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AMERICAN RECOVERY & REINVESTMENT ACT NEWSLETTER

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ARRA Creating and Saving Jobs Throughout EM

Hanford Hires First 400 Workers with Recovery Act Funds

Four hundred employees have been hired at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Hanford Site using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. The workers are currently receiving training for their new jobs in environmental cleanup. They represent the first of many jobs that will be created at the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington.

(Above) CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company (CHPRC) provided deactivation and decommissioning workers with a new hire orientation on April 27, 2009. Workers met members of the leadership team and received a briefing on Hanford's safety culture.

IN THIS ISSUE

EM Recovery Act Funding Summary

As of May 5, 2009, the Recovery Act funding summary for Environmental Management is:

SITE	***ALLOTMENTS***
BNL	*$42,355,000*
Moab	*$108,350,000*
West Valley	*$73,875,000*
Oak Ridge - Non Defense	*$78,800,000*
Non-Defense Program Direction	*$1,200,000*
Oak Ridge - ETTP	*$118,200,000*
Ur/Th Payments	*$68,950,000*
ORP	*$326,035,000*
Hanford	*$1,634,500,000*
Idaho	*$467,875,000*
Oak Ridge	*$231,110,000*
Savannah River	*$1,615,400,000*
Carlsbad	*$172,375,000*
Defense Program Direction	*$9,960,000*
Paducah	*$20,000,000*
Portsmouth	*$20,000,000*
Mound	*$19,700,000*
Oak Ridge Y-12	*$327,000,000*
ETEC	*$38,300,000*
SLAC	*$7,925,000*
SPRU	*$31,775,000*
Total Allotments	***$5,413,685,000***

Hanford Hires First 400 Workers with Recovery Act Funds (continued)

Many of the new employees are union workers hired to support deactivation and decommissioning (D&D) efforts for contractor CHPRC. The workers began training the third week of April. Training for D&D workers is expected to take up to five weeks and includes general Hanford Site training, safety training, and project-specific training.

(Above) New CHPRC employee Robert Valdez makes a call to his wife as he reviews his new company benefits package at new hire orientation.

Recruiting efforts add 30 new Health Physics Technicians at ORP

The ranks of health physics technicians at the Hanford tank farms contractor, Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS), will swell in the next six months with the hiring and training of 30 new candidates.

"Health Physics Technicians play a key role in protecting our employees from on-the-job radiological hazards. We had more than 500 applicants for our 30 positions and interviewed nearly 100 candidates," says Brad Brannan, WRPS Radiological Control manager. "We interviewed a diverse set of applicants, and now have a strong group of highly qualified individuals joining our team."

Basic qualifications were a high-school diploma or G.E.D. with at least one year of mathematics and/or science. People skills and an aptitude for math were paramount in the selection process. Health physics technicians support a wide range of employees, from senior managers to craft workers, and have to be able to develop good working relationships. The candidates' aptitude for math helped interviewers determine whether the candidates could successfully pass an intense training class.

The selected candidates reported to work on May 11 and spend 20 weeks at the Hanford Training Center in classroom training, followed by approximately six weeks of on-the-job training. Senior WRPS health physics technicians will be involved in both training regimens. When the training is completed, the new employees will support ARRA projects in the Hanford Tank Farms.

Recovery Act Funding Creating Cleanup Jobs at DOE's Idaho Site

Unemployed Idaho residents are doing something they haven't done in months - reporting to new jobs at DOE's Idaho site. The new positions are being funded by the $468 million DOE's Idaho Site received as part of the Recovery Act. The ARRA funding saved 250 current cleanup jobs and is expected to create many more. To date, more than 100 positions have been posted between the Idaho site's two cleanup contractors and the local small businesses supporting them.

Over the course of the next several months, the Idaho Cleanup Project and the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project will be hiring employees using the Recovery Act funding, accelerating cleanup work on both projects. The work will include demolition of excess nuclear and radiological facilities reducing the Idaho Site footprint by over 800,000 square feet. Work will also involve the retrieval of specifically targeted waste, the consolidation of spent nuclear fuel from wet to dry storage, and the accelerated shipment of stored transuranic and mixed low-level waste for offsite disposal.

(Above) The Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project at the Idaho National Laboratory

(Above) Demolition of the Materials Test Reactor at the Idaho National Laboratory

Stimulus Funding Saving D&D Jobs at DOE's Idaho Site

The ARRA funding received at the Department of Energy's Idaho Site has saved over 100 jobs in the current Deactivation and Decommissioning (D&D) program, while adding over 100 new jobs. These new employees will help to accelerate decommissioning of facilities that are no longer needed for the site's mission. In decommissioning of these facilities the risk to workers, the public and the environment will be significantly reduced while eliminating the costs associated with facility surveillance and maintenance.

EM and EPA Sign Interagency Agreement for Recovery Act Work at ETEC

DOE announced on April 23, 2009 that an agreement was finalized with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to transfer $38.3 million to fund a complete radiological characterization survey at the Energy Technology Engineering Center (ETEC) site at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL).

The funding, provided through the ARRA, will be used to conduct radiological assessments necessary to complete the environmental impact statement and site cleanup. DOE committed full funding to the Interagency Agreement that calls for radiological characterization work at SSFL Area IV and the northern undeveloped land. Under the agreement, EPA's tasks for the radiological characterization survey include: initiating a historical site assessment to evaluate past radiological activities, conducting a surface gamma scan, performing surface and subsurface soil sampling, and groundwater analyses. Approximately 10,000 soil and groundwater samples are expected to be analyzed.

DOE-leased ETEC is located on 90 acres within SSFL Area IV. The former Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) conducted nuclear research at ETEC starting in the 1950s. The Environmental Impact Statement for Area IV of the SSFL focuses on environmental restoration activities that include soil and groundwater remediation and the decontamination and decommissioning or dismantlement of the remaining government buildings and structures.

Keith Takata of EPA (left) and Cynthia Anderson of DOE-EM sign the Interagency Agreement for radiological characterization survey at ETEC.

Members of EPA Region IX and DOE-EM meet for the signing of the Interagency Agreement between EPA and DOE for ARRA work at ETEC.

Recovery Act Funding Proves Beneficial at Hanford

Retrieval of solid, radioactive waste continues with Recovery Act funding at Hanford

Using Recovery Act funding provided by DOE, contractor CHPRC has been able to continue work on a project previously scheduled to end in April 2009 and keep 65 highly trained and experienced workers on the job.

(Left) A weather structure is installed over the area where transuranic waste retrieval work will be done by CHPRC on the Hanford Site using ARRA funding.

(Right) Hanford workers whose jobs were saved by the ARRA will continue retrieving thousands of drums of solid, radioactive waste. Many of the drums are highly corroded and require specialized handling by experienced workers.

Workers are retrieving 70,000 drums-worth of solid, radioactive waste from burial trenches in central Hanford. Known as suspect-transuranic (TRU) waste, the material consists of contaminated debris, such as protective clothing, tools, equipment, and laboratory waste from plutonium processing facilities. The waste was put in drums and boxes that were placed in trenches in the 1970s and 1980s and covered with soil. Over the years, many of the drums became highly corroded and now require specialized handling during retrieval. As waste is removed from the trenches, it is characterized. About half is TRU waste that is prepared for shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico, and the other half is low-level waste that is treated and disposed of at Hanford.

Since the project began in late 2003, workers have retrieved more than 48,000 drums-worth of waste. ARRA funding has allowed the contractor to keep workers with up to six years of experience in doing this difficult work on the job. The funding will also help the DOE work toward meeting regulatory milestones in the Tri-Party Agreement between the DOE, State of Washington, and the EPA.

(Above) An excavator removes stockpile dirt from area where disposal cells 9 and 10 will be developed at ERDF at the Hanford Site.

Disposal Cells Being Prepared at Hanford

Washington Closure Hanford has been removing a huge stockpile of dirt at the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) on Hanford's central plateau in southeastern Washington State. This is the first work being performed by Washington Closure with ARRA funding.

Using ARRA funds, Washington Closure will add two massive disposal cells to the facility. The increased capacity will be needed at ERDF to handle the increased waste being removed by all Hanford contractors as they accelerate work under ARRA. Washington Closure excavators will move 375,000 cubic yards of soil – which will take three to four months to complete – from the area where cells 9 and 10 will be developed. Washington Closure's initial work prepares the construction site for digging of cells 9 and 10 – one of their first major pieces of work under ARRA at Hanford. Some of the stockpile dirt will be used to construct an interim cover for cells 1 and 2. Some of the dirt will be used to construct another access road to the facility.

Moab UMTRA Project Celebrates Haul Event

On May 4, 2009, the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project celebrated the official beginning of relocating 16 million tons of uranium mill tailings from the Moab site in Utah by rail, 30 miles north to an engineered disposal cell near Crescent Junction, Utah. About 150 invited guests and employees attended the tailings haul event, which was held at the rail load out area at the Moab site. Several speakers, including Utah Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr., gave remarks, which were followed by a ribbon-cutting and a demonstration of the massive gantry crane used to load and unload containers of tailings to and from railcars.

The train departs the Moab site once daily, Monday through Thursday. Trainloads will initially consist of 88 containers. With ARRA funding, the project is evaluating options to maximize the volume of tailings shipped by the end of fiscal year 2011.

(Left) Donald Metzler, Federal Project Director was the Master of Ceremonies for the tailings haul celebration. Other speakers seated to the right of Mr. Metzler are Governor Jon Huntsman, Pamela Juliano of Congressman James Matheson's Office, Steve Creamer, Chairman and CEO of Energy Solutions, and Ron Dean of Senator Orrin Hatch's office.

(Right) Utah Governor, Jon Huntsman giving remarks. Containers on railcars and a portion of the gantry crane are visible in the background.

(Left) Ribbon cutting (from L to R): Steve Creamer, Mike Moore (Acting Director, EM Office of Small Sites Projects), Donald Metzler, Governor Huntsman, Congresswoman Grace Napolitano of California, and Tony Amadeo (Vice President of the Midwest Division for S&K Aerospace, Inc.).

The First ARRA Funded Mixed Low Level Waste Shipment Leaves Idaho

A shipment of mixed low-level waste left DOE's Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project on May 6, 2009, years earlier than originally planned, due to funding received through the ARRA.

The 36.5 cubic meter shipment consisted of radioactive and chemically contaminated waste that had been retrieved, characterized, packaged and shipped from DOE's Idaho site. It will be treated and permanently disposed in a commercial disposal facility in Utah. ARRA funds for the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project are being used to accelerate the shipment of an additional 800 cubic meters of mixed low-level waste by Sept. 30, 2009.

(Above) Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project employees standing in front of the first ARRA funded mixed low-level waste shipment leaving DOE's Idaho Site.

Hanford's Small Business Forum Highlights Opportunities under ARRA

About 480 people from 21 states attended the DOE-sponsored Small Business Vendor Forum on April 29 in Pasco, Washington.

The Richland Operations Office, Office of River Protection, and Pacific Northwest Site Office, along with their major prime contractors and the Tri-City Development Council, hosted the forum. The forum provided small businesses with information about opportunities available at the Hanford site, with a focus on what ARRA would mean to Hanford and the local business community.

The forum was an opportunity for the small business leaders to interact directly with the contractors in matching needs and capabilities. Greg Jones, Chief Financial Officer for DOE at Hanford, spoke at the event. "We have a tremendous opportunity to put your small business to work," he said to the gathered crowd. "With additional money from the Recovery Act comes a lot of visibility and accountability, which small businesses should be prepared to handle." Most Hanford contractors spend a percentage of their money with small businesses.

DOE Announces the Recovery Act Clearing House

DOE has launched its new Recovery Act Clearing House Webpage. The purpose of the DOE Recovery Act Clearinghouse is to help increase the availability of information about DOE's ARRA activities. The Clearinghouse will provide initial consultations, and also make referrals when appropriate to other information sources (websites, documents, DOE staff, etc). Questions can be submitted using the submittal form or by calling the toll-free number: 1-888-DOE-RCVY (1-888-363-7289). Other questions can be accessed by browsing the list of frequently asked questions via the website.

For more information on EM Recovery Act work, please visit http://www.em.doe.gov/emrecovery/ and http://www.recovery.gov/. Feel free to send questions and comments to EMRecoveryActProgram@em.doe.gov. Your feedback is welcomed.