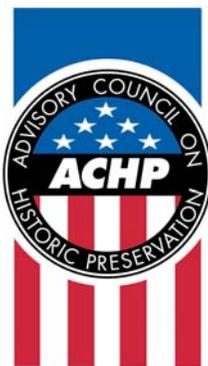


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Contact: Bruce J. Milhans
202-606-8513
bmilhans@achp.gov

Preserving America's Heritage

ACHP Supports Department of Energy Policy Statement on Historic Hanford Nuclear Reactor

WASHINGTON, DC – The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) today expressed its strong support for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) policy statement on the historic nuclear B Reactor at Hanford, Washington.

“The 105-B Reactor, the world's first full-scale plutonium production reactor, is one of seven federal facilities the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recommended be preserved and interpreted to present the history of the Manhattan Project and its key role in the victory of the Allies against the forces of fascism and empire in World War II,” said John L. Nau, III, ACHP chairman. “The ACHP is very pleased with the issuance of this directive, as well as with the entire Department of Energy effort to create an understanding of the Manhattan Project by working to make the places where history took place accessible to the public.”

The reactor was completed in September 1944 and produced plutonium for the Trinity device (the first atomic weapon ever exploded), for the bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan, on Aug. 9, 1945, and for Cold War-era weapons until the reactor's closure in 1968. The Manhattan Project was a top-secret, top-priority program to develop atomic weapons before World War II adversaries created similar super weapons. The drama behind development of the program played out at several key sites in the United States that include the University of Chicago, the Oak Ridge Reservation in Tennessee, the Hanford Reservation in Washington, and two sites in New Mexico: the Los Alamos National Laboratory and Trinity Site near Alamogordo.

The DOE desire to preserve key heritage resources and present this history was aided by a panel of experts convened by the ACHP on behalf of DOE. This panel issued a report in February 2001 with recommendations and preservation options for Manhattan Project Signature Facilities at Hanford and Oak Ridge.

The ACHP report noted: “Because of their pivotal role in World War II and the history of science and technology, the Signature Facilities deserve commemoration as national treasures. DOE needs to recognize this and convey to its employees, contractors, and the public that these Signature Facilities are as representative of the paramount events of the 20th Century as the Gettysburg National Military Park and the Golden Spike National Historic Site are of the 19th Century.”

DOE's Signature Facilities are those defined as “nationally significant historic properties that best convey and interpret the scale and importance of the Manhattan Project, and provide the core for the Department's ability to successfully interpret, whether in situ or through museum or other interpretive setting, its Manhattan Project mission of developing atomic bombs during World War II.”

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In 2006 DOE and the ACHP entered into a formal interagency partnership whereby the ACHP is assisting DOE to assess the heritage tourism potential of its Signature Facilities.

The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, is now in the process of developing a separate report to Congress (due spring 2009) on the feasibility of including certain Manhattan Project sites into a "Manhattan Project National Historical Park." Reactor 105-B is one of the sites under consideration for inclusion.

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