

Having followed the DOE Environmental Restoration projects since the Reconfiguration comment I made regarding the Preliminary Design Report, Priority System for Environmental Restoration, the Hanford projects have received the bulk of my attention. Hanford, being an example of anthropocene has taken on management of a wide variety of environmental issues. The Liquid Effluent Retention and 200 Area Effluent Treatment Facility and the Load-in stations reflect critical thinking associated with the issues and problems they will address. Having a history of working on environmental issues and remediation since the mid-1970s, I note that reading the Hanford documents has continued to be an enlightening and learning experience – evaluating the technologies in use, the chemistry of the plans, and assessment analysis methodology.

When Rick Perry was appointed, and the administration seemed to be unraveling government programs I worried Hanford restoration might become a victim of under-informed political personalities. Reading this document has swayed that concern. Wisdom seems to have prevailed and I commend those who stood in the path of denigrating the science and expertise that has been gained over the years.

Quoting from my 1991 comment:

“We are pleased that the DOE is beginning the arduous process of cleaning up the legacy of the nuclear era. It is our hope that our comment will assist the DOE in reconciling the desires of states, tribes and the U. S. EPA with the interests of local communities and the impact on the environment . We are also pleased to note the suggestion from Congress that the DOE cleanup priority system must rank and weigh in relative importance, health risk as the number one priority during this cleanup process. This is consistent with our goal of pollution prevention. We believe that activities that generate pollutants can be modified or have pollution control equipment installed which will greatly reduce or eliminate the impact on the environment and the health, safety and welfare of those who live near DOE facilities.”

Since that time, I was involved with supplying carbide lime slurry to the KC DOE Bannister Road waste treatment facility prior to its closure. It was my great pleasure to see firsthand the professional approach to handling waste treatment with an integrated approach. This approach as permeated the DOE approach to our national issues related to the US nuclear anthropocene from the history of these facilities. My new hope is that long-term thinking along the lines of geological time frames will guide the final resting place of the end products of waste treatment.