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Secretary of Energy Abraham Announces Pacific Northwest National Laboratory Contract Extension

Announces \$8.4 Million in Environmental Management Research Grants

RICHLAND, WASH - On a visit to Energy Department facilities in the state of Washington today, U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham announced that the department will move forward with plans to extend its contract with the Battelle Memorial Institute to manage and operate the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) for an additional five years.

"Battelle has done an extraordinary job operating PNNL over the years," Secretary Abraham said. "The Department of Energy and Battelle will be negotiating the details over the next several months, but we look forward to a continued partnership that will lead to further scientific advances benefiting our country."

Secretary Abraham authorized the department's Richland Operations Office to begin negotiations with Battelle. DOE decided to extend the contract with Battelle after evaluating several factors, including past performance and potential impacts from a change in the contractor. Battelle has received "Outstanding" ratings for the past three years from the department. The current contract expires in September 2002. The decision to extend the contract is subject to congressional approval.

Announces \$8.4 Million for Environmental Management Research

In addition to the planned contract extension for PNNL, Abraham said that the department's Environmental Management Science Program has awarded the lab \$8.4 million in grant funding for research to support the department's Environmental Management cleanup program.

The grants, to fund research initiatives to develop new approaches to dealing with the disposition of high

level waste and the deactivation and decontamination of facilities, are part of 45 research grants totaling \$39 million.

PNNL is a major multiprogram laboratory that conducts basic and applied research to solve problems in the environmental, energy, health and national security areas. The lab employs about 3,500 people and has an estimated annual budget of about \$540 million. In addition to its main Richland complex, PNNL operates a marine sciences laboratory in Sequim, Wash. It was created in 1965 when the government's research laboratory at DOE's Hanford Site was separated from Hanford operations. The lab's original mission was focused on nuclear technology and the environmental and health effects of radiation. PNNL gradually evolved into a national laboratory with a diversified, multiprogram mission. Battelle of Columbus, Ohio, has managed the lab for the department since its inception in 1965.

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