

# Cleaning up Hanford

Hanford cleanup is more than 25 years behind schedule with 177 underground tanks containing 56 million gallons of radioactive waste. The majority of the tanks are 60-70 years old with single shells, well past their 25-year design life. Two tanks are actively leaking.

The Columbia River, the largest river in the Pacific Northwest and the 4th largest in the nation, passes through the Hanford Site. Failure of the aging infrastructure and cleanup delays are a direct threat to Tribal treaty rights, local communities, downstream residents, agricultural activities, fish and wildlife, the regional economy, and the environment.

## The Tri-Party Agreement

In 1989, the state of Washington, the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency signed the Tri-Party Agreement, which is the governing document and roadmap to Hanford cleanup.

The TPA ensures that cleanup of Hanford's dangerous and radioactive nuclear waste is in compliance with federal and state law.

The TPA originally had 161 enforceable milestones and now contains more than 1,500. A milestone is a deadline with expectations of cleanup and dates due for various tasks, projects, or facilities. Any of the three agencies can request changes to the TPA. The approval process for changes includes public involvement.

## Consent Decree

Due to continued delays in progress of treating and retrieving tank waste, the state negotiated a federal Consent Decree with Energy and EPA in 2010 addressing tank waste treatment and retrievals.

The Consent Decree was amended in 2016 to reflect further delays in cleanup. Key tank waste retrieval and treatment deadlines are set out in the consent decree.

## Compliant Budget

Both the TPA and Consent Decree require adequate funding to meet cleanup milestones.

A compliant budget is the amount of funding needed to keep Hanford cleanup on track.

Ecology estimates that a compliant budget of \$3.35 billion is needed Fiscal Year 2023 and \$3.76 billion for 2024.



Ecology staff inspects the Tank-Side Cesium Removal system.

**Hanford has been underfunded by more than \$4 billion in the last 8 years.**

**This adds \$6 billion to \$10 billion in overall costs.**

**Every year of inadequate funding delays cleanup an additional 1.5-3.0 years.**

