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Feb 19, 2026

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February 19, 2026

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Re: Building Trust through Public Involvement (HAB Consensus Advice #324)

Dear Mr. Geimer, Ms. Schleif, and Dr. Buelow:

The Hanford Advisory Board (HAB, Board) appreciates the invitation to engage the Tri-Party Agreement Agencies (TPA Agencies, Agencies) on the topic of public involvement in Hanford cleanup.

Strong public involvement throughout the region is crucial to the future of Hanford cleanup. The foundation of public involvement is knowledge. Regional leaders and residents require education about the types of waste and contamination, the risks, and the potential solutions. But more than just education, making effective, long-term cleanup decisions requires sustained public involvement to keep communities engaged, build trust, and advocate for funding. The gold standard for public involvement is whether the public believes that Agencies listen and respond to public concerns. This is referred to as "efficacy" of involvement.

The results of the TPA Agencies' annual public involvement survey demonstrate very low trust that public input influences the Agencies' decisions. Improving public involvement, building awareness, and increasing public trust will help ensure continued focus and funding to protect our region and the Columbia River for future generations.

The HAB has offered many pieces of advice on this topic, which offer important insights that may help the Agencies successfully engage the public on Hanford cleanup. This advice is included in the following attachment: HAB Advice Related to Public Involvement, February 11, 2026.

In addition to this brief advice, the Board has prepared a sounding board on public involvement, included as an appendix to this advice, that provides more detailed suggestions on how to successfully engage the public in Hanford cleanup. The sounding board is a compilation of suggestions from a variety of Board members, not a list of ideas that are wholly agreed upon by all Board members. The Board hopes that this sounding board will be used to strengthen public involvement efforts at the Hanford Site.

Thank you for considering our advice.

Advice:

As requested, this advice provides specific, additional guidance on public involvement strategies—whether that be general education or formally required outreach. The first step is to develop specific measurable goals, identify target audiences, understand how to reach different audiences through meetings/social media/other types of gatherings and communication, and measure success for different types of outreach and education. Public engagement goals must be adopted for multi-year periods, updated each year (considering prior year evaluation), and evaluated to inform and continuously improve future engagement opportunities. These goals need to be developed well in advance of the start of a comment period or engagement activity, in collaboration with the HAB.

- The Board advises the TPA Agencies to embrace an approach to public involvement and engagement based on the following principles as articulated in HAB Advice #239[1]:

  > "The art and craft of public involvement is successful when: clear goals are defined; stakeholders contribute early to the design and development of public involvement; involvement is interactive, inclusive, engaging and respectful; the public has early input influencing the decision-making process (for example, the identification of alternatives for evaluation); the decision-makers demonstrate openness to having input influence their decisions and the decision-making process; and the public sees meaningful results from participation."

- The Board advises the TPA Agencies to regularly gather input on public involvement, both formally and informally, from the HAB, stakeholders, and Tribal Nations.
- The Board encourages the TPA Agencies to consider and incorporate ideas articulated in the included sounding board as part of the Agencies' ongoing public involvement practice. Contained within the sounding board are Board members' and interested members of the public's ideas for engaging community members to increase public trust.
- The Board advises the TPA Agencies to leverage the unique cross-section of stakeholders and Tribal Nations of the HAB to review and discuss targeted involvement and communication strategies.

Sincerely,

Susan Coleman, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

The Oregon Department of Energy consents to the advice but offers the following statement: Multiple seats on the Board did not receive their appointments before this advice was considered. Oregon points out that, while there was quorum, the consensus at the full Board meeting excludes those members whose packets were delayed.

References

1. HAB Consensus Advice #239, Incorporating Public Involvement Strategic Planning into the Community Relations Plan, November 5, 2010. Link: https://www.hanford.gov/files.cfm/HABAdv_239.pdf

Attachments HAB Advice Related to Public Involvement, February 11, 2026

CC:
Tim Walsh, DOE-EM
Meegan Tripp, DOE-HFO
Ryan Miller, ECY
Roberto Armijo, EPA
Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board
Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board
Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board
Paducah Citizens Advisory Board
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board
Idaho Cleanup Board
Portsmouth Site Specific Advisory Board
Kelly Snyder, DFO

Appendix: Public Engagement Survey Results

As part of the process for developing the advice titled Building Trust through Public Involvement, HAB members and interested parties were given the opportunity to respond to a series of open-answered survey questions which mirror a request for feedback on successful public involvement and community engagement from the TPA agencies. The survey responses are summarized below and included in the table, which follows this summary. Responses are the opinions of individual survey respondents and may not reflect a formal consensus of the Board. Responses in the table are presented in the order received.

Survey Summary:

Community Meeting Structure and Goals

In general, community meetings and workshops should be structured to inform, build awareness of Hanford cleanup priorities and challenges, and provide a forum for input/concerns/feedback into decision-making. If there is opportunity for dialogue and discussion, there is opportunity to share different opinions and priorities, to listen, and to build trust. The specific meeting structure depends on the goals of each meeting. Different meetings serve different purposes.

For instance, meetings like the Hanford "Dialogue" meetings were explicitly intended to serve a goal of improving accountability and demonstrating that the agencies engagement took public input seriously at the most senior levels. Thus, they were intended to have the most senior managers of the agencies interact with the public in an on-going fashion to "engage" and then return and share back how public input had been utilized (or not).

And other meetings may be designed to serve more general "educational" goals to bring in lower-information audiences through a more informal approach that includes some background and introductory information on Hanford. A lunch-time webinar might focus on a particular Hanford topic in more depth and might target an audience interested in more technical details.

Keys to engaging meetings:

- There is no one-size-fits all for planning and executing a successful meeting.
- Develop a clear goal for the meeting—based on annually updated strategic engagement plan—in collaboration with the Board and all interested entities (depending on topic and meeting) and communicate this as part of the meeting marketing and at the beginning of the meeting itself (for instance, "our goal is to get feedback on whether we should prioritize A or B with our clean up dollars").
- Create opportunities for questions or discussion, rather than just presentations. The amount of time for dialogue again depends on the goals of the meeting. Transparent information sharing and meaningful conversation builds trust.
- If there is an advertised Q&A section, keep the meeting open until questions are answered.
- Potentially break up longer presentations with some discussion between sections to engage/check in with the participants.
- Shape the content of the meeting based on the audience you are hoping to reach. Avoid technical jargon if you are engaging a more general audience to provide feedback. If you are covering many Hanford topics, from

groundwater remediation to tank waste removal, allow for enough time for information sharing and dialogue (Hanford Dialogue was scheduled at least 2.5 hours).

- Attempt to share the complete picture about a topic, even if it may be uncomfortable, or highlight opportunities for improvement.
- If you are expecting a larger crowd, consider stations or breaking into smaller groups for dialogue. This creates a more intimate and comfortable setting, allowing more people to ask their questions/provide comments. Facilitators can intentionally invite new voices to broaden participation and increase engagement.
- Strongly encourage employing trusted facilitators or independent emcees to help guide the meeting and ensure the goals of the meeting are met.
- Agency and/or contractor staff should be fully prepped on the meeting goals and encouraged to engage in dialogue with participants. Ways to show this could be repeating questions or rephrasing to ensure questions are answered to the best of their ability.
- If doing an online or hybrid meeting, make sure you have online facilitators to ensure people online can ask questions/provide feedback, and make sure everyone in the meeting sees comments/hears input.
- It's important to plan 3-4 months ahead for meetings to get input from the HAB and other stakeholder groups about goals, structure, location, format, and to develop and distribute advertising, etc. Connecting with local news outlets and posting in-depth links on websites encouraged

Format, Location, and Frequency

All three of these things are dependent on the intended purpose of the meeting, as discussed above.

- Meet the audience where they are. Different formats facilitate different outcomes/goals. An open house format may be better for gathering feedback on proposed policy changes or budget priorities. Small group conversations might be good when expecting a larger crowd to get more individualized input.
- Meeting formats could include panel discussions, booths, open house, listening sessions, speaker Q&As, small group round tables, virtual meetings with break-out sessions, etc.
- Reach out early to key stakeholder groups and the HAB when starting meeting planning to get input on format and location.
- Allow HAB members to have tables/engage with community members at Tri-Party events.
- Prioritize having at least 2-3 meetings/year outside the Tri-Cities to engage other impacted stakeholders.
- Hold general updates/informational meetings on a regular cadence to continuously engage communities throughout the region.
- Consider coordinating tours of the Hanford Site to engage in learning on specific areas of the site that are being discussed for cleanup.
- Connect with local organizations when setting up engagement opportunities in Tri Cities or in other communities to identify the best time of day/location to hold various meetings based on the meeting goals.

Who Are We Reaching—And Missing?

Traditionally, Tri-Party Agency meetings have reached English as a first language adults and, in the Tri-Cities, workers or former Hanford workforce. In the past, State of the Site Meetings have been held in Seattle, Portland, Hood River with the occasional meeting in Spokane, Yakima or Umatilla. The HAB encourages the Agencies to consider engaging regional audiences and especially new audiences, such as youth and Spanish-speaking communities. As mentioned above, different types of meetings should be used to engage different audiences.

Best ways to reach different audiences:

- Identify purpose of the meeting and target audience.
- Find a time/location that is accessible to the target audience by asking people in that community.
- Identify key leaders or trusted messengers in the community who can help develop the meeting structure, outreach to new audiences/facilitate the meeting, advertise the goal of the meeting, etc.
- Many people never even hear about Hanford meetings due to poor advertising. Others cannot attend because of location/time constraints, and/or lack of interesting topics/baseline information.
- Ensure advertising of the meeting includes meeting goals/avoids jargon and encourages participation
- Consider providing a kids' room or activity so childcare is not a barrier
- Snacks/drinks could be provided by an agency partner/contractor or business. Everyone loves snacks!
- When holding meetings outside the Tri-Cities, focus on historic or current issues that might impact that community (groundwater contamination/Columbia River for those downriver).
- Consistency and on-going engagement are key—for instance, only holding one meeting in Hood River every 3 years doesn't create a consistent opportunity for community members to engage/get updates/provide feedback. Portland may also be a good location to periodically hold regional meetings.
- When marketing the meeting or workshop, use social media and agency websites to provide background information—provide links to materials that will be covered in the meeting and maybe link some of that to pre-meeting information.
- Encourage people to "register" for the meeting using a sign-up mechanism. This will then send reminders so people don't forget to attend, and it will give meeting organizers an estimated meeting attendance count so they can prepare.
- People hear about meetings through their social media, news media, and family/friends. Be sure to engage the HAB and other stakeholder groups in sharing meeting invitations widely or to targeted groups, depending on meeting goals.
- Specific attention could be made to break down language barriers and expand outreach to Hispanic and Black communities.

Partnerships and Amplification

People attend meetings when the topic is of interest to them and they feel like their voice will be heard. They will often attend when encouraged by a friend or someone in their organization, at their business, or at their school/church. This is why partnerships and amplifying/sharing information across organizations is essential to effective public engagement.

Ecology and the HAB are good resources to find partnering organizations, but it is important to define what the goal of the meeting/engagement is, and why an audience would care about the meeting topic. There could be other partnerships with local schools, educational organizations, businesses, unions and non-profits that could help co-organize a meeting or amplify turnout to a conversation based on trust and relationships.

- Use the HAB to help plan/brainstorm meetings and potential partnerships.
- Engage educators in how to reach younger audiences. Perhaps gamifying the topic (creating a game) may pull in some younger folks but otherwise don't expect youth to attend meetings that are geared toward adult audiences.
- Other ideas: use fun social media posts to create meeting interest; create earned media opportunities by reaching out in advance to local TV, radio and print reporters; invite local respected organizations to provide their perspective at the meeting and allow local groups to table at events.
- High Schools, Washington African American Chamber of Commerce, and NCAAP Tri-Cities are potential outreach opportunities.

Digital Engagement

There are many ways to engage online. Social media and websites can be used to share out information and encourage people to attend meetings/workshops, as well as share surveys and ask for input. Also, people can engage in conversations through online meetings and workshops.

- Use the COE as a resource to help plan digital engagement campaigns.
- Use a layered approach, with podcasts, lunch and learns—a series of informational videos perhaps, and evening hybrid meetings.
- Remember that all online meetings (hybrid and remote) require someone to facilitate the online portion.
- Breakout rooms for hybrid and virtual meetings can serve as small groups in settings such as the Hanford dialogue.
- The best way to increase digital engagement is to work with marketing and digital experts who know how to increase digital engagement.
- Use plain language and accessible content when sharing information digitally.
- Videos are a great way to engage online and promote content/share information—they get more clicks!
- Recorded meetings also allow access for those with scheduling conflicts.

- Incorporate DNFSB and other weekly reports into a broad interested parties email list.
- Identify trusted messengers to boost the online presence on existing platforms.

Success Metrics

Setting clear meeting/engagement goals will help define and measure success. What are you hoping people will learn? How many people are you hoping to engage? What type of input would you like to receive? Setting clear measures of success is critical and the HAB can assist the agencies in how to develop metrics. For example, the Tri-Parties might want to get input on specific funding priorities or changes to TPA deadlines. It may be that the quality of input is more important than the quantity of comments, so a metric might be receiving 10 quality, different comments rather than 50 of the same comments. Success might mean a majority of participants learning something new, feeling heard at the meeting, or having their questions answered.

- Surveys can be used at the meeting (in real time or after the meeting, via email or even text message) to measure success.
- Ask participants for their contact information either before or during the meeting so you can follow up with surveys or even focus groups to improve the quality of the activity for the future.
- Having 200 people in the room might be successful, or it might be the opposite if the interactions are bad.
- Collect ALL THE DATA but only use the datapoints that are established in the meeting goals to measure success for that meeting.
- Planning is critical. Each meeting needs an intended outcome, a desired audience, and clearly communicated expectations.
- The HAB can help with setting realistic meeting goals and success measures, or help plan meeting formats to meet those goals, but only if the agencies ask and follow through.
- Success is likely achieved when the attendees leave feeling more informed and that they are being heard.
- Worker involvement, transparent communications, and the presence of more than just HAB members may indicate some level of success.

Survey Questions and Results

Community Meeting Structure & Goals

What should be the goal of a community meeting or public involvement event? Information? Feedback? Trust-building?

1	Inform public to build and maintain support for further cleanup
2	Opportunity for community to recieve information, ask questions and provide feedback related to operation of hanford facilities, management, health and safety, fiscal responsibility, etc.
3	Depends on the event. The goals of the event should be established before the event and thus success measured on those goals. I think building trust is always an important goal, but sometimes an event is specifically geared towards getting feedback on a specific proposal.
4	The host of the meeting should establish the goal. One thing that the meeting should NOT be held to do is to check a box. If the goal of the meeting is to have it because it is required, the attendees will likely realize that their participation means little.
5	The goals should be sharing new information/updates, gathering feedback/opinions/comments/concerns from the public, in the process building trust by honestly and openly sharing information while also genuinely asking for the public's input and showing that that input will be used in decision making.
6	Depends on what kind of meeting it is and who is involved in planning/holding/facilitating the meeting. Providing information and having a two-way dialogue that involves soliciting feedback should always go hand in hand. Trust building is a process that takes time, especially in times when there is a great amount of distrust or broken trust.
7	Build trust through transparent information sharing and meaningful two-way engagement that ensures community voices genuinely influence Hanford cleanup decisions.
8	All 3. First (information) is safety. The public is foremost concerned about their safety. Second: Feed back to define what those concerns are. Realize that those concerns are valid. Third: Trust-building occurs when simple facts of environmental safety and worker safety are provided coupled with admittance of how historical accidents and operating mistakes were made which resulted in new and improved procedures.
9	It depends on the goal of the meeting or public involvement event. If it's the latter, there should be ample opportunity for community members to ask questions and disseminate knowledge they have about the subject at hand. Every voice in attendance should be heard, and follow up of the meeting and/or event should be shared out after--recording, minutes, etc.
10	CONNECTING WITH LOCAL NEWS OUTLETS AND POSTING INDEPTH LINKS ON `THEIR WEBSITE

Should different types of meetings serve different purposes (e.g., technical briefings vs. storytelling/history nights)?

1	Yes and interactive presentations engaging AI to answer questions
2	Absolutely. Completely different audiences and interest levels.
3	Yes, different types of meetings can facilitate different outcomes and goals. For instance, a storytelling event might provide more context around the reasons certain communities see different standards. A workshop might be better to bring folks together around a common outcome or to inform folks so they can give meaningful input.All items I like using breakout groups or smaller sessions to allow people to listen and learn and engage. Some people don’t feel comfortable speaking in front of a huge group of people, but they feel more comfortable giving input in a small group.
4	absolutely.
5	Yes, meeting formats should vary in order to share different types of information and to reach broader audiences who may be interested in different topics. The Hanford Dialogue is a good example of a meeting that had a different format, with more open, informal discussion and Q&A instead of just technical information sharing. There could be a "visioning" meeting/workshop where the public weighs in and participates on where they would

	like to see the Hanford site in 10 years. There could be storytelling meetings that focus on where have we come from on cleanup and lessons learned from the past that are being applied to cleanup in the present/future.
6	Yes.
7	Yes. Different types of meetings should have clear and different purposes so people know what to expect and how to participate. Technical briefings can focus on sharing detailed information, while community meetings and listening sessions should prioritize hearing concerns, questions, and lived experiences. Decision-focused meetings should explain options and how public input will influence outcomes. Being clear about each meeting's purpose helps build trust, improves participation, and makes public involvement more meaningful.
8	Only current scientists engaged in Hanford studies are interested in technical briefings. The public needs honest storytelling regarding history in a simple way, not technical numbers. The problem is that current staff are not prepared to deal with the public. Staff lacks historical knowledge.
9	No, I think, outside of very spiritual or celebratory events, all modalities of sharing should be included at a large public, state of the site meeting, or available to be drawn upon. Issues like Hanford are so complex and impact the bioregion of human and more than human communities. However, smaller workgroups focusing on specific issues related to the cleanup, for example, have a different goal related to the purpose and will decided how to create a focused agenda.
10	YES

How do we balance content delivery with open Q&A time?

1	One third to two thirds content to questions
2	Q&A should be commensurate with the amount of content being delivered and the anticipated potential for questions or opinions from the intended audience. No bigger trust killer than to have limited Q&A time on a controversial or lesser-understood topic.
3	I think there's a way to get it balance. You do need to provide a certain amount of information for people to be able to react, and provide feedback. The content needs to be in a form is easy to understand for the average person. But yes, too much speaking and not enough time for feedback and questions and answers can be problematic. People come to a meeting because they wanna learn but also because they want to share. So a balance of presentation and Q&A is usually a good practice.
4	That depends on the meeting's desired outcome, and also on the content and complexity of the topic being presented.
5	It's important to be flexible when possible. It also depends on the type of meeting. But a more technical meeting would have more information sharing to explain to the public what is happening, and then allowing for ample Q&A time is important to make sure the public understands what was just shared. If a meeting is only scheduled for an hour, there should be flexibility in extending that time if it's clear there are many questions and clarifying questions about the content shared and the bigger picture. Similar for the Hanford dialogue format, meetings should be 2-3 hours so the public doesn't feel rushed through Q&A or feel like their comments/questions don't matter. For this format, there should be more time given to Q&A and less time spent on content.
6	As my sixth grader points out frequently, "monologuing" is not fun for anyone. Back and forth information sharing and conversation with open ended questions leads to more lively meetings and tends to be a more dynamic way of holding attention.
7	Make Q&A a priority, not an add-on, so people feel heard and involved.
8	There is no balance. Delivery has to be short with emphasis on clarity and safety. Open Q&A time has to be as long as necessary.
9	This depends on the size and time limit of the event. From this I think Q&A should be time specific if it's an in-person meeting. Everyone should be able to ask their question with a follow-up question, if needed. Those who didn't get to ask and want follow up should be encouraged to submit their question to the meeting convener and expect an answer to follow in some format. I've seen this done at Portland land use meetings for example, where an overflow meeting will be held, or comments periods extended to address the need for more questions and answers.

10	NOT SURE

What other meeting structure or meeting goal advice might you offer?

1	Time for general questions unrelated to presentations engaging AI. Try asking Google Hanford FFTF Sodium engaging AI to see the scope of AI assisted results
2	Consistency and predictability are very important and build trust. Things like every year there will be an open house on all things Hanford. Every time there is a public comment period opening, there will be this kind of public information/public meeting, etc.
3	I think it's important to allow people to provide both written and verbal comments. Also a way to give feedback about the meeting when they are leaving so that the agencies can continuously improve. If you're gonna do a workshop style, you need to allow for at least two hours for intro, breakouts, and then bringing everyone back together to share. If you have some sort of free meeting software where you can gather RSVPs, then you get a sense of how many people are coming to the meeting and you could potentially shape it differently for more or less participants
4	Have a plan - start with a desired outcome, then pick the presenters, venue, slides, etc
5	I think it's helpful to have meetings with the larger group split up into smaller groups so people who may be hesitant to ask a question would feel more comfortable. This could be done virtually in break out groups (not sure if Teams has this function but I know Zoom does). Also, it could be helpful to have an option for people submit anonymous questions if they're worried about asking the question in front of everyone. Meetings that incorporate games can be a fun and different way to learn about a topic. Also meeting formats that break down the typical (hierarchical) structure of the presenter standing in front of a group of seated people can maybe make people feel more comfortable sharing/asking questions. Round tables with small groups where everyone is seated (including agency reps) and a member of the public is appointed to lead/manage the group could break down the previously described structure. This could be especially effective during a "visioning" meeting.
6	Having a trusted facilitator for all parties can make a huge difference in how a meeting goes. It depends on the meeting. No one group or entity can do all of the things at once. Pick the thing you do best and focus your creative muscle on that. For the Tri-Party Agencies, the unique offering is being in charge of cleanup decisions and creating a pathway through which the public can better understand the cleanup their taxpayer dollars are funding and weigh in on those decisions. It is especially effective when agency leadership is open and able to listen to public feedback and rephrase to check for understanding. Knowing your thoughts/concerns/input is received is empowering for the public.
7	To be more inclusive, facilitators can intentionally invite new voices, rotate who speaks first, use small-group discussions, or offer multiple ways to share input. These approaches help broaden participation, reduce repetition, and ensure meetings feel more engaging and forward-moving for everyone.
8	Public meetings need experienced staff, not newbees who know nothing. Unfortunately, the entire DOE complex is structured to REWARD good news. That is why there is no trust. The no-nothings in leadership positions at Hanford want to look good and protect their image at all costs.
9	I know as how frustrating it is to have invested my time to attend a meeting and to not have the opportunity to participate. Depending on the size of the meeting or hearing, I would suggest breakout groups or tables where people can share their questions or concerns have them brought back to the larger group.
10	BIG PICTURE FOR PUBLIC

Who Are We Reaching—And Missing?

Who do you think we're not reaching right now and what can be done to improve outreach to those groups? (Youth? Spanish-speaking communities? Outlying rural areas?)

1	NW Regional media

2	I don't think we're doing enough to engage with Spanish making communities, communities along transportation, routes, and communities downstream. I think it's really important that we do regional meetings or stay at the site meetings so that folks in Spokane or Hood River or Portland can give input and learn about what's happening with the cleanup. A lot has been lost since the pandemic. There's a gap of knowledge and it's important that the agencies don't assume that people know what's been going on but actually reach out to local agent leaders, environmental groups, and business leaders to form new relationships and have them help drive people to regional meetings.
3	Right now you are reaching folks who know and care. Depending on the meeting goals, you should find folks who don't know, but would care. Again, meeting content and agendas will decide how engaged the audience is.
4	Youth, Spanish speaking communities, anyone outside of the Tri-Cities area. Events should be tailored to each group, so if you're trying to get youth to attend a meeting, hold it at a university and partner with a student group/club to reach more people. If you're trying to reach the Spanish speaking community hold the event in Spanish. For groups that are more difficult to reach because they don't have time to attend, consider offering a monetary incentive, childcare, food, etc to lessen the burden of attending a meeting.
5	The missing groups are everyone that is too busy, doesn't know about the issues, and/or is focused on other concerns. I would rather agency efforts be spent on creating dynamic and engaging meetings about decisions and gathering input about those decisions that is reflected in the decisions made, than spreading outreach efforts thin with that first-touch engagement. That is not to say that outreach is not important. Showing up where people are already going is great if there is capacity for that kind of outreach. Better to make an open and engaging meeting where groups that are not engaged want to show up. The more technical public involvement topics are not great first-touch engagement opportunities. Developing more opportunities for engaging dialogue in a revitalized State of the Site/Hanford dialogue style meetings would be more a great use of limited resources.
6	Black and Hispanic communities may not be fully reached because of limited outreach, language barriers, and past experiences of not feeling heard. Outreach can improve by working with trusted community leaders and organizations, sharing information in clear and bilingual formats, and offering meetings at accessible times and locations so participation feels welcoming and meaningful.
7	The emphasis on "under-served" masks the real problem is that EVERYONE is being given covered with only good news about difficult processes at Hanford which have difficult technical problems where a lot of stuff goes wrong.
8	Given the importance of the Hanford site and its regional/global impact, I would say "everybody!" Let's start with regional. Everyone state of the Pacific NW needs to know what's up at Hanford--plain and simple. Yes, outlying rural areas, but also major urban centers in the Pacific NW like Portland. I know as a Portlander, knowledge about Hanford is lacking, and if there is a catastrophe at Hanford, we are definitely going to be impacted. Those who kind of know focus a lot on transportation of radioactive wastes. That would be a good issue to focus on, as well as proposed SMNRs Amazon plans to build at Hanford.
9	WORKERS

What has prevented broader community participation in the past?

1	Lack of awareness of the scope of the contamination and cleanup
2	Poor meeting advertising. Or coordination with other local organizations in different communities to drive participation and interest. You have to put a lot of time into turning out people to a community meeting. People have a lot of competing things on their agenda, and you have to be very intentional about location and time of day, connecting with local groups that can help promote The meeting, and using HAB members to help drive information and increase attendance.
3	Reduction in flashy media coverage - which isn't necessarily a bad thing since bad news stories break through more than good news ones.
4	The lack of interest in holding public meetings outside of the Tri-Cities and the disregard for public opinion and participation in decision making.

5	Inaccessible information, meeting formats that require a baseline understanding of topics that the broader public does not have.
6	From my perspective, past participation has been limited because meetings can feel unwelcoming and difficult to engage in, especially in person. As one of the few Black participants in the room, it can be uncomfortable to speak up when the same voices dominate the conversation and the environment feels formal and closed. Creating more welcoming spaces, intentionally inviting new voices, and offering multiple ways to participate would help make engagement feel more accessible and encourage broader involvement.
7	The realization that they are wasting their time. There is no evidence that DOE has changed their policies in accordance with HAB advice or input from the public.
8	From a Portland perspective, there have not been enough opportunities to come and learn about what's happening at Hanford. Hearings aren't happening anymore. I think the last regional series of hearings was three years ago--none of them were in Portland. It's a hard draw admittedly because it's scary and people are already overwhelmed. But anything can be faced in community, and if outreach adequately communicates how important it is for residents to be informed, they will come. Also, ongoing education about Hanford at every level needs to happen. People simply don't know or understand how impactful Hanford has been, is and could be in the future.
9	LOCATION

What would make the Hanford message feel relevant to someone outside the Tri-Cities?

1	Coverage of wind and water throughout the region
2	Ground water the river is the main concern for folks to live along to come over and downstream. Transportation into southern Oregon or up through Spokane is probably the biggest concern for those communities. Survey elected officials and have members from different communities identify the biggest needs and how to engage those communities in meaningful dialogue.
3	Historical context, engineering and technical innovation, call to public service.
4	It's personal to each individual and what their interests and concerns are. But there are overarching themes that may be relevant to many, like the importance of the Columbia River, clean water, clean air, nuclear waste is a burden that is passed along from one generation to the next and we must do our best to safeguard future generations, healthy and safe communities free from the impacts of radiation and chemicals, healthy people and wildlife, keeping workers safe, etc.
5	If you are paying taxes, you pay for this cleanup. If you care about protecting future generations, you care about this cleanup.
6	The Hanford message feels more relevant when it shows how cleanup affects shared resources like the Columbia River, public health, and future generations across the sta [sic]
7	Being honest that all of the on-going processes/projects have upsides and downsides. Telling both sides of the story. Not being afraid to explain what has gone wrong in the past and to explain the struggles happening in the present. Quite telling fairy tales.
8	As I said above, the issue of transportation of wastes through Oregon and how dangerous that is, and anything that effects the Columbia River watershed and the Pacific Ocean. Stressing that we are all downriver from Hanford, connected to it, and need to know what's happening there, is so important. Also, delivering some sense of agency--How can you be involved? kind of thing.
9	NOT SURE

What other audience-related advice should be considered?

1	Keep it simple but have the capability to deliver detail by AI
2	In terms of the Department of energy or ecology website or social media make sure to make a lot of the issues easy to understand. What is the ultimate concern? Is it protecting the ground water from tank waste? Is it how you dispose of waste from Hanford? Is it Long-term cleanup, goals and strategies? Future uses along the Columbia River? I would start with the issue of concern and then talk about strategies that the agencies are using to reduce risk and protect communities. Invite people into the conversation with their thoughts, questions and suggestions.

	Online surveys if they are done correctly could be valuable for people who are unable to attend in person meetings. And always consider having hybrid meetings if you were able to find a way to facilitate the online component effectively.
3	If you build an interesting agenda, they will come.
4	Pick good communicators for presenters!
5	Try culturally relevant messaging, and trusted messengers. Share information in accessible formats, be inclusive, and clearly explain why the issue matters to people's daily lives.
6	DOE leadership and contractor leadership are too busy protecting their image. They live in a world where good news is rewarded with cash and bad news is rewarded with penalties. Audiences want down-to-earth talk, not BS to protect images.
7	Tribes have a deep relationship to this issue. Any meeting should of course begin with a land acknowledgement and should include space for Tribes to participate and share their concerns. This is so important and often absent. We are simply going nowhere with remediation/restoration with the Tribes.
8	END OF CLEAN UP GOALS

Format, Location & Frequency

What types of formats might work best? (Panel discussions, booths, open-house tables, listening sessions, speaker Q&As?)

1	Tours of featured structures
2	The format has to be dictated by the content, the audience, the purpose and the desired outcome.
3	Again, it depends on the goals of the meeting. An open house format may be better for the beginning of a decision-making process. Question and answer and comments might be better for a decision document. It just really depends on what you're trying to accomplish. Again, set those goals early, and then the meeting format should facilitate getting the best input. Use the info board committees to generate ideas and help set the tone for the meetings, the facilitation and meeting format.
4	Panel discussions would be appropriate for some things but not others- I don't know that a panel discussion on a RCRA closure plan would work. Come talk to the HAB once you know what the intent of the meeting is, and we can help brainstorm the format.
5	All of the above. Panel discussions, booths, open house tables, listening sessions, speaker Q&As, small group round tables, virtual break out sessions, etc.
6	Depends on the goal. There are so many great options.
7	Formats work best when they meet people where they are. In addition to listening sessions, open-house tables, and small group discussions, agencies should go into community spaces such as churches, community centers, schools, and cultural events.
8	Most of these formats are worthless. Cost a lot of money with poor results. Listening to current workers (not managers) talk about their experiences is down to earth. Ok, so there may be problems revealed, but people problems and equipment problems is REAL LIFE at Hanford. DOE and contractor management is afraid to talk about them.
9	All of the above given the specific focus of the meeting and the audience expected, the physical space, etc. All good.
10	OPEN HOUSE

What other advice would you offer on meeting formats, location, or frequency?

1	Quarterly in various parts of the region
2	Offer hybrid options or recordings whenever possible to increase the potential connection of people to information.
3	I like the way to say the same means always happened every year in different locations but with similar goals of giving an update on how the cleanup is going, how much is costing, the choices that are being made and getting

	input into both priorities and funding and operational choices. If you are consistent with the type of meeting you hold on an annual basis people will look forward to those meetings and they will participate more frequently. Especially if they feel like their comments and feedback are received in an open and honest way. . Especially if they feel like their comments and feedback are received in an open and honest way by the tri parties.
4	meet with the HAB early in the process to get some ideas.
5	Don't expect the communities to come to you, you must go to them and make it as easy as possible for them to attend (what this means will differ from one community to the next depending on their needs).
6	Start simple and keep up a regular rhythm/frequency for general information sharing that provides the public with accessible information, an opportunity to ask questions and share their concerns/feedback. And find ways to incorporate public feedback into the decision making process in ways that are visible and clearly communicated back to the public.
7	Maybe meeting less often but with clearer purpose can help reduce fatigue and make participation feel more meaningful.
8	Townhall meetings on a regular basis in the Richland Community Center, maybe with snacks. First of the month all year long. The problem with informal sit-down with workers and former-workers is that it scares the hell out of management to have people telling their personal stories.
9	There should be a public state of the site at least every year, and more often when issues like Amazon building new SMNRs at Hanford, or Amazon opening up Umatilla for a SMNR demo protect, overturning Oregon's 45 year moratorium on new nuclear without all Oregon citizen's consent.
10	BIGGER MESSAGES , BIGGER VENUES

Partnerships & Amplification

Are there local groups, schools, or organizations we could partner with to co-host events or bring in new audiences?

1	I'm not from the Tri-Cities
2	Any local organization, etc could be a partner, but again it all depends on what you are trying to achieve and why are you trying to communicate. There is so much information noise that being purposeful and strategic is hugely important. That is hard to advise for broadly because it is so dependent on the other things - need, reason, intent, audience, desired outcome, etc.
3	Ecology put together a really good list of organizations that they reached out to you with the public involvement survey. I would start with those. I would ask HAB members from different communities to personally introduce Department of Energy or Tri party communications and public involvement staff to specific contacts ant specific organizations that have a large reach and have an interest in Hanford cleanup. Rotary and Kiwanis clubs are always looking for speakers. Sometimes you need to book out months in advance, but they have very engaged members, and they often have large luncheons several times a year and an update on him for cleanup would be very valuable. Also the chambers of commerce from the Tri-Cities Spokane Portland and Seattle.
4	Of course there are. But high schoolers aren't going to necessarily be interested in a 20,000 page permit. New audiences should not be the goal - new members of the desired audience for each meeting should be.
5	Yep, I would consider any school, organization, or group in the Pacific Northwest a potential partner for co-hosting events.
6	Yes, partnerships are great. Depends on topic/goal/location.
7	Washington African American hammer of Commerce NAACP Tri-Cities WA Chapter of the Links Incorporated
8	There are a wide number of organizations which could sponsor an event once a month throughout the year. Your imagination can create that list.
9	Definitely schools, high school on up. Yes, churches and local regional advocacy groups.
10	NOT SURE

What role can HAB members play in amplifying these events or serving as community liaisons?

1	Keep talking about Hanford, just bring it up breafly and use local examples for example Eugene is replacing a potable water storage located on well traveled street building two seven and a half million gallon steel tanks. There is four times that volume of waste at Hanford that must be treaded and safely disposed
2	Refer POC for organizations that could cohost events, provide a speaker opportunity or forward information in newsletters, websites, etc.
3	I think I gave some good ideas in my previous comments.
4	The HAB is best used as a planning tool rather than a signal boost. Plan better meetings, have better outcomes.
5	Share on social media, let their friends, family, community know via word of mouth, share with their listserv if they're an organization.
6	Let HAB know and ask for help.
7	Encourage participation from underrepresented voices.
8	Most of the HAB members have never worked at Hanford and know nothing. Other HAB members have warped ideas full of misinformation. I was a member of the HAB for 19 years and helped produce over 10 pieces of advice. DOE rejected them all.
9	HAB members for the most part are closer to the issues of the Hanford cleanup and its impacts. It would be so wonderful to hear from you, community members, at these meetings and hearings, as well as the bureaucrats. We need to work together.
10	PERSONAL MEDIA

What else should be considered in regard to potential partnerships and amplification?

1	Create computer games like simcity out of documents like the cost and schedule studies to engage younger folks
2	Work with the media in different communities to promote events. Try and get earned media when you have a community meeting and have a hook to get the local journalist to care about what you're talking about.
3	don't amplify unless there is a reason to amplify. be transparent but not so much that you are spamming the region with uninteresting meting topics.
4	Invite local groups, orgs to share their opinions during the meeting to offer an alternative viewpoint to the agencies.
5	Find groups that are trusted by the people you are working to reach in the location you are meeting.
6	Potential partnerships should focus on trusted, community-based organizations that already have strong relationships with residents, especially in Black, Hispanic, Tribal, and rural communities.
7	DOE management is not structured to consider outside assistance. They have to control information to the public. Under that tight control, no outside suggestions will matter.
8	Make sure as best as possible that all voices are represented somehow. At a recent information session in the Oregon legislature in the House Interim Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment, which agenda included the state's energy strategy and data centers, only one side was given the opportunity to educate house reps. It was horrible. Make sure all voices are at the table when and if possible.
9	NOT SURE

Digital Engagement

How can we complement in-person efforts with digital outreach?

1	There are a rich sources of podcasts on the internet of Hanford subject mater, gather links and publicize them
2	More layered, more impact
3	I think we've talked about a lot of ideas like having lunchtime online workshops or meetings to get input from people. Also evening, either all online or hybrid meetings. But with hybrid meetings you have to be very careful that you have an online facilitator that can truly be effective. Consistent social media Engagement with updates and information that is easy to understand and not scientific jargon can be helpful. Try to get more people to

	follow the department of energy and department of ecology nuclear program, social media pages. Images and videos are what people look to click on.
4	if there is an interactive portion of the meeting, include a virtual room as well.
5	Consider holding virtual-only meetings similar to the Hanford dialogue in order to reach people farther afield. People could be separated into smaller groups using break out rooms in order to mimic the types of conversations held in the in-person dialogue.
6	Work with the COE and other groups that are actively involved in communicating about Hanford with different audiences.
7	Recorded sessions allow people who can't attend in person to stay informed and engaged.
8	Digital outreach has reached new proportions in the past 10 years. The HAB once upon a time had a broad email list for weekly reports. DOE stopped those weekly reports. The DNFSB weekly reports should be combined with honest reports from DOE, Ecology and EPA, not the fluff that has been automatic in the past.
9	For instance, making sure that the results from this survey are shared out afterwards. If it's an in-person meeting or hybrid, make sure there are recordings to share out, as well as contact info if people have further concerns or questions.
10	TRINKETS RELATED

What other advice might you have on digital outreach and engagement?

1	Have AI gather and digest all Hanford documents to be readied for public inquiries
2	Its great for general awareness and top of mind name recognition.
3	A series of fun informational videos could be something for the energy to try. Maybe doing a regular series of brown bag online lunch workshops. Have somebody who is dynamic promote those on social media and share out with the Hanford advisory board members so they can share out to their networks.
4	(i am sure this is happening but will say it anyway with no commentary on current outreach staff) continue to hire people who know how to do digital outreach - The HAB might not be the best place to look for this answer.
5	Plain language information. Accessible entry points.
6	Use trusted messengers to post and share content, and choose platforms people already use.
7	All of the digital platforms should be utilized, not just one. Many folks do not have smart phones with all the apps.
8	Share out to everyone on your mailing lists, and for those further afield, look online and see which advocacy groups working on this issue should be notified. Reaching out to universities and unions and churches, etc. Not to forget online local media. Cast the net as broadly as you can.
9	NONE

Success Metrics

What would success look like for these events?

1	Enthusiastic public support for cleanup budget
2	What was the purpose and desired outcome? Was it met?
3	Again. Identify what the goals are early and how you will measure your success.
4	if the meeting meets its goals and is held, with presenters who are authorized to answer tough questions.
5	Depends on the event. Quality interactions over quantity. Having 200 people attend an event could be good or terrible depending on the quality of interactions.
6	Events are successful when participants leave feeling informed, respected, and motivated to stay engaged.
7	People walking out of meetings feeling like they have heard the pros and cons and being satisfied that DOE is doing the right thing.
8	People learning more about the nuclear narrative near them, with the opportunity to ask questions and listen to others ask theirs. Debate and disagreement are also good, within reason of course.
9	ATTENDENCE BESIDES HAB MEMBERS

Are we measuring turnout, diversity of voices, feedback received, or long-term awareness?

1	Just in survey results
2	Measure what you treasure. The purpose and desired outcome of the event should be incorporated into the measurement. Knowing what the average ROI is on different activities - posts to likes/shares, open houses to attendees, public meetings to attendees, comments, questions, surveys to respondents helps show whether you are improving or not over past performance.
3	Is there a bunch of different metrics that could be measured. Again I think some of these are shorter term goals for a particular meeting or comment. But I think it would be good to do an any survey that can measure interest or knowledge of some of the core issues facing Hanford, like tank waste, treatment, and disposal. It's tough to measure long term impact with the same people, but if you engaged an actual public engagement, consultant or professional survey organization that might be possible.
4	that depends on what the goal is.
5	All of the above
6	Depends on the type of outreach. All of these things are important.
7	n/a
8	I have been to many public meetings seeking comments where I was the lone person making comments. What does that tell you about the public's energy to step forward and speak out? Since the entire public out-reach policy is flawed, metrics are meaningless until you re-adjust public policy.
9	I wish all of the above. But to being with: turnout, diversity of voices and feedback received for sure.
10	NOT SURE

What else would you advise in regard to evaluating outreach and engagement success?

1	Just keep trying
2	Have a goal identified before you do a community engagement activity, and what successful look like and then measure participation, engagement, and that should help with measuring your success.
3	define success for each meeting. come to the HAB early and ask what information is needed to assess whether or not the goal for that specific meeting has been met.
4	As stated in HAB advice #239: "The art and craft of public involvement is successful when: clear goals are defined; stakeholders contribute early to the design and development of public involvement; involvement is interactive, inclusive, engaging and respectful; the public has early input influencing the decision-making process (for example, the identification of alternatives for evaluation); the decision-makers demonstrate openness to having input influence their decisions and the decision-making process; and the public sees meaningful results from participation.
5	What percentage of feedback leads to visible changes or follow-up.
6	Success will be obvious once you change policy of telling fairy tales without the dirty reality. The dirty reality is acceptable because of multiple safety factors designed into each process step. But you have to tell the public both sides and not punishing contractors for revealing problems. It is ok to tell the public that half the instrumentation on 75-yr old tanks has failed as long as they know that safety is still being maintained.ned
7	Transparency with a capital T. Let community members know what your process was so they can help in the future.
8	WORKER INVOLVEMENT. LABOR AND EXEMPT