

Notice of Upcoming Public Comment Period

PROPOSED TRI-PARTY AGREEMENT CHANGES TO ALIGN CLEANUP WORK WITH OVERALL PRIORITIES AND ADJUST CLEANUP SCHEDULES BASED ON CURRENTLY ANTICIPATED NEAR-TERM FUNDING

The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies - are proposing changes to the TPA concerning several Hanford cleanup projects managed by the USDOE Richland Operations Office (USDOE-RL).

These proposed changes:

- Reflect shared priorities to protect the Columbia River and complete cleanup of the soils and groundwater along the River Corridor.
- Are consistent with USDOE-RL's vision to complete River Corridor cleanup and reduce the active area of cleanup to the Central Plateau by 2015.
- Adjust cleanup schedules to focus currently anticipated near-term funds on higher-priority work and delay milestones for cleanup work identified as lower priority at this time.

Protecting the Columbia River, cleaning up the River Corridor and keeping groundwater contamination on the Central Plateau from moving toward the river are the underlying principles that guide the 2015 vision. As work is completed, the area remaining to be cleaned up (active cleanup area) would shrink, reducing the need for infrastructure (e.g., utilities, roadways, surveillance of buildings and waste sites). This should produce cost savings that could be put towards cleanup of the Central Plateau.

Below is a summary of the draft TPA change packages and some of the proposed changes:

- Focus greater resources on groundwater and protection of the Columbia River.
 - Establish new and accelerated groundwater and Columbia River protection milestones.
 - Create 29 new cleanup interim milestones and target dates.
- Adjust existing milestones to better align with currently anticipated 2009 funding and overall priorities.
 - Proposed changes would delay near-term milestones for transuranic waste retrieval, treatment and certification. (M-91 milestones)
 - Proposed changes would delay the submission of cleanup documents (i.e., feasibility studies and proposed plans) for nine operable unit groups on the Central Plateau. (M-15 milestones)
- Realign and integrate 100 K Area cleanup.
 - Adjust completion of K-Area interim actions to reflect delay of the removal of sludge from the K West Basin.
 - Provide an integrated approach to finish cleanup of the 100 K Area (includes K East and K West reactors, adjacent fuel storage basins, 79 facilities, and 124 soil waste sites) in three phases that do not impact ongoing work in the K West Basin.

- Change the milestone to complete interim safe storage of K East Reactor from 2011 to 2014.
- Establish six new interim milestones, two of which would address hexavalent chromium in the 100 Area soil and groundwater.
- Retain some Pacific Northwest National Laboratory facilities in the 300 Area that are needed for continued laboratory operations.
 - Postpone and delay the cleanup of four major Pacific Northwest National Laboratory research facilities and associated waste sites in the 300 Area until they are no longer needed to support operations (about 20 years).
 - The current TPA schedule is to remove those structures by 2015.
- Designate groundwater and River Corridor soil operable units as Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) past practice units.
 - Align TPA designation with current interim actions under CERCLA.
 - Provide an integrated and streamlined framework and methodology to investigate, analyze and decide on River Corridor cleanup actions.

In addition to proposing these draft TPA changes, the agencies agreed to continue discussions on other issues. They signed an Agreement in Principle to discuss a strategy for completing cleanup of the Central Plateau. These discussions are planned between March 1 and July 31, 2009 and could result in other proposed changes to the TPA that would require public input.

The agencies want your input on these proposed milestone changes and are planning to hold a 45-day public comment period expected to run from **March 9 through April 23, 2009**. No public meetings are scheduled at this time. To request a public meeting, call the Hanford Cleanup Hotline 1-800- 321-2008 or reply to this email by February 25, 2009. If there is significant interest, the agencies will hold a public meeting(s). The fact sheet, which will be mailed out at the start of public comment, will list meeting dates and locations.

The draft TPA Change Packages will be available electronically Friday, February 6. To view them, go to <http://www.hanford.gov/?page=110&parent=91> and click on **Modifications for Upcoming Public Comment**.