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Nevada Site Office Environmental Management

EM NEWS FLASH

Underground Test Area Sub-Project Plays Host to United Kingdom Scientists

During the week of March 17, two scientists from the United Kingdom traveled across eight time zones and through the Nevada desert to meet with U.S. Department of Energy staff at the Nevada Test Site (NTS) to better understand the groundwater modeling process that is currently utilized at the site by the Underground Test Area (UGTA) Sub-Project. This meeting provided a unique opportunity for the United States and England to learn from each other on how to address the problem of radioactively contaminated groundwater.

During the three-day visit, Dr. Ian Teasdale and Dr. Kate Cooper from the Sellafield Limited Site, which is located on the coast of the Irish Sea in Cumbria, England, were provided a tour of some of the UGTA sites on the NTS and discussed with UGTA Sub-Project personnel the similarities and differences between the NTS and Sellafield. The scientists also discussed the environmental concerns anticipated from regulators and the public as the Sellafield Limited Site groundwater characterization activities progress.

Technologies and software applications similar to those in use by the UGTA Sub-Project to determine the movement of groundwater contamination resulting from historic underground nuclear testing on the NTS are required for the groundwater modeling activities for the Sellafield Limited Site. The visiting scientists were also seeking to become more familiar with the recent database management advances engaged by the UGTA Sub-Project, as similar practices may be useful for handling extremely large data sets for Sellafield.

Drs. Teasdale and Cooper are involved in the remediation of groundwater contamination and the associated database management for the Sellafield Limited Site, a nuclear reprocessing and waste storage facility encompassing approximately 4 square kilometers on the west coast of Great Britain. The Sellafield Limited Site has been instrumental in the United Kingdom's nuclear industry for more than 50 years. Currently, a wide range of decommissioning and clean-up activities are underway at Sellafield.

Did You Know?

Sellafield was home to Calder Hall, the world's first commercial nuclear power station. Calder Hall was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1956, and ceased operations in 2003.

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