

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	7 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Beyer, Burley, Cannon, Jenson, Macpherson, Smith G., Dingfelder
Nays:	-
Exc.:	-
Prepared By:	Cat McGinnis, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/5, 3/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Urges Congress to fund cleanup efforts at Hanford Nuclear Reservation and to expedite cleanup actions in order to safeguard public health and welfare and protect the Columbia River.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Implications of Oregon seeking standing on Hanford Tri-Party Agreement

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The Hanford Nuclear Reservation is a 560-square mile site in Washington State on the Columbia River (35 miles from the Oregon border) that produced plutonium for the nation's nuclear weapons program over a 40 year period, beginning in 1944. The Hanford site currently has 177 underground storage tanks that hold millions of gallons of high level radioactive waste. At least 67 of these tanks have confirmed leaks that have released approximately one million gallons of radioactive waste into the soil; that waste has migrated to contaminate ground water underlying 200 square miles on the nuclear reservation. Further concerns have been raised about the 2,300 tons of corroded spent nuclear fuel rods in two water-filled basins less than 500 yards from the Columbia River. Studies indicate that contaminated ground water from the site began entering the Columbia River in the 1950's. Today, shipments of radioactive waste travel daily through Oregon to the Hanford disposal site.

The Hanford Tri-Party Agreement is mandated as part of a federal consent decree and calls for cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, including timeframes for specific actions. The three parties that entered into the agreement are the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Energy, and the Washington Department of Ecology. Oregon continues to seek a formal decision making role in the Hanford Tri-Party Agreement.

The Oregon Department of Energy has identified goals for the cleanup of Hanford Nuclear Reservation, targeted for completion by 2010. These goals include stable funding, ground water cleanup, removal of surplus plutonium from the site, and emptying of the K-Basins, including removal of contaminated soils.