

January 2011
Volume 7, Issue 1

C^{the} Current

River Corridor
Closure Project

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Please submit story ideas or comments to [WCH Communications](#).

The editor reserves the right to edit any submitted articles for length and clarity.

Close Encounters of the “Dome” Kind

The skyline of the 300 Area is constantly changing, and the removal of the 309 Building dome is probably the most recognized change to date. On Saturday afternoon, January 15, Washington Closure Hanford (WCH), Barnhart and Cutting Edge employees made final preparations and removed the dome from what had been its home since 1960.



Workers monitor the 71-ton dome as it releases from 42 clips installed during the cutting process.

“It went as planned,” said Gary Snow, deputy director for D4. “The folks involved did a terrific job of planning and executing the job in a safe manner. It’s another sign of the progress we are making along the river corridor.”

The dome stood 80 feet tall and is 80 feet in diameter. Made of carbon steel, a little more than a quarter-inch thick, it was supported by 12-inch thick concrete walls. The crane used on the job weighs approximately 500 tons with a



“The folks involved did a terrific job of planning and executing the job in a safe manner. It’s another sign of the progress we are making along the river corridor.”

*Gary Snow,
Deputy Director, D4*

FACTOID

The polar crane located inside the dome was used to refuel the reactor and other supporting activities. It was removed after the dome. The crane is 75-feet long and weighs 37 tons.



Carol A. Johnson was recently appointed the Closure Director for Washington Closure Hanford.

Dome continued



After size-reducing, the dome’s new home will be Hanford’s Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

200-foot boom. The Barnhart crane is being used for several special lifting projects in the 300 Area.

The remaining below-grade facility houses the Plutonium Recycle Test Reactor which operated in the 1960s to test alternative nuclear fuel. The demolition and remediation of above-ground structures will be completed this year and the underground reactor facility will take approximately two years to execute.

Carol Johnson Named Closure Director

Carol A. Johnson has been appointed Closure Director for WCH. As Closure Director, she will be responsible for integrating the company’s strategy and activities to close out and transfer land back to the federal government that has been entrusted to WCH for cleanup.

“My job is to make sure the company is transitioning to closure in 2013,” Carol said. “That means making sure we’re creating a closure culture. It also means that as an organization, we’re becoming ‘fit’ for our closure purpose.”

“We have a committed closure team, led by Ella Feist, that’s been working on this for over a year. The team includes Peter Diaz, Stewart Mackay, Cecelia Ward and Regena Williamson. They have done an outstanding job in establishing the foundational elements to take us down the path of closure,” said Carol.

This is starting to be evident in the field. WCH recently completed field work in Segments 1 & 2, which comprises about 60 square miles that is ready to be turned over to the U.S. Department of Energy and Mission Support Alliance.

“Designing and implementing the process for returning remediated lands in Segments 1 & 2 to the federal government has been a major accomplishment. It sets the stage for River Corridor’s remaining 160 square miles,” Carol said.

Before joining Washington Closure in December, Carol spent four years at the Sellafield site in the United Kingdom where she served as Executive Director of Infrastructure, responsible for more than 1,900 staff and a \$350 million annual budget.

She has over 30 years of experience in the nuclear industry. She has held technical and managerial assignments at Savannah River, Los Alamos National Laboratory and Idaho National Laboratory.

Carol and her husband Michael live in Kennewick.

Service Awards

The following individuals reached a milestone in their careers.

10 Years:

Darnell, Michael E.
Goos, Gordon A.
Martinez, Charlene R.
Miller, Debra R.
Whatley, Zona G.

15 Years:

Wimett, John M.

20 Years:

Garza, Miguel A.

25 Years:

Hughes, Michael A.

New Hires

WCH welcomes the following new employees who have joined our project:

Jayne Kahne: WCH, Industrial Hygienist – SH&Q

Jennifer Copeland: WCH, Subcontract Specialist – Project Services - Procurement

Alan Doughty: WCH, HAMTC Crane Operator – D4

Noe Alaniz: WCH, HAMTC Lube & Tireman – Waste Operations

Ryan Paulson: WCH, HAMTC D&D – D4

Kevin Tice: WCH, HAMTC Lube & Tireman – Waste Operations

Daniel Evans: WCH, HAMTC Temp Truck Driver – Waste Operations

Nicholas Vela: WCH, HAMTC D&D – D4

Darrell Boone: WCH, HAMTC Temp Truck Driver – Waste Operations

William Brewen: WCH, HAMTC Temp Truck Driver – Waste Operations

Hans Carman: WCH, Resident Engineer – Engineering Services

Matthew Krumbah: WCH, HAMTC Temp Truck Driver – Waste Operations

Tanna McVicker: WCH, Planner – D4

WCH Finishes “Super-Sized” Project at ERDF

A project team led by WCH along with subcontractors TradeWind Services and DelHur Industries has completed construction of super cells 9 and 10 at the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF). The project is part of a \$100 million expansion and upgrade of ERDF funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Super cell 9 is scheduled to begin receiving waste in February, 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.

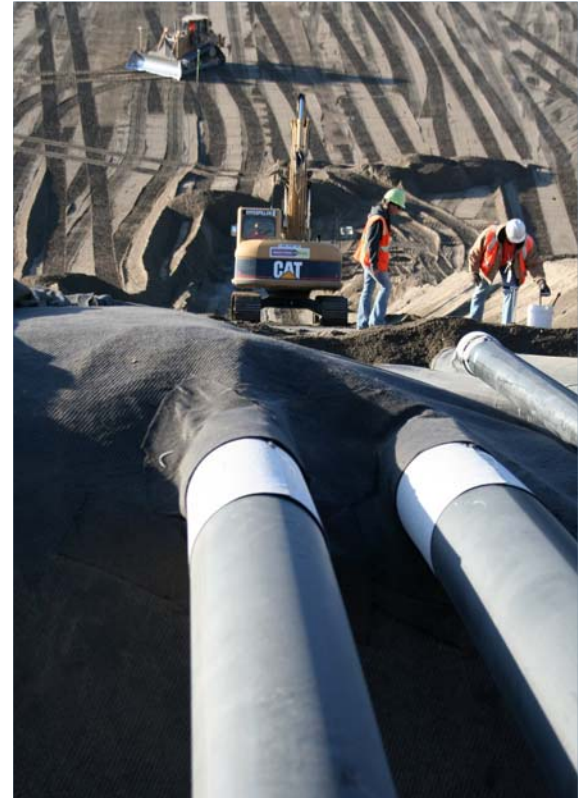
Super cell construction was accomplished several months ahead of schedule and well under budget. The super cell 10 project included upgrades to the leachate transmission pipe and construction of two new leachate holding tanks to replace ERDF’s two original tanks.

Previously, ERDF was constructed two cells at a time. The project team used lessons learned from prior cell construction and incorporated several design enhancements during super cell construction. The enhancements led to a cost savings of about \$1.5 million per super cell.

Bruce Covert, the Director of Waste Operations, said teamwork was the key to construction success. He also praised the entire construction team for maintaining ERDF’s strong safety culture.

“We continue to set records because of the commitment of our workers to dispose of waste safely and efficiently.”

*Bruce Covert,
Director, Waste Operations*



Washington Closure Hanford subcontract TradeWind Services installs riser pipes from the sump to the crest pad building in super cell 9 at ERDF.

“From excavation through the cell testing process, the safety performance was excellent,” Bruce said. “The construction team of TradeWind Services and DelHur Industries worked hard to achieve Washington Closure’s goal of “Zero” injuries.”

Meanwhile, disposal records continue to fall at ERDF. The Waste

New Hires continued

Mitchell Working: WCH, Craft Supervisor – Field Remediation

Alex Britain: WCH, Sr. Industrial Hygienist Program Specialist – SH&Q

Lisa Furniss: WCH, Human Resources Administrative Assistant – Project Services –HR

Karl Sanders: WCH, Project Manager – Field Remediation

Dean Wutowski: WCH, Temporary Truck Driver – Waste Operations

Clifford Henze: WCH, Temporary Truck Driver – Waste Operations

Norm Pavel: WCH, Temporary Truck Driver – Waste Operations

Timothy Pool: WCH, Pipefitter – D4

Shane Swiger: WCH, Temporary Truck Driver – Project Services - Facilities

Douglas Ordal: WCH, Sr. Subcontract Specialist – Project Services - Procurement

Amanda Tuttle: WCH, Quality Assurance Engineer – SH&Q

Carla Hays: WCH, Human Resources Specialist – Project Services - HR

Alen Lapandic: WCH, Accountant – Project Services - Controllers

Super-Sized continued

Operations team disposed of 1,791,282 tons of material in Calendar Year (CY) 2010, shattering the previous record of 1,014,991 tons set in CY2005. Also in CY2010, the Waste Operations team disposed of a record 86,501 waste containers, breaking the previous record of 50,118 set in CY2005.

“We continue to set records because of the commitment of our workers to dispose of waste safely and efficiently,” Bruce said. “The Waste Operations staff, our subcontractors, and the D4, Field Remediation, and other Hanford contractor teams work together, allowing us to achieve these records.”

Stacy Thursby Continues on the Board of VPPPA

Washington Closure’s Stacy Thursby was again elected to the national board of the Voluntary Protection Programs Participant’s Association (VPPPA). Stacy has served on the board for four years and brings her enthusiasm and knowledge of VPP not only to her immediate team, but to the entire RCC Project.

The VPPPA is the leading organization dedicated to cooperative occupational safety, health and environmental management systems. It is a member-based association, providing a network of over 2,100 companies and worksites that are involved in or in the process of applying to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) or the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) and other government agencies that are developing or implementing cooperative recognition programs.

As WCH earned the VPP Star of Excellence in 2010, having Stacy on the national board of the VPPPA lends credibility to the projects efforts to grow its safety program. The VPP Star of Excellence is the highest honor that the DOE VPP awards to a contractor validating the significant mentoring efforts, innovation in safety and demonstrating injury and illness rates substantially below industry average. WCH is currently assisting DOE VPP Headquarters (HQ) in the revision and update of the VPP Guidance Manual for DOE and have assisted the DOE VPP HQ team on three assessments in 2010.

Congratulations for another election, Stacy and for being a leader dedicated to putting WCH in the forefront of an excellent safety program.

Focus on ARRA - Jessica Morales

Jessica Morales discovered two things at an early age: She was not afraid of a little dirty work, and she liked working for herself. So when Morales was 13-years old, she began picking up house-cleaning and landscaping jobs in her hometown of Finley, Washington, about 30 miles from the Hanford Site.



Stacy Thursby, Washington Closure Hanford, Safety and Health Programs, is serving her fourth year on the VPPPA National Board.



“I’m glad to be a part of the team working to provide Washington Closure the services to safely clean up the burial ground.”

*Jessica Morales,
President, Acquisition Business
Consultants*

Morales continued

“My grandfather was always building something, and I got hooked,” Morales said. “One of the most important things I learned from him was that you can achieve a lot in life through hard work.” That attitude led to bigger and better things for Morales, who has spent the past 15 years working in the construction field. Today, she is the president of Acquisition Business Consultants (ABC), a minority-woman owned small disadvantaged HUBZone business that specializes in construction services and project management.

Morales currently is serving as the project manager for White Shield/Apollo, a joint venture between two local companies working on a \$3.7 million project to install water, electricity, roads, office trailers and a waste container transfer area at the 618-10 Burial Ground. The work is funded with ARRA money.

The 618-10 Burial Ground is one of the most hazardous and complex burial grounds on the Hanford Site. It contains low- and high-activity radioactive waste from Hanford’s reactor fuel development and manufacturing facilities.

“I’m glad to be a part of the team working to provide Washington Closure the services to safely clean up the burial ground,” Morales said. “We’ve got a lot of great, dedicated people working hard in some tough weather conditions to make sure we get these utilities in.” White Shield/Apollo is scheduled to complete the infrastructure work in February, paving the way for full-scale remediation of the burial ground to begin in March.

While Morales grew up close to Hanford, she moved to Anchorage, Alaska, soon after high school. She and her husband then began a small home improvement business, which focused on finish and trim work. It wasn’t long, however, before they began tackling bigger projects, such as remodeling kitchens and bathrooms. Eventually, the company started constructing houses and small commercial buildings. And Morales had her hand in everything – writing proposals, handling the billing and procurement, delivering materials, and even doing the finish carpentry. At the same time, she earned a business degree.

Morales later founded ABC in Wasilla, Alaska, which focuses on federal government projects, and later opened an office in nearby Pasco, Washington. No matter where the job takes her, Morales sticks with her hard-working, hands-on approach. “I’ve never wanted to be a figurehead or anything like that,” she said. “I like being involved in all aspects of the job. That’s the only way I want to run a business.”



Field Remediation workers just completed excavation of the old plutonium vaults on Gable Mountain. The vaults were built into the hillside and were used to store plutonium before it was shipped offsite. Later, it was used to store explosives. A culturally sensitive area, the site will be restored to its original state, including removal of the access road. Pictured are George Dvorak, FE&C, and Ernie Biebrich and Robert Gray, WCH.



United Way Pledges Top \$210,000 this Year

The United Way campaign wrapped up with an outstanding outcome: WCH, Eberline Services Hanford (ESHI) and their employees pledged \$210,000 to United Way this year. That included \$154,500 from employees, \$52,000 from WCH and \$3,500 from ESHI.

“Overall, we did very well,” said Todd Nelson, who coordinated the campaign for the River Corridor Closure Project. “All of the contributions are used locally, and United Way does an excellent job in managing the dollars and distributing the funds. It will be put to good use.”



If there had been a category for it, Frank Farmer would have won the prize in the ERDF United Way chili cook-off for the most interesting chili presentations. He entered a chili made with elk meat, and for dessert, he provided chilled, chocolate dipped jalapenos.

The project’s goal was to give every employee the opportunity to make their own decision about contributing to United Way. “It’s a great way for many employees to make their charitable donations go as far as possible to worthwhile organizations, such as the Children’s Development Center, the Boys and Girls Club, Red Cross, Grace Clinic and a couple dozen others,” Todd said.

Several groups added an element of fun to their solicitation efforts this year, including Waste Operations, which held a chili cook-off. Bruce Covert, Waste Operations Director, even won the trophy for best overall chili. “And, yes, his really was the best,” said Todd. “I don’t think there was any vote-buying, except maybe with another bowl of chili.”

FACTOID

On March 17th many local restaurants will participate in the 5th annual dine-out for United Way. Participating restaurants donate a percentage of their St. Patrick’s Day proceeds to United Way’s Community Solutions fund. All participating restaurants will be listed in the February newsletter on the United Way website:

<http://www.unitedway-bfco.com/newsletters.htm>

Buddy Bentz, who organized the chili cook-off, was one of a dozen employees

across the project who served as co-chairs and coordinators for their projects or functions. The others included Shannon Ardamica, Jim Atkins, Linda Avalos, Tari Birch, Mark Buckmaster, Bruce Covert, Nita Crist, Tom Edmundson, Jon Fancher, Whitney Franklin, Robin Huxoll, Sherrie Jungfleisch, Christy Lindholm, Nelson Little, Carrie Locke, Vickie Page, Dean Strom, Ed Traverso and Maria Yancy.

“Their assistance was invaluable, and the campaign would not have been as successful as it was without their commitment,” said Todd.

Although this year’s campaign is over, pledges can be made up through the end of the calendar year. Contact payroll to make a pledge and have it deducted automatically from your check.



Bruce Covert, WCH Waste Operations Director, serves up chili during the Waste Ops United Way fundraising chili feed. Bruce won the prize for “Best Overall Chili.”

Washington Closure Awards \$196 million to Small Businesses

From October 2009 through September 2010, Washington Closure subcontracted \$209 million in work to other businesses. Of that, \$196 million, or 94 percent, went to small businesses. That is significantly more than the 65 percent the company is required to spend with small businesses.



Washington Closure's Procurement team works diligently to meet and exceed contract goals of spending at least 65% of contract dollars, on small businesses. Pictured left to right: Rod Harrison, WCH Manager, Procurement & Property Management; Dick Hansen, Kristy Johnson, Belinda Records, Sue Palmersheim and Bob Harris.

The \$209 million total includes more than \$58 million in ARRA dollars placed with 153 subcontractors. The total also includes \$128 million spent locally in Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties.

"This year, we more than doubled the amount of money and tripled the number of subcontractors we were able to work with using Recovery Act funds," said Rodney M. Harrison, Washington Closure procurement and property manager. "The total number of local businesses we were able to work with was up by 40 percent, as well."

"Since this is a nuclear cleanup site, there's an added responsibility to ensuring our subcontractors can safely manage the work," said Harrison. "If a small business can meet the qualifications and safely perform work at Hanford in a quality manner, then we're anxious to hear from them."

"Sometimes, in order for a small business to meet the qualifications and demonstrate they can safely perform the work on time and within budget, they have to team up with a larger, more experienced business. That's a strategy we encourage," he said. "It allows the smaller business to be mentored by a business experienced in large-scale environmental cleanup."

The 65 percent small business subcontracting goal is part of Washington Closure's contract with the Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the River Corridor Closure Project. It is one of the most aggressive subcontracting goals within the DOE system. The goal was placed into the contract to ensure the company makes every effort to locate qualified subcontractors and give them opportunities to bid on government-funded work.

"This year, we more than doubled the amount of money and tripled the number of subcontractors we were able to work with using Recovery Act funds."

*Rod Harrison,
Procurement and Property
Manager*

High-Hazard Silo Cleanup Begins at 118-K-1

Cleanup of highly radioactive underground silos has begun at the 118-K-1 Burial Ground.



Cleanup of the 118-K-1 Burial Ground resumed in January 2010. Workers expect to remove an estimated 370,000 tons of contaminated material before the project is completed in December 2012.

“Elsewhere in this burial ground, we have unearthed the most radioactive waste discovered to date during cleanup in the River Corridor,” said Tom Foster, Director of Field Remediation for Washington Closure Hanford.

The burial ground is about 16 acres in size and is located adjacent to Hanford’s K East Reactor and about a half-mile from the Columbia River. The original configuration of the burial ground included 16 trenches and 11 silos. It operated from 1955-1973 and accepted wastes from the K East, K West and N reactors.

The six silos located in Trench I of the 118-K-1 Burial Ground are corrugated metal pipes 10 feet in diameter and 25 feet deep.

“We know that most of the highly radioactive waste is located at the bottom of the silos,” said Scott Parnell, project manager for the 118-K-1 Burial Ground. “We’ll start by removing the first 10 feet of debris from within the silos using an excavator equipped with a special bucket called a clamshell. Once the first 10 feet is removed, we’ll work from the lower hazard to the higher hazard silos.”

Parnell said their approach is to take each step slowly, carefully and deliberately to ensure workers and the environment are protected at every stage of cleanup.

WCH began cleanup at the burial ground in May 2006 and continued work there until June 2008. More than 130,000 tons of contaminated material was removed before crews were deployed to higher priority work.

Cleanup work resumed at the 118-K-1 Burial Ground in January 2010. Since then, workers have dug up 140,000 tons of contaminated material that has included lead, soft wastes, reactor process tubes, spacers, graphite and other reactor equipment and hardware.

They have also found and safely handled highly radioactive reactor piping, including one piece reading 274 R/hour. By comparison, the DOE limit for employee exposure to radiation is 2 R/year.

“Elsewhere in this burial ground, we have unearthed the most radioactive waste discovered to date during cleanup in the River Corridor.”

*Tom Foster,
Director, Field Remediation*
