The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, Medicine

Nez Perce Tribe's Involvement with Cleanup at the Hanford Site

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Presentation Outline

1. Review of why the Nez Perce Tribe history at the Hanford Site.

2. The Nez Perce Tribe's perspective of the Hanford Site.

3. Comments on the Academies Statement of Tasks for assessment of technology development.

Nez Perce Treaty of 1855

The Nez Perce ceded ~6 million acres to the US and reserved a reservation of ~7.8 million acres.

In Article 3 ….Secured to said Indians is "…the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places in common with citizens of the Territory; and of erecting temporary buildings for curing, together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing their horses and cattle upon open and unclaimed land."

Subsequent Treaties and Agreements

1863 Treaty – Reduced the reservation from 7.8 million acres to 770,000 acres.

1868 Treaty – Allowed land for the Lapwai Military Reservation and promised to fulfill the 1863 treaty.

1893 Agreement – Due to the Dawes Act (Allotment Act) of 1877 the U.S. negotiated to maintained the exterior boundaries from 1863 but reduced Indian owned land to ~250,000 acres. The balance was opened up to homesteading.

Today – All treaties and agreements had a savings clause, which is in effect today: "The existing provisions of all former treaties with said Nez Perce Indians not consistent with the provisions of this agreement are hereby continued in full force and effect."

Nez Perce Territory

Occupied the Northwest since time immemorial from lower Columbia River to Yellowstone.

Traveled to trade in California, Nevada, Utah and were considered the most dominant tribe in the Columbia Plateau region.

Nez Perce Involvement at Hanford

Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 – Public Law 97-425, Title I, Sec. 101.(a),(b):

"…upon any decision by the Secretary or the President to develop [the above] …the State or Indian tribe involved shall be entitled, with respect to the proposed repository involved, to rights of participation and consultation…."

In 1987 the Nez Perce Tribe was declared an "affected tribe" due to the Hanford site being considered for a high-level nuclear waste repository. This also is the basis for the tribe being considered a "trustee" for natural resources injured by the release of contaminants from the Hanford site.

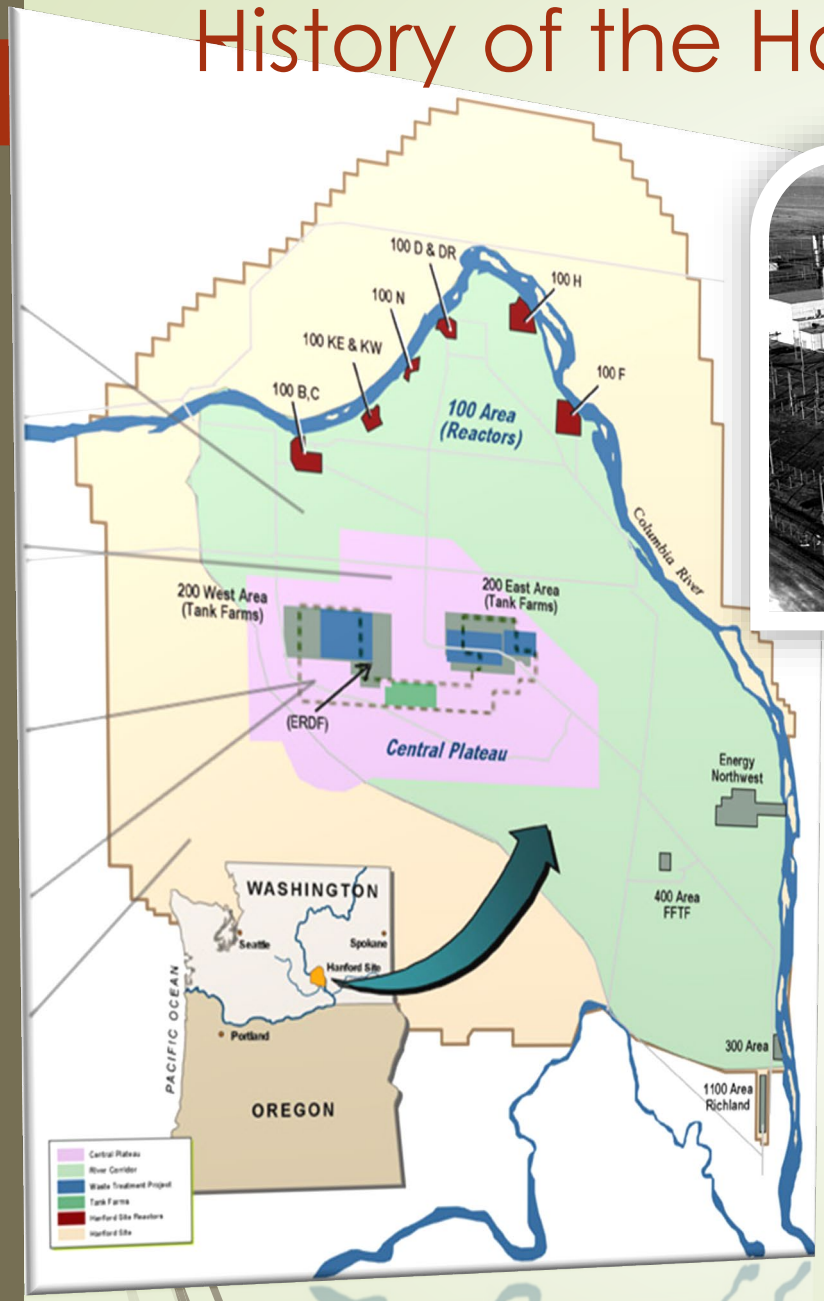
Nez Perce Involvement at Hanford (continued)

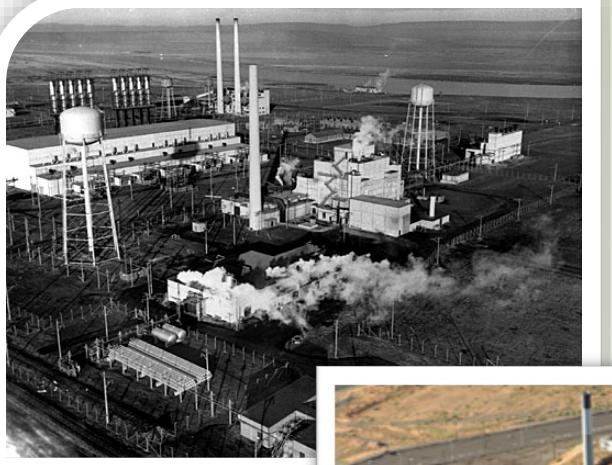
Nez Perce Tribe – End State Vision

Resolution NP 05-411

"The Nez Perce Tribe believes that the ultimate goals of the Hanford cleanup should be to restore the land to uncontaminated pre-Hanford conditions for unrestricted use. This includes air, soil, groundwater, and surface water. Tribal members, ecological resources, and cultural resources within Usual and Accustomed areas should not be exposed to any potential adverse risk above that which has always existed for the tribe prior to the establishment of the federal government projects and facilities at Hanford in 1942."

History of the Hanford Site Cleanup





B Reactor

B Plant

Tank Farm

History of the Hanford Site Cleanup (continued)

Cleanup activities began in earnest in early 1990s after 40+ years of intentional and accidental releases of over 500+ contaminants in quantities difficult to imagine.

History of the Hanford Site Cleanup (continued)

The scope and scale of hazardous releases from Hanford are large and complex in nature.

- Over 1,400,000,000 gals of ground water have been contaminated at Hanford.
- There are over 1,300 documented hazardous release sites.
- From 1944-1971 single-pass coolant reactors released approximately 113,000,000 curies of radioactivity from 11 contaminants and over 66,000,000 curies from nonvolatile beta emitters.
  - The majority of radioactivity was short-lived (2.5 hours -83.7 days)
  - This was also combined with high temperatures
- Over 685,000 curies of iodine-131 was released to the atmosphere from 1944-1947.
- Over 1.5 million gallons of "waste water" was released to the ground for every ton of uranium process in the plutonium processing plants.

Nez Perce Tribe's work with other Columbia Basin Tribes

- The Nez Perce Tribe is involved with many of the other Tribes who have similar usual and accustom rights to the Columbia River and adjacent areas based on treaties with the United States.
- Each Tribe has direct government-to-government relationship with the United States independent of the other Tribes.
- The Nez Perce Tribe cooperates and coordinates their activities with the United States through organizations like the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission.
- At the Hanford Site the Nez Perce Tribe works with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation and the Yakama Nation on the State and Tribal Governments Working Group (at both a Site and National level) and the Hanford Natural Resource Trustee Council.

Academies Statement of Tasks

1. A review of DOE-EM's technology development efforts to treat Supplemental Low Activity Waste (SLAW).

- Based on the Nez Perce Tribe's Vision statement and past involvement in cleanup we would recommend the following:
  - The main issue driving development of new technologies should be improving the site (reducing risk) for humans and the environment.
  - Analysis of alternatives should place a higher priority on solutions improving the long-term conditions of the site more than short-term conditions.
  - The process should be transparent and understandable to all the public.

Academies Statement of Tasks

1. Continued:

- The Nez Perce Tribe supports improving cleanup technologies at the site to meet their Vision of individuals having unrestricted use of the site.
- Also stated above, acceptance of the Hanford Site as being clean by the tribal and non-tribal public will require developing new and better technologies in a transparent process understandable by technical and non-technical individuals.
- The Hanford Site should not be managed as a repository for nuclear wastes due to the lack of cleanup technologies.

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(Thank You)