



# Aging Infrastructure at Hanford Threatens the Columbia River

**Comment  
Deadline:  
May 22,  
2020**

## What is the problem?

When plutonium production ended at the Hanford Nuclear Site in 1989, over 500 contaminated facilities and structures remained. Some structures received liquid waste during Hanford's plutonium production operations and contain residual radioactive and chemical contamination. According to the U.S. Dept. of Energy (Energy), several of these structures pose a high risk of collapse, which could release radiation into the environment.

## How is Energy planning to tackle the problem?

In February 2020, Energy proposed a stabilization plan for three of the structures with the highest risk for collapse. The plan: fill the three structures with engineered grout, a concrete-like substance, to stabilize the structures and mitigate the risk of potential future failure.

## Is Energy's plan enough to protect public health and the Columbia River?

No. While grouting the three most at-risk structures will prevent failure and a potential release of radioactive contamination, grouting alone fails to protect public health and the Columbia River in the long-run.

Energy must:

- ensure that grouting these structures does not turn into a half step of abandoning these structures in place forever; and
- have a plan to remove the grouted structures in a timely manner that complies with Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) deadlines.

Energy's current plan will result in long-term threats to public health and the Columbia.

## How can I hold the government accountable?

Tell Energy that grouting these structure does not constitute long-term cleanup!

**Want to learn more?  
Read Columbia Riverkeeper's public comment guide.**



**Take Action  
Public Comment  
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Columbia Riverkeeper's mission is to protect and restore the water quality of the Columbia River and all life connected to it, from the headwaters to the Pacific Ocean.

**Clean Water  
Healthy Rivers  
Our Future**