EM Recovery NEWS FLASH

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Hanford Treats Record Amount of Groundwater

RICHLAND, Wash. – Workers have treated more than 800 million gallons of groundwater at the Hanford Site so far this year, a record annual amount.

Last year, workers with DOE contractor CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company treated 600 million gallons of groundwater at the site.

"It's great to know the amount of treated groundwater is increasing. We are meeting our goals, which means we are protecting the Columbia River," said Bill Barrett, CH2M HILL director of pump and treat operations and maintenance.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act work to expand Hanford's capacity for treating contaminated groundwater led to the 2011 record amount. The Recovery Act funded the installation of more than 300 groundwater wells and construction of two groundwater treatment facilities. The 100-DX system began operating in late 2010 and the 200 West system is scheduled to begin operating in 2012. Those Recovery Act investments will enable Hanford to treat millions of additional gallons of groundwater in 2012 and subsequent years.

Hanford has also improved the efficiency of treatment operations. For example, a new, long-lasting resin is now used to help remove contaminants from the groundwater, requiring workers to change the resin less frequently. Since the 100-DX began operating, it has pumped more than 149 million gallons of groundwater without a single resin change. Workers would have needed to change the previous resin used 83 times during that same period.

Top right photo: These tanks contain resin used to help remove contaminants from groundwater.

Bottom right photo: Equipment inside a groundwater treatment facility at Hanford.

Background photo: An aerial view shows the 200 West pump-and-treat facility, which is scheduled to begin operating in 2012.

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