



United States Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C. 20460

[Advice # 94a](#) From: Timothy Fields, Jr.

June 4, 1999

Ms. Marilyn B. Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
723 The Parkway, Suite 200
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Ms. Reeves:

Thank you for your letter dated April 21, 1999, to Administrator Carol M. Browner of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Administrator Browner has asked me to respond to your letter from the Hanford Advisory Board on the proposed fiscal year 2001 budget for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Richland Operations Office.

My Office has been following closely the effect of flat or decreasing budget allocations to Federal facilities as environmental commitments at these facilities move to remediation and waste treatment from planning, investigation, and permit preparation. Remediation and waste treatment are far more costly than planning and investigation, but these actions are necessary to achieve the intended results to protect human health and the environment. Constrained Federal budgets mean that Federal Departments and Agencies must achieve greater results for the dollars spent. As a regulator, EPA not only has an obligation to ensure compliance with Federal environmental statutes, regulations and cleanup agreements like the Tri-Party Agreement at Hanford, EPA must also help other Federal Agencies find efficiencies to make scarce dollars go further. I believe EPA Region 10 and its Hanford office have excelled at this mission, aided by the Hanford Advisory Board, Washington's Department of Ecology, the affected tribes, and others with an interest in this site.

As you know, both EPA's Regional Office and its Headquarters Federal Facilities Office have participated in a number of exercises with DOE, the Department of Ecology, and Hanford stakeholders to find innovative ways to keep cleanup and compliance actions on track at Hanford. As more actions at Hanford move beyond the study phases, I expect to see even greater challenges than we have faced in the past. EPA will continue to look to groups like the Hanford Advisory Board for creative ideas, suggestions and valuable input.

EPA appreciates the thoroughness with which the Hanford Advisory Board has reviewed and evaluated the FY 2001 DOE budget request for the Hanford site. This advice is an important example of the value of citizen advisory boards and the contributions these groups continue to make in Federal facility cleanups across the country.

Hanford Advisory Board advice appears to focus on the same issues that EPA has been working on for

the past couple of years. Cleanup of contamination along the Columbia River, treatment of Hanford tank waste, and pursuit of cost savings through efficiencies are important priorities for all of us at EPA who deal with Hanford issues. We will continue to work closely with EPA Region 10, the Hanford Project Office and with DOE Headquarters to ensure continued progress toward cleanup of the Hanford site.

On March 31, 1999, EPA and the Washington Department of Ecology submitted a letter to DOE expressing concerns over the proposed resource restrictions for the Hanford and Columbia River projects. The letter clearly stated that we expect a budget proposal which fully supports the legal cleanup requirements to which all parties have agreed.

If you have questions, Jil Woolford, Director of the Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office would be more than happy to provide assistance. Jim works on my staff and can be reached at (202) 260-1606. Thank you again for the budget advice and your perspective on the Hanford cleanup.

Sincerely,

/s/

Timothy Fields, Jr.

Acting Assistant Administrator

cc: Steve Herman, OECA

Craig Hooks, OECA/FFEO

Jim Woolford, OSWER/FFRRO

Mike Gearheard, Region 10

Doug Sherwood, Region 10

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For questions or comments, please send [email](mailto:Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov) to Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov

Response to HAB Consensus Advice #94 (March 26, 1999)

Subject: HAB Consensus Advice on U.S. Department of Energy FY 2001 Budget

Letter from Timothy Fields, Jr. (EPA, Washington DC), dated June 4, 1999

URL: <http://www.hanford.gov/boards/hab/response/094a.htm>

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