Protecting the future with a cleanup that works.
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Resistance is Key
A Message from the Executive Director & Board Chair

It took a lot of grit and perseverance for many to successfully navigate 2021. Fighting for a safe and effective Hanford cleanup was no exception. Thank you for sticking with us and fighting for a Hanford cleanup that protects our water, land, people, and way of life in the Pacific Northwest.

One highlight for us in 2021 was hearing from former Governor Chris Gregoire—our Hanford Hero Award Recipient at our Annual Spotlight Gala—about the origins of Hanford cleanup starting in the 1980’s. As a signatory to the Tri-Party Agreement, she was presented with a broom symbolizing her cleanup efforts, which a local newspaper snarkily invited her to ride back to Seattle. Governor Gregoire reminisced about the clear hostility to the State of Washington in the 1980’s when Ecology inspectors were denied access to the site, and even turned away at gunpoint. Hanford cleanup was born of resistance. A safer, cleaner future won’t be handed to us on a platter—we must continue to fight for it. Thanks to a broad coalition of allies, we are doing just that. Listen to her full, motivating speech here.

Looking ahead, we have some important news. On April 1, Tom will transition to the role of Senior Advisor as we welcome our existing Deputy Director Nikolas Peterson as our new Executive Director. After many years of succession planning, we are incredibly excited for the future of our organization under Nikolas’ leadership. Stay tuned for many opportunities to celebrate Tom’s legacy and to hear from Nikolas about his vision for the future of Hanford Challenge.

Of course, these transitions will not affect our mission and current agenda of resisting federal Energy Department efforts to re-label high-level tank waste and to use cement as a disposal medium instead of glass to cut corners. We are working with our allies in Washington, Oregon, the Native American community, labor, and other public interest groups to assure that the federal government sticks with the plan to vitrify tank waste and bury that waste in a deep geological repository, as required by law.
We will continue our advocacy to treat Hanford’s radioactive and chemical wastes onsite, instead of sending it offsite to Perma-Fix Northwest. That is a place not only situated in a residential community, but it has been riddled with worrisome safety and compliance issues.

We continue to champion concerned employees who catch problems and work to keep cleanup on track. They provide us with essential information about the cleanup and help target our research on the technical complexities of Hanford cleanup. This assistance focuses our attention on the important cleanup issues that enable all of us to take action.

No matter what challenges come our way, Hanford cleanup is a long game and requires our collective efforts now and moving forward.

We cannot do this work alone. Together with you and our allies, we will persevere and realize our vision of an effective cleanup and a safe future.

Thank you for investing in this vision.
Our Mission & Vision

Our Mission

To create a future for the Hanford Nuclear Site that secures human health and safety, advances accountability, and promotes a sustainable environmental legacy.

Hanford Challenge exists to:

- Ensure **permanent protection for the planet and its inhabitants** from the effects of contamination at Hanford.
- Ensure **worker rights, safety and security** at Hanford.
- Ensure **transparency and accountability to the public** for the most efficient and effective cleanup of Hanford available.

Protecting the Planet

Hanford Challenge protects the planet from the dangers posed by the most contaminated nuclear site in the western hemisphere. We strive to protect the planet and its inhabitants in the short and long term, working towards a safer, cleaner future.

Transparency & Accountability

Hanford Challenge stops attempts to evade regulations, challenges cleanup shortcuts, and empowers individuals to act. We form strategic networks of unions, tribes, environmental organizations, community groups, public officials, and concerned individuals to hold Hanford accountable.

Hanford Workers

Hanford Challenge provides legal representation and advocacy for Hanford workers and whistleblowers. We support workers who report waste and fraud, health and safety risks, and violations of laws at the Hanford Nuclear Site. We also fight for workforce access to protective equipment and healthcare.
Program Accomplishments

237k People Reached on Social Media

50k+ More than 2020!

20 Mentions and Quotes in the News Media

Our Presentations Reached 16k

Our Comments Reached 26k

Resulting in 4.8k Comments Submitted by the Public

65 Hanford Advisory Board Meetings on Hanford Cleanup Policy

The Hanford Advisory Board is a regional advisory board for the Tri-Party Agencies. We participate to make sure workers are protected and the public is involved.

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Hanford Challenge • 2021 Annual Report • www.hanfordchallenge.org • Program Accomplishments
Our very own Executive Director, Tom Carpenter, was a guest on the nationally syndicated Thom Hartmann radio show to talk about Hanford cleanup and urgent worker health issues. This was an exciting opportunity to reach out to the millions of listeners and followers of Thom Hartmann about an issue important to all of us—the safe and effective cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Site.
In 2021, your donations were hard at work tracking and resisting attempts to shortcut the cleanup of high-level tank waste and as we enter 2022, we are primed for the fight.

Thanks to you, we are ready to file litigation at a moment’s notice. We have briefs ready to submit. We have allies ready to fight with us. Our coalition has expanded to include the State of WA and Oregon Dept. of Energy. We deployed new tools to mobilize action on high-level waste cleanup. In a key moment of opposition, we filed a joint letter to the new Secretary of Energy, signed by Hanford Challenge, the State of Washington, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakama Nation, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and Columbia Riverkeeper.

February 26, 2021

Hon. Secretary Jennifer Granholm  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20585

RE: Request to Rescind High-Level Radioactive Waste Interpretive Rule

Dear Secretary Granholm:

The Department of Energy knows much of this and has avoided making any decision that could trigger that litigation, which we count as a victory.

Hanford Challenge developed tools to counter a DOE report to Congress claiming that up to 80% of Hanford tank waste could be reclassified as other than high-level waste and grouted to save money and time. We were a key voice of resistance, researching and producing plain language guides including objections to DOE’s Congressional report, and a Frequently Asked Questions detailing the background behind high-level waste definitions, DOE’s reclassification effort, and concerns with replacing vitrification with grout. We also published a history of Hanford’s failed grout program.

As you know, this is a multi-year campaign that requires ongoing vigilance. As we have discovered in the past year, commitments that seem rock solid can be broken depending on who is in power. It will take constant surveillance, organizing, coalition building and pressure to defend the cleanup agreement for Hanford tank waste treatment and disposal. We thank you for standing with us to ensure that this work continues to protect the future.
In 2021, Hanford Challenge continued to file public comments on emerging issues. Thanks to your generous donations, we tackled an upsurge in public comment periods, filing 15 sets of public comments, empowering you to write comments with 12 Comment Writing Guides, and presenting interactive “Take Action!” comment writing workshops.

1. Class 2 Permit Modification LERF/ETF- Mass Balance
3. Congressional Action to Fund Hanford Cleanup Campaign
4. New Tanks Now Campaign
5. TPA Agency Changes to Cleanup Milestones for M-091
6. RCRA Permit Modification for Integrated Disposal Facility Leachate Collection System
7. FY 2023 DOE Field Office Budget Submittal Cleanup Priorities
8. Test Bed Initiative Draft Environmental Assessment
9. Take a Stand for Workers Rights Campaign
10. U.S. DOE 5-Year Plan
11. Waste Treatment Inspection Plan
12. LERF/ETF Decontamination
Take Action!

New Hanford Tanks Now!

#ActionAlert: We are out of time and space at Hanford. The recent news of another tank leak creates even more urgency for Congress to increase cleanup funding to build new tanks.

We must act now to protect the environment and the public from the nuclear waste leaking from these aging tanks. It is important that we act now. Take action today!

As you know, Hanford’s underground storage tanks continue to fail and leak waste into the ground and groundwater, threatening the health and safety of the Columbia River and future generations. Our New Tanks Now Campaign, to urge lawmakers to build new tanks at Hanford to combat this crisis, resulted in 4,500 comments to elected officials! Thank you! You are amazing!

Take a Stand for Workers Rights Campaign
Stay tuned in 2022, as we keep fighting for workers rights and protect Washington’s compensation law which continues to be a target of the federal government.
At the end of 2021, Hanford Challenge created a Spanish-language introductory presentation and brochure. By increasing accessibility to basic information about Hanford in Spanish, Hanford Challenge hopes to increase opportunities for the Spanish speaking community to weigh in on cleanup.

In 2022 we’ll be partnering with community organizations that work closely with Spanish speaking communities in Eastern Washington. We hope to foster strong relationships with these communities and organizations over the coming years. We will also continue to translate and provide information about Hanford in Spanish.

Starting in 2021, Challenge has partnered with Juntos Consulting Collaborative for a 5 year series of DEI trainings to deepen organizational opportunities for learning, sharing, and acting based on a systemic analysis of equity in action for Hanford Challenge.
Legal Update

Battle for Hanford worker comp law continues in the United States Supreme Court

In January 2022, the United States Supreme Court agreed to review a Washington law that made it easier for Hanford workers to obtain medical care for occupational diseases resulting from exposure to hazardous substances at Hanford. The law afforded Hanford workers the same presumption of occupational disease that this State created for firefighters in 1987. And like those firefighters, Hanford workers keep the rest of us safe, and as a result are exposed to unknown concentrations of waste. The law was previously upheld by the federal district court as well as the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

In response to this news, Hanford Challenge, the Washington State Attorney General, UA Local 598, and Hanford workers united for a press conference on September 16, 2021. Check out the news coverage by King5 and The Seattle Times.
“We join with Bob Ferguson, the local union and others to call upon the Biden administration to drop this appeal. Hanford workers deserve the kind of legislative reform they received that will help them to get the compensation and medical care resulting from illnesses caused by working at Hanford.”

Bertolla Bugarin

“The request from all of us is for this administration to drop their appeal to the United States Supreme Court. They can do that. They have the power to do it and they need to do that. The workers who are with me here today and the many hundreds and thousands more who cannot be here today do not deserve to have this fight before one more court.”

Bob Ferguson, WA Attorney General

“The workers need this law. They deserve this law they have worked and paid with their life and injuries to clean up one of the most toxic sites [in the world] and I don’t understand [the challenge to] it,” said Bertolla Bugarin, whose husband, 70-year-old Abe Garza, is critically ill after several exposures to toxic vapors at work. “They’re saying workers at Hanford are a commodity and expendable.”

Hanford Challenge
COVID continued to pose challenges for everyone in 2021, including Hanford Challenge. Thank you for stepping up with generous donations to help us weather the storm. Because of you, Hanford Challenge continues protecting the future with a cleanup that works. Your generous donations helped Hanford Challenge end the year with the equivalent of a six-month cash reserve, THANK YOU!

Total Operating Revenue = $697,012

Total Operating Expenses* = $656,771

*These are preliminary breakdowns and may be updated with our 2021 Form 990.
This year’s event was one of our best ever, with dynamic speeches from Attorney General Bob Ferguson and former Governor Chris Gregoire. More importantly, everyone had fun while enjoying the (shortened) auction and being out and about to see each other in person.
At the 2021 Spotlight Gala, we presented the Hanford Hero Award to Governor Christine Gregoire. During her many years of service as Attorney General and Governor, she was the first Washington state official to hold the federal government accountable for Hanford through the establishment of the Tri-Party Agreement, the single most important document for the safe and effective cleanup at Hanford. She also forced Hanford to empty leaking tanks and fought for protection of Hanford workers from toxic chemical vapors.

"The fights may change as the years and now decades go by, but thanks to the leadership, the vision, and tenacity of people like Chris Gregoire, like Bertolla and Abe, like Tom Carpenter, and with the support of all of you in this room, I'm confident that it's a fight we can win."
- AG Bob Ferguson

"We've got a long ways to go, but because of [Gov. Gregoire], we are in a much better position than just about any other state in the union that has a big DOE site."
- Jay Manning

"Let's join together tonight with Tom Carpenter and the team at HC. No more dragging of feet. No more risking the health and safety of our Hanford workers. No more distractions. No more excuses. No more delays. It's time, my friends, to get back on track."
- Gov. Chris Gregoire

Hanford Challenge's annual gala is moving back to the Spring. We hope to see you on May 13th at the Westin Seattle for our 2022 Spotlight Gala: Legacy! Stay tuned for more details!
Grants & Sponsorships

Horizons Foundation

The Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation

KELLER ROHRBACK LAW OFFICES • L.L.P.

The Lambert Firm

Lucky Seven Foundation

Mehri & Skälet PLLC

Northwest Fund for the Environment

Patagonia

Satterberg Foundation

Smith & Lowney PLLC

UA Local 598 Pasco, WA
OUR 2021 TEAM

Staff:

Tom Carpenter
Executive Director

Nikolas Peterson
Deputy & Legal Director

Jeanna Deforeit
Development & Operations Director

Miya Burke
Program Manager

Liz Mattson
Senior Program Strategist

Freyja Markee
Operations Coordinator

Alison Tate
Events & Outreach Manager

Board of Directors:

Vicky Vreeland
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Vice Chair

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John Kriese
Treasurer

Allen Brecke

Nick Bumpaous

Chris Cazares

Randal Dick

Steven Gilbert

Sen. Adam Kline

Craig McGlinchey