



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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June 8, 2017

17-NWP-069

Mr. Doug S. Shoop, Manager  
Richland Operations Office  
United States Department of Energy  
PO Box 550, MSIN: H5-20  
Richland, Washington 99352

Mr. Ty Blackford, President and CEO  
CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Company  
PO Box 1600, MSIN: H7-30  
Richland, Washington 99352

Re: Continued Response Actions to Partial Collapse of PUREX Tunnel 1

Reference: Department of Ecology Administrative Order Docket No. 14156, dated May 10, 2017

Dear Mr. Shoop and Mr. Blackford:

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) received Letter 17-AMRP-0180, dated May 31, 2017, from the United States Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (USDOE-RL). The letter notified Ecology of continued response actions to the partial collapse of PUREX Tunnel 1.

Section J.4.5 of the PUREX Tunnels Contingency Plan (which is implemented pursuant to Permit Condition III.2.A.1), provides for USDOE-RL undertaking certain actions in the event there is a condition that could introduce additional risk to personnel, the facility, or the environment.

Due to the continued immediate threat to human health and the environment posed by the instability of PUREX Tunnel 1, Ecology approves grouting of PUREX Tunnel 1 as an interim stabilization measure under Section J.4.5 of the PUREX Tunnels Contingency Plan, Permit Condition III.2.A.1, and Washington Administrative Code 173-303-360(f)-(h). Ecology agrees that this recovery action is the best option to protect human health and the environment, based on the remaining risk of failure for the rest of PUREX Tunnel 1.

Ecology approves the grouting of Tunnel 1 as an interim stabilization of the PUREX Tunnel 1 structure that will not preclude any final future closure or remedial decision. In accordance with Ecology's Administrative Order (reference), a description of this interim action will need to be included as part of the permit modification submitted to Ecology to address Corrective Action 3.

In addition, as described in Corrective Action 2 of the Administrative Order, USDOE-RL is required to develop corrective actions to ensure the safe storage of the waste in the PUREX Storage Tunnel 2. By August 1, 2017, USDOE-RL is to submit a draft report detailing the corrective actions to ensure the safe storage of the waste in the PUREX Storage Tunnels 1 and 2 to Ecology for comment and approval.



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Ecology considers the interim action of grouting Tunnel 1 to meet the intent of Corrective Action 2 in the Administrative Order as it applies to Tunnel 1. However, USDOE-RL must still develop corrective actions to ensure the safe storage of the waste in Tunnel 2. In addition, USDOE-RL must provide to Ecology, by August 1, 2017, a draft report detailing the corrective actions for PUREX Tunnels 1 and 2. Ecology expects USDOE-RL will work closely with us as the project plan for grouting Tunnel 1 is developed to ensure continued cooperation.

If there are any questions, please contact Stephanie Schleif, Facility Transition Project Manager, at [stephanie.schleif@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:stephanie.schleif@ecy.wa.gov) or (509) 372-7929, or Ron Skinnarland, Waste Management Section Manager, at [ron.skinnarland@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ron.skinnarland@ecy.wa.gov) or (509) 372-7924.

Sincerely,



Alexandra K. Smith  
Program Manager  
Nuclear Waste Program

bw/jvs

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