

River Corridor Closure Project

DOE's Largest Environmental Cleanup Closure Project

March 2011

The Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility The Hub of Hanford Cleanup

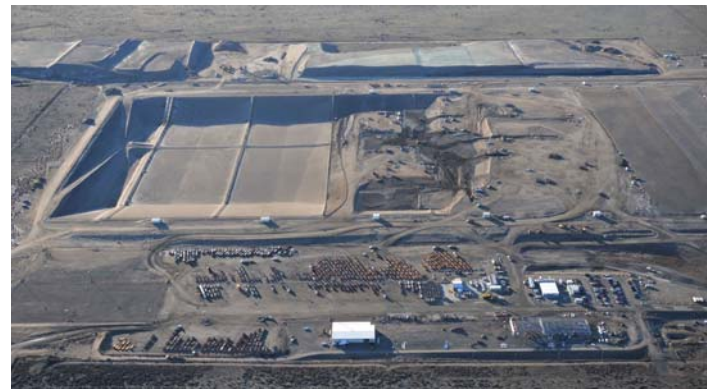
What is ERDF?

The Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility is the onsite disposal facility for low-level radioactive, hazardous and mixed wastes generated during cleanup activities at the 586-square-mile Hanford Site in south-central Washington state. Washington Closure Hanford manages ERDF for the U.S. Department of Energy's Richland Operations Office. The facility, which began operations in July 1996, is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and does not accept non-Hanford waste.

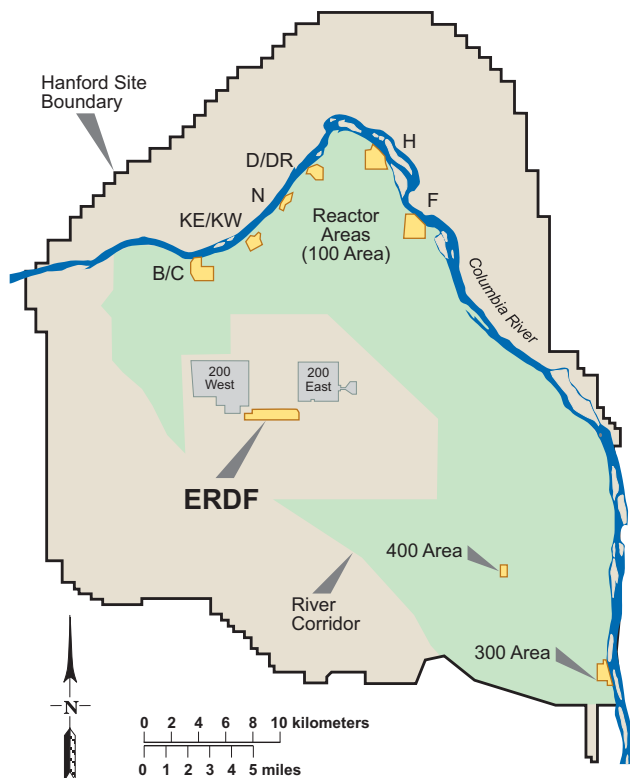
Where is the waste that is disposed at ERDF generated?

The majority of cleanup waste comes from the 220-square-mile River Corridor, located along the banks of the Columbia River. The waste consists mainly

of soil contaminated by the effluent of Hanford's nine plutonium production reactors, which operated from 1943-1987. Now that DOE's Tank Waste and Plateau Remediation contracts are in place, ERDF is receiving increasing amounts of cleanup waste from across the Hanford Site.



Hanford's Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility



What type of waste does ERDF receive?

Low-level waste is a term used to describe nuclear waste that does not fit into the categorical definitions for high-level waste, spent nuclear fuel or transuranic waste. Waste from the River Corridor primarily consists of soil contaminated with fission and activation products. With the effluent sites remediated, what remains in the River Corridor includes waste sites, burial grounds and buildings contaminated with radionuclides, as well as hazardous materials, such as mercury, asbestos, beryllium, chromium and lead.

Where is the waste disposed at ERDF?

ERDF comprises disposal areas called cells. The facility's first eight cells were constructed two at a time. The cells are constructed with bottom and side liners consisting of multiple layers of natural and man-made materials that form an impermeable barrier, along with a system to catch liquids as they drain through the waste materials. Each pair of cells is 500 wide, 1,000 feet long and 70 feet deep – large enough to hold about 2.8 million tons of material. In February 2011,



U.S. Department of Energy

Protecting the Columbia River

ERDF completed construction of super cells 9 and 10. Each super cell is equivalent in size and capacity to a pair of cells. Super cell 9 began receiving waste in February 2011, with super cell 10 to follow in March. The addition of the super cells will increase ERDF's capacity by 5.6 million tons to a total capacity of 16.4 million tons. ERDF currently contains nearly 11 million tons of waste material.



Waste disposal at ERDF

How is Recovery Act funding improving ERDF?

The construction of super cells 9 and 10 is part of a \$100 million expansion and upgrade of ERDF funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Washington Closure also is using Recovery Act dollars to construct three maintenance facilities and an operations center. In addition, ARRA money has been used to purchase equipment to support ERDF's disposal efforts, such as an automated scale, 150 waste containers, 20 shuttle trucks, four bulldozers, and two water trucks.



Excavation of super cell 10



Liner installation at super cell 9

How much waste does ERDF receive?

About two years ago, Washington Closure disposed about 200 waste containers a day (each containing about 22 tons of waste). Now the average is closer to 450. In calendar year 2010, the Waste Operations team disposed of 1,791,282 tons of material, shattering the previous record of 1,014,991 tons set in 2005. Also in 2010, the Waste Operations team disposed of a record 86,501 waste containers, breaking the previous record of 50,118 set in 2005.

What is ERDF's top priority?

Safety is the key to the overall success of ERDF. Workers are dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the facility's strong safety culture. To date, the project has certified more than 50 employees as safety trained supervisors. Since the facility began operations in 1996, waste transport drivers have logged more than 16 million miles with only one at-fault accident. And since the Washington Closure assumed management in 2005, more than 7 million miles have been logged without an at-fault accident. Employees also have worked the life of the waste disposal subcontract with only one lost-time injury.

Washington Closure Hanford is a limited liability company managed by URS, Bechtel and CH2M Hill. It manages the \$2.4 billion River Corridor Closure Project for the U.S. Department of Energy's Richland Operations Office. The company is responsible for demolishing 312 buildings, cleaning up 366 contaminated waste sites, placing two plutonium production reactors and one nuclear facility in interim safe storage, and managing the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.