

OREGON HANFORD CLEANUP BOARD

Paige Knight, Chair

June 1, 2005

Larry Clucas, Vice-Chair

Mary Lou Blazek-Smith

Mr. Charles Anderson
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
EM-2/Forrestal Building
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington D.C. 20585

Norma Jean Germond

Maxine Hines

Wayne Lei

Robert McFarlane, M.D.

Eric Nisley

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Marc Rogelstad

The Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board consists of Oregon legislators and citizens appointed by the Governor to provide advice on Hanford cleanup issues. At its March 2005 meeting, the board received a briefing on the status of the Hanford Site budgets.

*Armand Minthorn
Confederated Tribes of
the Umatilla Indian
Reservation*

*Michael Grainey
Oregon Dept. of Energy*

The Board was greatly alarmed when it learned of proposed cuts to Hanford cleanup funding in the President's FY 2006 budget and in the FY 2007 target.

*David Van't Hof
Governor's Office*

While we are relieved to learn that Congress may restore much of the funding, the Board remains concerned about the message coming from the Department of Energy and this administration on Hanford cleanup. DOE's position seems to be that because many difficult tasks have been completed at Hanford, the bulk of cleanup has been accomplished and drastic cuts in funding should follow. This is not the case.

*Phil Ward, Director
Water Resources
Department*

Sen. Margaret Carter

Sen. Rick Metsger

We are pleased that several very difficult, very expensive projects have been completed in the past year at Hanford. This includes moving all free liquids from the single shell tanks to double shell tanks, moving spent nuclear fuel away from the Columbia River, and stabilizing plutonium for long-term storage. These are significant accomplishments. But much important work remains to be done.

Sen. David Nelson

Rep. Linda Flores

Rep. Bob Jenson

Rep. Steve March

Many critical projects at Hanford have been deferred for years while funds and technical expertise were focused on the tanks and the spent fuel and the plutonium. Now that those projects are complete, these funds must be shifted to this other work – not taken away.

*Lynda M. Horst
Administrator*

phone 503.378.4040 800.221.8035 in Oregon fax 503.373.7806

625 Marion Street, N.E., Suite 1, Salem, Oregon 97301-3742

www.energy.state.or.us/nucsaf/HWB/hwboard.htm

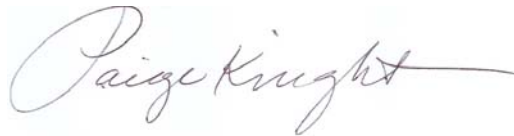
Just to name a few of the remaining challenges at Hanford:

- Hanford is still without the capability to treat and package remote-handled transuranic waste. Until such a facility is built, Hanford can not move forward with clean-up of several high-risk burial grounds.
- While the spent fuel is out of the K-Basins, the basin sludge poses difficult and expensive challenges of its own.
- Hanford's groundwater program remains woefully under-funded. While programs have been initiated to try and contain some of Hanford's contaminated groundwater plumes, little has been done to actually clean up contamination in the groundwater.
- DOE has yet to begin to address Natural Resource injury at Hanford.
- Significant design changes may be needed for Hanford's waste treatment plant because of the recognition that increased seismic standards are needed.

There is plenty of critical work that remains to be done to reduce the risks posed by Hanford. The President's proposed FY 2006 budget would have severely curtailed actual cleanup work. Plans to accelerate cleanup can not go forward with these reduced funding levels.

The board also believes strongly that funding for security concerns must not come at the expense of cleanup. While the board certainly recognizes the importance of security, particularly now that plutonium will remain at Hanford much longer than anticipated, site cleanup must not suffer as a result. Expected increases in Hanford Site security costs must be met by commensurate increases in Hanford's budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paige Knight". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Paige Knight, Chair

cc: Keith Klein, Manager, DOE Richland Operations Office
Roy Schepens, Manager, DOE Office of River Protection
Mike Wilson, Washington Department of Ecology
Nick Ceto, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Stuart Harris, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Russell Jim, Yakama Indian Nation
Gabriel Bohnee, Nez Perce Tribe
Todd Martin, Chair, Hanford Advisory Board