



2012-249

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

3100 Port of Benton Blvd • Richland, WA 99354 • (509) 372-7950

August 3, 2012

12-NWP-131

Ms. Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
1933 Jadwin, Suite 4
Richland, Washington 99352

Re: Hanford Advisory Board Advice #256 – Final Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement

Reference: Letter 12-NWP-113, dated July 18, 2012, from Jane Hedges, Ecology, to Tracy Mustin, USDOE, "Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement"

Dear Ms. Leckband:

Thank you for the Hanford Advisory Board (Board) advice on the Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM EIS). The Department of Ecology (Ecology) considered your comments, and our views are similar to the Board's on this subject. Because of this, we will limit our response to your advice directed toward Ecology.

Ecology is pleased that the Board supports our position urging the United States Department of Energy (USDOE) to select and build a second low-activity waste (LAW) vitrification facility. Hanford has a long history of working toward vitrification for all LAW. This effort includes broad stakeholder support during the 1993 Hanford Tank Waste Task Force evaluations and a commitment from USDOE in the 1997 Tank Waste Remediation System EIS. In addition, we believe the data in the TC&WM EIS indicates that the only viable option for supplemental treatment is another LAW vitrification facility. Ecology has shared our concerns about the preferred alternative for supplemental treatment in the TC&WM EIS with USDOE (reference).

The Board also advised USDOE to look at other forms of glass as possible alternatives to borosilicate in the Waste Treatment Plant system. While alternative glass forms may hold some promise in the future, Ecology believes borosilicate glass is the most proven and protective form for the vitrified waste. We will encourage USDOE to design facilities that support this proven technology. It is essential that waste be removed from the aging single-shell tanks as soon as possible and placed in the most protective waste form.

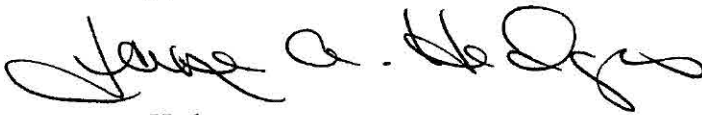
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We appreciate the Board's attention and guidance to help ensure that treatment and disposal of the large volume of LAW destined for a Hanford landfill is protective of people and the environment for thousands of years into the future. Along with the Board, we urge USDOE to fulfill their obligation.

If you have questions or wish to have further discussion on this topic, please contact me at 509-372-7905 or Suzanne Dahl, Tank Waste Treatment Section Manager, at 509-539-3489.

Sincerely,



Jane A. Hedges
Program Manager
Nuclear Waste Program

cc electronic:

Helen Brownell, EPA
Dennis Faulk, EPA
Catherine Brennan, USDOE-HQ
Ken Niles, ODOE
Suzanne Dahl, Ecology

cc: Scott Samuelson, USDOE-ORP
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Administrative Record: TC&WM EIS
Environmental Portal
USDOE-ORP Correspondence Control
USDOE-RL Correspondence Control