

XRPDX

I work with XRPDX action team representing over 1500 members in Oregon and SW Washington and we are deeply concerned about the proposed changes in the Holistic settlement for the cleanup of radioactive waste at Hanford. Given that radioactive wastes are likely to reach the Columbia River prior to the 2040 deadline (there is some indication that may already be happening), these changes are even more disconcerting. We call on the State of Washington and the Federal Government to ensure safe, efficient, durable and effective plans for protecting both the river, groundwaters, communities and the rights of Tribes in this clean-up process. We are concerned that Tribes did not have a full opportunity to exercise their treaty rights prior to the public announcement of proposed changes and believe that these changes should not take place without full consultation of the Tribes with TPA agencies. We believe the proposed grouting plan is premature, in conflict with current law and the "good as glass principle" for vitrifying and deep contained burial of high level radioactive waste and that tank waste may very likely contain high level waste. Adequate environmental review results should be made available to the public and decisions should not be made without fully understanding the potential harm that grouting might be caused. We are definitely not in favor of the shipment of radioactive waste through communities in Washington or Oregon or shallow storing within Texas or Utah. Affected communities should be fully informed of any transport or storage plans and given time to weigh in and consent to such risks. How does this plan ensure that grouted wastes will not get stranded or stored at Hanford while awaiting shipment in ways that could harm the surrounding communities.

Have different climate change scenarios been modeled in terms of ground water dynamics and what if there are unanticipated changes in levels of radioactivity or mobility? How do you ensure long-term protection of the groundwater, River, and surrounding communities as well as those downstream? How much contamination is likely to reach the river over various timespans (decades, centuries,etc.)? The processes being proposed are likely to involve the production of transuric wastes and what guarantees are in place on how those will be adequately handled. Until these and other questions can be answered, we ask that action not be taken on the proposed changes laid out in the signed settlement but that action continue quickly with reliable methods for long-term River, groundwater, and community protection.