

The RadioActivist Campaign

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September 15, 2004

Columbia Riverbed Sampling Tubes Installed

The Columbia Riverbed of the Hanford Reach is contaminated with Hanford's solid wastes as well as groundwater seeping from Hanford site.

The RadioActivist Campaign (TRAC) installed plastic tubes to sample riverbed water under the Hanford Reach in September. TRAC installed the sampling tubes horizontally to collect riverbed water from just under the fine sediment surface. This upper level of sediments is contaminated with both solid wastes and groundwater seepage.

According to TRAC's Norm Buske, this upper level in the riverbed is specially important for river ecology. For example, it is the level at which clams are most frequently found.

TRAC installed 6 sampling tubes underwater on weekends in September, when the river was lowest: at a background location (Vernita), at N-Springs, at D-Island, at F-Reactor, at the Old Hanford Townsite, and at 300 Area.

TRAC used a new "spring-auger" driver to install the plastic tubes horizontally under the bank. This thin, flexible driver disturbs the riverbed matrix less than does a conventional drive point.

These sampling tubes are the first comprehensive installation under the Columbia River to sample riverbed water along the entire stretch of the Hanford Reach.

TRAC expects to report radiological results of riverbed water samples, in November.

TRAC is conducting this study under contract to Hanford Action of Oregon.