

DOE/EA-1260/FONSI

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TRANSFER OF 1100 AREA, SOUTHERN RAIL
CONNECTION, AND ROLLING STOCK
HANFORD SITE, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
AUGUST 1998**

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), DOE/EA-1260, to assess environmental impacts associated with the transfer of the 1100 Area, southern rail connection, and rolling stock to a non-federal entity. Based on the evaluations in the EA, and considering comments from the Corps of Engineers, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, and members of the public, DOE has determined that the proposed action is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA). Therefore, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

ADDRESSES AND FURTHER INFORMATION:

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PURPOSE AND NEED: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) needs to reduce indirect costs by optimizing site infrastructure. Due to downsizing at the Hanford site and consolidation of resources, the 1100 Area and southern rail connection are not required for Hanford operations.

The proposed action is consistent with the site missions of economic transition, re-use of current assets, and optimization of land holdings.

BACKGROUND: The 1100 Area serves as a procurement, central warehousing, vehicle maintenance, transportation, and distribution center for the Hanford Site. Property in the 1100 Area is zoned by the City of Richland for heavy manufacturing, medium industrial, and limited manufacturing. The 1100 Area is shown as Industrial and Commercial property in the Draft Hanford Remedial Action Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

RL received an unsolicited proposal from the Port of Benton (POB) requesting transfer of the southern connection of the Hanford railroad and the 1100 Area. The POB developed a long-range plan to integrate the Hanford rail system and associated infrastructure into a regional Freight Mobility and Industrial Center. The proposed action will not affect the rail system north of Horn Rapids Road.

PROPOSED ACTION: The DOE proposes to transfer the ownership of the 1100 Area consisting of 311 hectares (768 acres), the southern rail connection consisting of 25.76 kilometers (16 miles), and rolling stock to a non-federal entity. Any rolling stock that is not transferred would be excessed. The Yakima River delta is owned by the Corps of Engineers. The proposed action concerns the usage of the railroad right-of-way.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No-Action Alternative: This alternative would involve the continued DOE operation and ownership of the 1100 Area facilities and the Hanford southern rail connection. Reduction of indirect costs by optimizing site infrastructure would not occur.

Other Alternatives: Three alternatives considered were: (1) DOE retains ownership and leases facilities and the rail system to non-federal entities; (2) transfer a portion of the 1171 facility, the 1171C, the railroad tool shed, the railroad scale house, and the southern connection of the Hanford rail line; and (3) transfer the 1100 Area and southern rail connection to General Services Administration for excess of property and equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: Impacts connected with the transfer of the 1100 Area and southern rail connection are expected to remain the same after the transfer. Impacts are limited to small quantities of gaseous, particulate, or thermal discharge activities from transportation trucks and rail line activities. No adverse impacts to species, habitats, or other biological resources are expected to result from the proposed transfer of the 1100 Area and the southern rail connection.

Socioeconomic Impacts: Existing Hanford workers would not be directly affected by the proposed action. The transfer of the 1100 Area to a non-federal entity would reduce operating costs at Hanford and encourage economic diversification. It is anticipated that the non-federal entity may increase employment levels within Benton and Franklin counties.

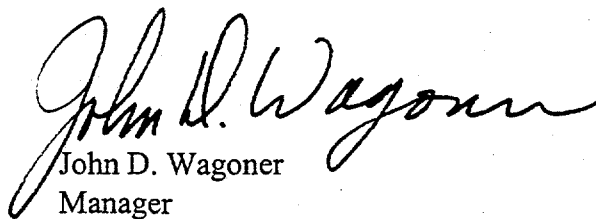
Cultural Resource Impacts: Eighteen archaeological sites and one isolated find will be evaluated to determine the eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed action will not impact the historical significance of these identified sites. The transfer document will provide for appropriate preservation and protection.

Environmental Justice: Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, requires that Federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and activities on minority and low-income populations. This proposed action would have minimal impact to both the offsite population and potential workforce.

Cumulative Impacts: The proposed action is not expected to substantially change the cumulative impacts of operations on the Hanford Site and surrounding area. Potential impacts from future uses are unknown and analysis at present would require speculation.

DETERMINATION: Based on the analysis in the EA and comments received on the draft EA, I conclude that the proposed transfer of the 1100 Area, southern rail connection, and rolling stock to a non-federal entity does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, an EIS for the proposed action is not required.

Issued at Richland, Washington, this 27th day of August, 1998.



John D. Wagoner
Manager
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