MEDIA INFORMATION REVIEW,
JANUARY - JUNE 1992

Hanford Environmental
Dose Reconstruction Project

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July 1992

Letter report
to the Technical Steering Panel
and the Centers for Disease Control
under Contract Number 18620

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PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The media information review, requested by the Communications Subcommittee of the Technical Steering Panel (TSP), provides a general indication of the media's areas of interests with regard to the Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction (HEDR) Project. This review briefly assesses 14 newspaper articles/advertisements collected between January and June 1992 by Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories (BNW). Articles that mention the project, activities closely associated with it, or members of the Panel were included in the analysis. The sources of the articles and announcements include most newspapers in the Northwest (dailies and weeklies) as collected and distributed to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Hanford contractors by Westinghouse Hanford Company, Communications. National and international media coverage was provided during the review period by Burrelle's Press Clipping Service, New York, and A.T.P., New Jersey. The articles and advertisements represent those collected and judged applicable to issues and activities associated with the Technical Steering Panel and the Hanford Environmental dose Reconstruction Project. The collection is not considered inclusive of every written account of the subject, but as good a representative collection as reasonable. This review is unscientific and is not meant to display a technical analysis of the materials.

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS REVIEWS

Media information reviews were prepared at the request of the TSP Communications Subcommittee for CY 1991 and the first half of CY 1992 (Harvey 1992). The previous reviews evaluated a significantly larger sample of articles than found in this report.

Past reviews also reflected notable issues the TSP encountered during the media evaluation period. These issues, which drew the attention of the media, included the Hanford Health Information Network, litigation, the Hanford Thyroid Disease Study (HTDS), and Hanford Downwinder concerns. During this evaluation period, however, there were no significant issues or events that resulted in considerable media attention.

A primary interest which led to the request for developing these media reviews was to observe and track the public's ongoing perception of the study, through the eyes of the press. Past reviews have shown no indication that credibility of the TSP, its findings, or the project itself, are viewed negatively or are suspect. It should be noted, however, that the small sample size of this review does not support that opinion one way or the other.

FINDINGS

Several important documents (Freshley and Thorne 1992; Ramsdell and Burk 1992; and Walters et al. 1992) were published, distributed, and made publicly available during this review period. However, no newspaper or magazine articles were known to have been written on these topics. Of the clippings collected, limited interest dealt with the expansion of the research study area (East Oregonian, 4/10); further development of the computer model (East Oregonian, 4/10; Tri-City Herald, 4/24); Canadian interest (Vancouver Sun, 3/17; Nucleonics Week, 4/9), and uncontaminated agricultural crops in the Hanford vicinity (Capital Press, 2/15).

General categories and issues found within the data were identified and displayed in an order of ranking.

ARTICLES REVIEWED AND CATEGORIZED

The categories are followed by total column inches (e.g., Various - 77 c/in). The articles/advertisements are followed by column inches, date and source^(a) (e.g., 10 [c/in]-2/13 [February 13]/TCH [Tri-City Herald]).

Various - 70 c/in

Advertisement of February public meeting (10-2/13, TCH)
Advertisement of February public meeting (10-2/13, GH)
Advertisement of February public meeting (10-2/13, PRB)
Advertisement of meeting with Ag Community (10-2/13, CP)
Advertisement of April public meeting (10-4/16, TCH)
Advertisement of April public meeting (10-4/16, HH)
Advertisement of April public meeting (10-4/16, EO)

Project News - 53 c/in

Radioactive study expands (38-4/10, EO)

(a) Sources: CP (Capital Press), EO (East Oregonian), GH (Grandview Herald), HH (Hermiston Herald), NW (Nucleonics Week), PRB (Prosser Record Bulletin), TCH (Tri-City Herald), and VS (Vancouver Sun), BC.

Radioactive estimate for downwinders (15-4/24, TCH)

Canadian Interest - 24 c/in

British Columbia included in study (18-3/17, VS)

New Democratic Party "Fearmongering" (6-4/9, NW)

Agriculture - 15 c/in

Crops not radioactive (15-3/13, CP)

General - 7 c/in

Article on TSP Pasco and Hermiston public meetings (7-4/22, TCH)

Disclosure - 6 c/in

Plutonium papers released (6-2/15)

ISSUES

The following addresses the issues found within the articles reviewed. There may be several issues found within each article (e.g., effects on downwinders/litigation/health issues).

Ranked by Number of Stories

1. Advertisements - 7 stories, 70 c/in
2. Health Impacts/Concerns - 4 stories, 54 c/in
3. Computer Modeling - 2 stories, 53 c/in
- 3a. Canadian Interest - 2 stories, 24 c/in
4. Native Americans - 1 story, 38 c/in
- 4a. Litigation - 1 story, 38 c/in
- 4b. Exposures to Downwinders - 1 story, 15 c/in
- 4c. Agriculture - 1 story, 15 c/in
- 4d. Public Meeting Scheduled - 1 story, 7 c/in
- 4e. Disclosure - 1 story, 6 c/in

Ranked by Total Column Inches

1. Advertisements - 70 c/in, 7 stories
2. Health Impacts/Concerns - 54 c/in, 4 stories
3. Computer Modeling - 53 c/in, 2 stories

- 4. Native Americans - 38 c/in, 1 story
- 4a. Litigation - 38 c/in, 1 story
- 5. Health Impacts (crops/groundwater) - 30 c/in, 2 stories
- 6. Exposures to Downwinders - 15 c/in, 1 story
- 6a. Agriculture - 15 c/in, 1 story
- 7. Public Meeting Scheduled - 7 c/in, 1 story
- 8. Disclosure - 6 c/in, 1 story

REFERENCES

Freshley, M. D., and P. D. Thorne. 1992. Ground-Water Contribution to Dose from Past Hanford Operations. PNL-7978 HEDR, Pacific Northwest Laboratory, Richland, Washington.

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Ramsdell, J. V., Jr., and K. W. Burk. 1992. Regional Atmospheric Transport Code for Hanford Emission Tracking (RATCHET). PNL-8003 HEDR, Pacific Northwest Laboratory, Richland, Washington.

Walters, W. H., R. L. Dirkes, and B. A. Napier. 1992. Literature and Data Review for the Surface-Water Pathway: Columbia River and Adjacent Coastal Areas. PNL-8083 HEDR, Pacific Northwest Laboratory, Richland, Washington.

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