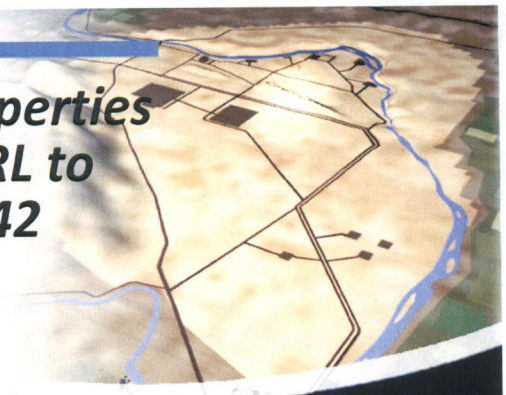
Information on Preservation of Historic Properties and Artifacts at Hanford Provided by DOE-RL to Supplement its Response to HAB Advice #242



Management of Manhattan Project and Cold War Era buildings and artifacts was first laid out in the "Programmatic Agreement among the U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Washington State Historic Preservation Office for the Maintenance, Deactivation, Alteration, and Demolition of the Built Environment on the Hanford Site, Washington," with a Programmatic Agreement signed among the three parties in 1996. The Programmatic Agreement generated two documents to guide artifact tagging and curation as well as mitigate building demolition:

- The Hanford Site Manhattan Project and Cold War Era Historic District Treatment Plan, which evaluated and gave the rationale for which buildings should be documented because of their unique characteristics or functions; and
- The Hanford Site Historic District History of the Plutonium Production Facilities 1943-1990, which provides the formal historic context of Hanford's buildings, and was written to mitigate the adverse effects of building demolition during Hanford's cleanup mission in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

- Consistent with the Programmatic Agreement, the "tagging" of artifacts in facilities slated for demolition is generally done in teams, with technical experts representing the facility or process the facility was part of, as well as at least one person with a deep knowledge of Hanford Site history and the contents of the collection thus far.
  - Sometimes, an item may qualify as an artifact, but may not be retrievable (e.g. it is contaminated and can't be safely retrieved). In such cases, the loss of the artifact is "mitigated" by documenting it via photographs (most likely), as well as written documentation about how the item functioned in the facility and why it was significant.
- DOE takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that "properties, records and associated artifacts...are properly recognized and evaluated, and that decisions are made to preserve them in accordance with NHPA requirements." During 2011, we made significant progress in this area by working with all the Hanford Site contractors to preserve documents and other records associated with the Manhattan Project/Cold War Era and to complete the pickup of all remaining tagged artifacts available for collection. The few identified artifacts remaining in facilities will be removed as the demolition of those facilities makes their removal safer, more cost effective and/or feasible. We also, for the first time, had our contractor complete a listing of all items in inventory.
- We disseminated your advice to our contractors at the time we received it and have impressed upon them the importance of complying with their obligations in this area.
- In the next several years we will strive to consolidate Hanford's Manhattan Project and Cold War artifacts into a facility that meets today's standards. Obviously, this is dependent on funding. RL agrees with the Hanford Advisory Board that these artifacts are invaluably significant and should be stored in conditions that will ensure their long term preservation (e.g. security, proper climate, fire safe, etc.) and – as they were paid for by taxpayers – RL also agrees that the public should be able to see and understand what they are and what makes them special. We would like to use photos, videos, and virtual tours to supplement – not replace – the public's ability to see these artifacts in person.
- DOE-RL would like to be able to use some of the "new approaches" the HAB has recommended for drawing in visitors and showing off the collection and Hanford's history in the best way possible. In order to do that, we will give serious consideration to the HAB's advice to look for ways to expand DOE's thinking on what can be preserved (e.g. air lock doors, clean glove boxes, etc.). Consistent with this advice, within the last couple of months, DOE-RL has already saved a "wine rack" from the Plutonium Finishing Plant that was once used to store cans of stabilized plutonium. Once slated for disposal, now the rack can someday help tell visitors about the legacy of Cold War operations at the Hanford Site.
- We are working closely with state and federal agencies on preservation activities at the Hanford Site. For example, we consulted closely with the Washington State Historical Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service, prior to beginning physical testing at the B Reactor last fall that would help us better understand the condition of its key structural support areas.