

Session 5A

Panel: The Hanford Site - An Update of Challenges and Accomplishments

Panel Reporter – Steve Wiegman, US DOE ORP

The Hanford Site panel provided a lively discussion of challenges and progress at the nation's most complex cleanup site. Panelists included:

- Roy Schepens, Manager DOE-Office of River Protection
- Keith Klein, Manager DOE Richland Operations Office
- John Fulton, Washington Closure Hanford
- Ron Gallagher, Fluor Hanford, Inc.
- Mark Spears, CH2M Hill Hanford Group
- William Elkins, Bechtel National

Keith Klein, manager DOE Richland Operations Office, set the stage with a visual history of the site dating back to the Tribal Nations and early settlers up through the processing years and into the current cleanup. Recognition of the importance of worker safety and environmental monitoring and protection at Hanford started in the 1940's and continues today.

John Fulton, Washington Closure Hanford, highlighted the outstanding progress on cleanup along the Columbia River as the River Corridor Cleanup project performance exceeds expectations.

Ron Gallagher, Fluor Hanford, Inc, then covered the cleanup progress in the Hanford Central Plateau, including successful demolition of facilities with exceptionally high airborne contamination. Gallagher also provided an update of the latest technologies being applied in groundwater remediation. The focus then switched to the DOE Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP).

Roy Schepens, manager DOE-ORP, described the plans for tank waste processing. He made the point that we have shown we can retrieve the difficult waste from old tanks by proper application of technology designed for the physical state of the waste and the tanks. He emphasized the value of completing testing of supplemental treatment to allow early waste solidification to help offset the impact of Waste Treatment Plant delays.

Mark Spears, CH2M Hill Hanford Group, described the significant safety issues overcome in the past several years and the significant performance improvement now being realized through innovative technology.

William Elkins, Bechtel National, highlighted the importance of confirming seismic criteria for the Waste Treatment Plant. Construction on the Pretreatment and High-Level vitrification facilities has been suspended pending this information. Significant construction progress is being accomplished on facilities not affected by the seismic