

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE HANFORD REACH NATIONAL  
MONUMENT FEDERAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Management Of White Bluffs Landslides Related Issues**

**Submitted by**

**The Ad Hoc Subcommittee for Conflict Resolution**

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee for Conflict Resolution (Subcommittee) has considered the issue of the numerous recent landslides along the White Bluffs within or near the Hanford Reach National Monument. The Subcommittee requested, under contract with Triangle Associates through the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR), and in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Department of Energy (DOE), and the Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), a complete independent assessment of the White Bluffs landslides and a report of the findings. The Subcommittee has reviewed the report and submits the recommendations below to the full Hanford Reach National Monument Federal Planning Advisory Committee (Committee) for consideration.

The Triangle assessment and report comprise a commendable summary of the landslide situation along the White Bluffs based on existing literature, interviews of parties representing many aspects of the concerns and workshops involving relevant experts. The report evokes gaps in the scientific understanding of the slides and it concludes that water beyond natural rainfall and runoff is a major contributing factor. The report also lists recommendations that were developed during the expert workshops.

The Subcommittee concludes that the span of the White Bluffs landslide issue is much broader than the Hanford Reach National Monument alone. While some of the slide activity is within the Monument, some is not and the bigger picture of regional geology and groundwater must be considered. A comprehensive effort to evaluate and assess mitigation alternatives falls outside the purview of the managing agencies for the Monument. At the same time, these agencies have a responsibility to wisely manage lands within their legal authority.

The Subcommittee makes the following three recommendations regarding the White Bluffs landslides to the Committee:

1. The managing agencies should develop a surface water management plan for areas above the White Bluffs. The plan should include irrigation canals, wasteways and impoundments on Monument land, and should require development of interfaces with other responsible agencies. The plan should also address the practice of using surface water impoundments to create wetland habitat.
2. The managing agencies should develop plans for management of the slide areas within its boundaries. Among other issues, these plans should consider public safety concerns and they should address control of landslide-caused changes to the quality of natural features.
3. The managing agencies should recommend to the US Department of Interior that it assign a lead Federal agency to conduct future comprehensive scientific and engineering studies of the landslides, and to assess feasibility of any mitigation measures.