

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Hanford Reach National Monument  
3250 Port of Benton Blvd.  
Richland, WA 99352

(509) 371-1801  
(509) 375-0196 fax

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# Hanford Reach National Monument Federal Planning Advisory Committee

August 9, 2004

TO: Dave Allen, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1 Director  
Greg Hughes, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Project Manager  
Keith Klein, US Department of Energy, Manager

RE: Committee Advice #9: Recommendation on the Committee's Preferred Alternative

At the Hanford Reach National Monument Federal Advisory Committee meeting on June 16-17, 2004 members heard a presentation of and discussed some possible activities within the four management alternatives. The purpose of the meeting was to (1) hear a progress update from the Service on the planning process and environmental analysis to date; and (2) make recommendations on the Committee's preference in management action for the Hanford Reach National Monument Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). After a preliminary "straw poll" of Committee members' preference in a management alternative, the Committee entered into discussion on the issues and opportunities to develop a Committee preference toward one alternative.

## Final Vote on Committee's Management Preference

All seats were represented at a Committee vote on June 17. Thus, the vote carried with twelve in favor and one abstention (*For*: State, Counties, Cities, Economic Development, K-12 Education, Utilities/Irrigation, Environment/Conservation, Outdoor Recreation, Scientific/Academic (3 seats), and Public-at-large; *Against*: none; *Abstaining*: Native American). The Committee chose as its preference all of Alternative C with the modifications detailed on page two. The Committee also highlighted the following overriding principles in choosing a preferred management alternative.

## Overriding Principles

The Committee discussion highlighted some overriding principles the Service should consider throughout all alternatives:

- Use existing roads and trails where possible so long as there is no potential impact to sensitive areas.
- Provide and describe a process for consultation with Tribes and utility/irrigation districts to ensure parties with valid existing rights are consulted prior to making management decisions, and to ensure that existing rights are maintained through the decision-making process. Preservation of cultural resources should reference Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act or management documents that ensure compliance with Section 106.
- The Service should continue looking longer into the future in making management decisions than the fifteen-year life of the Plan.
- Focus nodes of access and concentrate activities around these nodes on the Monument.
- Population control of all wildlife should be included in all alternatives.

Modified Alternative C

The majority of the Committee focused on providing more controlled public use and access, as represented in Alternatives C and D. A modified Alternative C was crafted to meet the interests of members in the majority, using Alternative C as a basis. The modified Alternative C keeps the philosophy of concentrating access to the periphery of the Monument and preserving the Monument's resources. The following changes are suggested to the base map for Alternative C. A modified Alternative C base map is attached for reference.

- *Sand Dunes*: Close the West half of the dunes to public access and leave the East half open, but controlled.
- *Boat Launches*: Keep access open to non-motorized boat put-in/take-out options in the "heart of the Monument," but close the White Bluffs boat launch. Analyze in a step-down management plan possible locations for boat launching, including a review of the impacts to existing resources. Phase-in the closing of the White Bluffs boat launch as sites to the north and the south are developed or improved.
- *Saddle Mountain Overlook*: Provide access to the summit, protect sensitive species and provide access to adjacent public lands. Seasonal use restrictions may be the most appropriate way to protect the sensitive plant species, or permanent closure of specific areas on the summit.
- *North Shore of Columbia River*: Make the North shore of the River Corridor "open, but controlled" access.
- *Camping in Vernita Area*: Add overnight camping at the Vernita area and provide open, but controlled access at the Riverlands.
- *Rattlesnake Unit*: Develop a loop trail in the McGee Ranch area. Retain the observatory with the condition that it is for remote access use only. Any developed trail access to the top of Rattlesnake Mountain should consider the use of existing roads where practical and the use of a permit system to regulate human traffic.

We look forward to seeing how the Service will use this recommendation.

Sincerely,



Jim Watts, Chair