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A Site Specific Advisory Board, Chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act

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US Environmental
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Washington State Dept
of Ecology

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Department of Health

September 7, 2007

Dave Brockman, Manager

U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations
P.O. Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

Shirley Olinger, Acting Manager

U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection
P.O. Box 450 (H6-60)
Richland, WA 99352

Re: Groundwater and Vadose Zone Management Strategy

Dear Mr. Brockman, and Ms. Olinger,

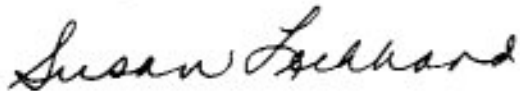
The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) continues to be encouraged by the accelerated focus on Groundwater Remediation. Further characterization and the implementation of Treatability Tests for evaluation of promising remediation technologies are just two examples of efforts we whole-heartedly support. Along with other efforts, they will help fulfill the goals of a comprehensive understanding of the Hanford Site and effective cleanup. The Board has, for a long time, believed that integration of geographic areas, contaminant sources and groundwater plumes is essential to support final remedial decisions. Adequately assessing risk and the goal of returning groundwater to its highest beneficial use are dependent on this approach.

The draft Integrated Groundwater and Vadose Zone Management Strategy seems to articulate a reasonable path to integration. The Board recommends not losing sight of the fundamental Program Element goals of preventing groundwater degradation, remediating groundwater and monitoring groundwater. The Board supports the U.S. Department of Energy's intent to publicize work schedules and target dates for specific work identified in the Integrated Strategy.

The Board expects implementation of this integration effort to occur in the near-term. Further, we wish to direct you to Board Advice #197 and Attachment 1. In this advice, we articulate our established values for groundwater remediation decision-making with a decision flow chart illustrating those values and the process for ensuring they are considered as important decisions are made. We also champion the goal of a Management Plan and Program that is sustainable and fully funded.

Lastly, the Board wants to restate, from past advice (Board Advice #131 and others), that effective public involvement is critical. We expect a transparent process that identifies assumptions and integrates public views into the development and implementation of all further plans.

Sincerely,



Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

This letter represents HAB consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.

cc: Nick Ceto, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Jane Hedges, Washington State Department of Ecology
Doug Frost, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations