U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Application of Lessons Learned from EM Closures at Hanford

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Objective

Highlight and discuss lessons learned from previous DOE EM site closure projects (Rocky Flats and Fernald) that can be applied to advance and accelerate clean-up and closure of the Hanford site.

Key Lessons

- Everyone* needs to share a common vision of what is to be done and what the end state will be.
- Regulatory framework needs to be streamlined and nimble enough to facilitate progress and developed with the end state in mind.
- The team of Decision-Makers need to be identified, empowered, and committed to achieving the agreed upon end state.

* If someone thinks they are a stakeholder, they are a stakeholder. Their stake and degree of influence will vary.

End State

Everyone needs to share a common vision of what is to be done and what the end state will be.

- Consultative process involving all parties in order to work toward agreement of what needs to be done and to what level – and to understand what the options really mean
- "Blue Sky" discussions starting with blank slate and unconstrained look can lead to different end state decisions
- Public discussion of realistic future site use to build consensus
- Engage a good moderator to help parties reach resolution
- Legislative solutions can also help solidify end state decisions
- Pilot projects can also be useful to get work going and accelerate decision-making on Site-wide issues
- Develop a credible plan with best available information, proceed with work safely, and learn by doing, with a bias toward continuous improvement. Don't hold out for the "best" approach. Improvement potential may not be obvious until work starts

Regulatory Framework

- Clarity on end state can help drive consensus on cleanup levels to ensuring that key stakeholders are supportive.
- Flexibility in regulatory framework and a bias for action facilitates progress and gives contractor ability to adjust as needed.
- Regulatory milestones included in the project baseline helps ensure the regulators, the contractor, and the DOE were all working toward the same baseline and milestones, not “project” milestones and “regulatory” milestones.
- Contract and baseline structure should be consistent with regulatory framework; ideally it will facilitate the regulatory structure.

Decision-Makers

- The team of Decision-Makers need to be identified, empowered, and committed
  - To achieving the agreed upon end state
  - To resolving regulatory issues
- Team should change if dynamic is not productive
- Team should understand the core interests of key stakeholders
- Share information, good or bad, early and often
- Parties must use information fairly and not for manipulation or advantage
- Congressional involvement can help institutionalize decisions, maintain commitment among stakeholders, and solidify stable funding
  - Congressionals should not be surprised! Pre-brief!

In closing….

- Many additional lessons have been documented from clean-ups at Rocky Flats and Fernald as well as at ongoing clean-up projects at other DOE sites.
- Many technical lessons (D&D techniques, waste packaging & transport) from Rocky Flats and Fernald have already been applied with great success.
- The lessons highlighted here represent some of the key concepts that can directly be applied at Hanford.
- Other lessons in areas such safety and contracting approach are also valuable and should be considered at Hanford as well.