



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Environmental Management
P.O. Box 450, MSIN H6-60
Richland, Washington 99352

AUG 14 2009

09-ESQ-099

Ms. Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
1933 Jadwin Avenue, Suite 135
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Ms. Leckband:

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD (HAB) ADVICE #212 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE TANK CLOSURE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT
(TC & WM) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Thank You for the Board's #212 recommendations regarding the development of the Draft TC & WM EIS. We appreciate the Board's continued interest in the release of the Draft TC & WM EIS. The EIS is an important basis for Hanford cleanup decisions, which warrants review and public dialogue. DOE agrees that a 45-day review and comment period may not be sufficient and has extended the public comment period to 140 days for the Draft TC & WM EIS.

Prior to conducting the formal public hearings, DOE will host a one-day workshop in the Tri-Cities to familiarize stakeholders and others with the alternatives, layout of the document, and data presentation. As we discussed, the goal of that workshop is not to provide comment on the Draft EIS itself because this workshop is not a public hearing. Holding this workshop will provide information about the document to assist with your review.

Your consensus advice included very specific timeframes for activities to occur relative to the Draft TC & WM EIS. Based upon past experience, the timing of the workshop and the public hearings could be influenced by a broad array of factors including the exact release date of the EIS, availability of facilities, other public involvement activities and meetings, holidays, and the availability of key personnel.

We believe the HAB plays a role in helping inform the broader public on Hanford cleanup activities and decisions. As we move forward with the release of the document, we are cognizant of the number of cross-cutting public involvement activities. We look forward to working with the Board to have a meaningful public dialogue on the Draft TC & WM EIS.

Ms. Susan Leckband
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If you have any questions regarding the response to consensus advice #212, please contact Mary Beth Burandt, DOE TC & WM EIS National Environmental Policy Act Document Manager, (509) 372-7772.

Sincerely,



Shirley J. Olinger, Manager
Office of River Protection

ESQ:MEB

Attachment:
HAB Letter dated February 6, 2009

Attachment
09-ESQ-099

HAB Letter from Susan Leckband to I. R. Triay, HQ, S. J. Olinger,
ORP, D. A. Brockman, RL, and J. Manning, Ecology,
“Public Comment Period Considerations for the Tank Closure and
Waste Management Draft EIS,” dated February 6, 2009

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

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February 6, 2009

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Re: Public Comment Period Considerations for the Tank Closure & Waste
Management Draft EIS

Dear Ms. Olinger, Mr. Brockman, and Mr. Manning,

Background

The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) has closely followed the development of the Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM EIS). Decisions that will be made based on the analysis in this document will have significant impacts on the cleanup remaining at Hanford and will influence the level of perpetual care, monitoring and oversight that will be necessary for hundreds of years into the future.

From all accounts, this will be a lengthy and technically complex document. A thorough and rigorous analysis of the TC&WM Draft EIS is essential to ensure that good decisions are made. It is also important for the public to fully understand the range of important decisions that will ultimately be made based on the analysis and conclusions contained within this document.

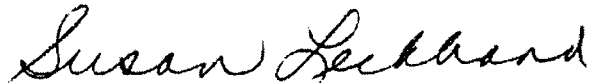
The Board and its various members expect to play a role in helping the public to understand the TC&WM Draft EIS. To do so, we will need the assistance of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to help us understand the document and to work with us in developing a coordinated plan for soliciting public comment.

Advice

- The Board strongly encourages DOE to allow a minimum 120-day review/comment period once the TC&WM Draft EIS is publicly released, with the option to extend. The length and complexity of the document, along with the important decisions that will be based on this document, require that the public be provided with a fair opportunity to thoroughly review the TC&WM Draft EIS and consider its implications. The standard 45-day review period is not adequate. DOE has taken years to complete the TC&WM Draft EIS. There is no reason the public review process needs to be compressed to meet an artificial internal DOE schedule.
- Within two weeks after the TC&WM Draft EIS is released, DOE and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) should conduct a one to two day informational workshop for the Board and other interested parties in the Tri-Cities to thoroughly explain and discuss the key contents of the document and the key decision points. This will help Board members to conduct their own analysis and prepare comments on behalf of their member organizations. Board member organizations will also be better able to develop and distribute public information materials to help inform and prepare the public to provide comments. The Public Involvement and Communications (PIC) Committee is willing to assist DOE and Ecology in designing this workshop. We believe the dialogue that occurs at this workshop will also likely assist DOE and Ecology in developing their own public information materials for the public.
- No earlier than 75 days after release of the TC&WM Draft EIS, DOE and Ecology should conduct a series of public hearings across the region to solicit public comments on the document.

- DOE and Ecology should work with the PIC Committee to determine the number and location of public hearings. DOE and Ecology should also work with the PIC Committee to review and help shape DOE and Ecology presentations that are provided at these public hearings.
- Notices, advertisements, and background material developed for the workshop and public hearings must clearly inform the public of major decisions that will ultimately be made based on the analysis and conclusions contained within the TC&WM Draft EIS. As examples, these public information materials should explain the implications of bringing new waste to Hanford for disposal or leaving wastes in underground storage tanks or soils. These public information materials should also inform the public of how public concerns and values may be impacted by proposed decisions.

Sincerely,



Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

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

cc: Elin D. Miller, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Doug Shoop, Co-Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office
Steve Pfaff, Co-Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection
Richard Campbell, Environmental Protection Agency
Jane Hedges, Washington State Department of Ecology
Catherine Brennan, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations