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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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January 26, 1998

Ms. Marilyn Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
723 The Parkway, Suite 200
MSIN: B1-41
Richland, WA 99352

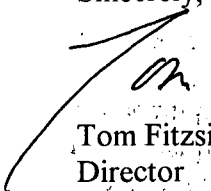
Dear Ms. Reeves:

Thank you for forwarding Hanford Advisory Board Advice #83 regarding TWRS Vadose Zone Characterization. Ecology concurs with the HABs desire to "get on with" characterization of past tank leaks and improving our understanding of contaminant transport through the soil zone. We know that current baseline retrieval technologies present a risk of additional leakage. That risk must be assessed with a more complete understanding of vadose zone properties by the time we begin to retrieve wastes that cannot be readily pumped.

We also recognize the potential advantages of using slant drilling techniques to supplement other characterization tools. As you know, we are participating on a work group with the Department of Energy, tribal representatives, and other stakeholders in developing a comprehensive vadose zone characterization plan for TWRS. We will use this comprehensive plan to determine the most effective approaches, including slant drilling, and to implement those approaches in a timely manner. The use of slant drilling will be considered in the context of fulfilling data requirements in a cost effective and expedient way.

We look forward to continued improvements in our understanding of the vadose zone beneath the tank farms. We appreciate the Board's support of this work.

Sincerely,


Tom Fitzsimmons
Director

cc: Al Alm, Department of Energy, HQ
Alice Murphy, Designated Federal Official
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations
Randy Smith, Environmental Protection Agency
Dan Silver, Washington Department of Ecology

