place for the regulators to be and he would welcome the Board's participation.

Leon Swenson stated that he would like to keep the seat and keep the same local environmental designation. He noted that the expectations for the seat should be made clear up front, so that the new person will be an active member.

Board members suggested numerous possible organizations that might fill the position of local environmental group, including agricultural interests, the local bass club, and those involved in the Hanford Reach. Dennis cautioned the Board to remember to maintain balance to ensure that all voices are heard regarding cleanup concerns.

Howard Gnann stated he does not think that keeping the seat is a way for the Board to move towards efficiency. He noted that in looking at the charter, if a seat misses 25% of meetings in a year they should be removed from the Board. He urged the Board to make sure this requirement is being met and encouraged involvement of alternates.

Nolan suggested the Board needs to consider the question of balance and broad representation. He asked the Board to consider if a possible organization will help or hinder the Board's credibility with DOE and the regulators.

Board members agreed to follow the process for filling a vacant seat. The regulators will send out solicitation letters and will provide a packet for Board members to send to interested parties.

Tri-Party Agency Updates

DOE-ORP

Howard reminded the Board of the upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting on the budget. Work on the cumulative impact analysis is on-going. They are taking a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) approach to the analysis, which will be more quantitative than it has been in the past.

DOE-RL

Joe Voice informed the Board that Mike Weis has been transferred to DOE Headquarters for a detailed assignment, helping with the transition to a new administration. Mike is planning on returning in three months. In the meantime, Joe and Matt McCormick will be working with the Board. DOE-RL is currently preparing for the FY 2006 budget presentation at the Committee of the Whole. They are also working with the regulators to solidify the dates for the FY 2007 public budget meetings. Joe added he thinks the agencies have been more proactive in communicating with one another, which has helped in the development of the Central Plateau cleanup strategy as well as improving overall inter-agency relations.

Washington State Department of Ecology

Nolan Curtis stated Ecology is disappointed with the FY 2006 budget announcements. There are so many fixed costs at Hanford that there is little flexibility or room to cut costs. He commented it is his understanding that the FY 2006 allocations will not put DOE out of TPA compliance, but he is concerned that it may jeopardize future goals and milestones. There are some non-cleanup activities that are being costed out of the cleanup budget.

Nolan presented updates on two issues. First there was a release at the PEcoS facility. A 350-gallon tank containing nitric acid was being emptied in preparation for dismantling and one of the parts in the pump tank failed over the weekend of February 12th. Most of the leak was contained within the building, but 20 gallons were released into the soil surrounding the facility. The acid leak did convert to nitrogen dioxide, creating a visual plume. The leak was reported to the Washington Department of Health (DOH). Richland and Hanford fire departments responded. There are some outstanding questions regarding the notification procedure that was followed, the design of the facility and possible ways to prevent this from happening again. Excavation of the contaminated soils continues. Earl Fordham, DOH (Ex-officio), stated that DOH received the air sample reports and they are all negative. They are currently working to determine where they can declare the area clean. Some of the contamination is in the soil under the footing of the building. The fire department did lay down kitty litter on Battelle Blvd, but there is a spot on Battelle Blvd that is above background levels but below release levels. DOH is working with the City of Richland to determine what they want to do.

On technetium-99 (Tc-99), a letter was sent from the regulators stating that the tanks and T-farms are severely degraded as indicated by the amount of Tc-99 that was found in a new well. The slurry sample findings were extremely high, which has prompted the regulators to test the groundwater. The trends of increasing Tc-99 and the number of down-gradient detections have lead Ecology to believe that not only has the contamination moved further down-gradient than anticipated, but also much deeper. They are now concerned about depth as well as the level of contamination. The letter is requesting an expansion of the well coverage.

Laura Cusack, Ecology, gave an update on the IDF permitting. The Board had previously suggested limiting IDF to receive only immobilized low-activity waste (ILAW) and bulk vitrification wastes. DOE has submitted a new application and Ecology is working on issuing a new permit, which should be ready by the end of March. By limiting the waste, they have obtained State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) coverage for the facility. DOE has asked for temporary authorization to put in a test pad for the clay admixture, to verify the porosity and water resistance. Ecology anticipates issuing the temporary authorization and a modified determination of non-significance (DNS). Laura did advise the Board that it is probable that, in the early May timeframe, with time for public review, DOE may want to start laying the clay and synthetic liner and may ask for temporary authorization for that work. She anticipates the final permit will be authorized in early June.

Rob Davis pointed out that at the workshop it was clearly illustrated that clay does not work in an arid environment. The clay must stay hydrated in order to stay sealed. He wanted to know if DOE had not learned this lesson. Howard responded that the clay will be used in a landfill design, rather than as a cap. The clay liner is used along with other materials during the operational period of the liner, but once the cap is on, the liner is no longer useful. He suggested that he can bring in clay landfill experts to explain this more thoroughly.

EPA

Nick Ceto stated they have filled one of their vacant positions. They have also offered a position to a co-op student, but they are not sure if she will accept it. EPA is working with DOE-ORP on assistance for another 2-year position. The EPA office will be moving down near the DOH offices. Work is continuing in the C area; they found some spent fuel up there and are working to get it cleaned up. Like Ecology, EPA is also concerned about the budget. The cost of increased security is high and it seems that the money is slated to come out of the cleanup funds. Board members will hear more about this at the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Committee Reports and Issue Manager Updates

Leon Swenson reported the Tank Waste Committee (TWC) had a committee call in February and there will be another in March. TWC is supporting the Committee of the Whole and budget meetings happening next week. Leon noted that TWC is very interested in what is happening on the Central Plateau, and there may be advice coming to the Board in April.

Maynard Plahuta reported that the River and Plateau Committee (RAP) was pleased with the caps and barriers symposium. RAP's primary concern right now is also the Committee of the Whole and budget.

Amber Waldref gave an update regarding the Yakima Open House that will take place the evening of Thursday, April 28th. The Public Involvement Committee (PIC) could use other Board members' help with this event. The official flyer has been completed and will be distributed to rotary clubs, public officials and anyone else in the area that can be reached. At the open house, PIC would like at least one Board member at each display. There will not be a formal program, but Todd will be speaking during the open house. Todd will also be doing radio interviews prior to the open house. The committee is hoping for large community participation at this event.

Keith Smith stated he has seen some interesting results from the stop-work advice. He was able to attend a training that was the direct result of the contractors re-educating workers on stop-work goals. The training was comprehensive, using a hands-on approach and encouraging participants to solve problems as a group. Overall the training emphasized guiding principles with a focus on the stop-work plan. Keith also noted he was very impressed by DOE's response to this advice.

Harold Heacock invited the Board to the Committee of the Whole on behalf of the Budget and Contracts Committee's (BCC). They will be viewing the FY 2006 budget allocation request. BCC has submitted a lengthy list of questions. He advised the Board to expect budget advice at the April Board meeting.

Board Practices Refresher #5

Todd reviewed Board norms. He reviewed the list of Do's and Don'ts, which is part of the Board binder. He then asked Board members to discuss how they would feel about having one day Board meetings if agendas seem light on items. Todd noted that, in the past, one day Board meetings were not an option, as it was customary to allow Board members to "sleep on" advice and other action items. He also asked for input as to whether or not people find meeting summaries helpful.

Agency Perspectives

Erik Olds, DOE-ORP, stated he thinks the Board is doing well establishing efficiencies and managing resources. He is interested to hear what Board members think about a one day meeting.

Joe Voice suggested that issue managers contact him or other public involvement officers in order to save time, as they are best equipped to contact the correct people. This will be the best use of Board member's time.

Board Discussion and Questions

Leon said he uses the committee meeting summaries frequently, even when he has participated in a meeting, as it helps to augment his memory of the discussions. Committee meeting summaries also help lay out action items. He also commented that he would be delighted with a one-day Board meeting, as long as committees were vigilant in bringing complete advice to the Board so there is time for wordsmithing.

Betty Tabbutt suggested starting the first day of two-day meetings around 10 AM, in order to allow those traveling extra time to get there in the morning. This would save one night's hotel stay for many.

Greg deBruler stated that a one day meeting might be acceptable, but he thinks it might be more helpful to use the time for education and/or dialog.

Jeff Luke was adamantly opposed to the idea of a one-day meeting. His reason for wanting to keep two-day meetings is that Thursday evenings are a valuable time to share with other Board members and allow a low-key, relaxed environment in which to work out solutions on contentious topics. He finds that it isn't really possible to fully understand each other's opinions and positions at Board meetings without this time to sit and talk them through. He also thinks that two-day Board meetings are a great opportunity for the agencies to interact with the Board.

Rob Davis stated that he is surprised this is a light meeting. He will strive to pay more attention to the Executive Issues Committee (EIC) call. He would like to see all Board meetings packed too full to fit into one day.

Jim Trombold stated he trusts the EIC to make a decision on whether or not a one-day meeting would be sufficient. He suggested having learning sessions on the night before a one-day meeting.

Pam Larsen appreciates the meeting summaries. She has found that she misses a lot during meetings that she has chaired and the meeting summaries help her to realize the big picture of what has happened during a meeting. As for one-day meetings, she commented the committees would have to have more active discussions on advice prior to a one-day Board meeting.

Tim Takaro also appreciates the summaries as they help keep him up to date when he cannot attend a meeting. He is concerned that the Board is losing sight of all the work that needs to be done. He thinks that some of the most valuable time spent during a Board meeting is the night between sessions; that is the time when things are hashed out and things that seemed impossible on Thursday have a way of working themselves out on Friday.

Norma Jean Germond agrees that the meeting summaries are valuable. She has a hard time envisioning a one-day meeting. She also cautioned there have been several times where advice will seem simple but when it gets to the Board, there are many different points that need to be incorporated or changed and things become very complicated. This would be impossible to deal with in one day.

Todd pointed out this meeting could not have been a one-day meeting as the EIC had originally thought it might be. For the time being, the Board will continue with two-day meetings.

Board Business

Todd noted the following as possible topics for April’s Board meeting:

- Caps and barriers decision tree
- Budget advice
- Tanks tutorial
- National repository discussion

Jim Trombold reminded Board members to include the Yakima Open House in their plans for the April Board meeting.

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 Skinnerland, 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

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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