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### CH2M HILL PLATEAU REMEDIATION COMPANY EXPANDS GROUNDWATER CLEANUP NEAR COLUMBIA RIVER

*Accelerated Efforts Expanding Hanford Site's Ability to Treat Contaminated Groundwater*

RICHLAND, WASH. – AUGUST 6, 2009 - [U. S. Department of Energy](#) (DOE) and contractor [CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company](#) (CH2M HILL) are accelerating groundwater cleanup efforts at Hanford's 100 Area.

Hanford's 100 Area stretches 16,600 acres along the Columbia River and once housed nine plutonium production reactors. The Project's environmental cleanup goals include removing contaminated soil and treating groundwater to remove contaminants. The contaminant considered of greatest concern in 100 Area groundwater is hexavalent chromium.

"Groundwater cleanup is a top priority at Hanford for CH2M HILL and the Department of Energy," said Dyan Foss, CH2M HILL Vice President of Soil and Groundwater Management. "In the 100 Area and across the Site, we're working to expand current treatment systems and build new ones to increase pumping capacity and maximize groundwater treatment. We're also focusing on testing new treatment methods to increase the amount of groundwater we're treating."

Recently in the 100 Area, CH2M HILL completed upgrades and expansions of the K Area groundwater treatment system, including adding an additional treatment facility. The K Area spans 535 acres and includes the K East and K West reactors, adjacent fuel storage basins, and several facilities and waste sites that supported reactor operations from the 1950s to the 1970s. Operation of the newest groundwater treatment system began in May, and within one month, the overall treatment capacity for the K Area Project reached over 35 million gallons per month – three times its previous capability.

As of June 2009, over 206 million gallons of water have been treated, removing more than 49 kilograms of hexavalent chromium from Hanford's K Area.

"The K Area treatment systems are important to containing chromium and eventually restoring the groundwater to meet drinking water levels," said Dave Brockman, Manager of DOE's Richland Operations Office. "These actions also support our goals to contain complete cleanup of the Columbia River Corridor by 2015, with final treatment systems for groundwater in place."

CH2M HILL is expanding other treatment facilities in the 100 Area including H Area, near Hanford's "H" Reactor. In addition, designs for upgrading the D Area groundwater

treatment system, near “D” and “DR” reactors are under way with construction expected to start early 2010.

During the Cold War, billions of gallons of liquids contaminated with chemicals and radioactive elements were discharged from plutonium production facilities to several soil disposal sites across the Hanford Site.

Sodium dichromate, a chemical used as a corrosion inhibitor, was added to the river water used to cool Hanford’s older nuclear reactors while they were operating. Over time, the soil and groundwater became contaminated with chromium because of leaks in the dichromate transfer systems and piping and because cooling water treated with dichromate was periodically discharged to the soil near the K Reactors.

Once all systems along the River are operational, CH2M HILL expects the 100 Area Groundwater Treatment Systems to pump and treat at a rate of more than 90 million gallons per month- over three times the capacity available along the River before the treatment system expansions began.

*Headquartered near Denver, Colo., employee-owned CH2M HILL is a global leader in engineering, procurement, construction, management and operations for government, civil, industrial and energy clients. With \$6.4 billion in revenue and more than 25,000 employees, CH2M HILL is an industry-leading program management, construction management and design firm, as ranked by Engineering News-Record (2008). The firm’s work is concentrated in the areas of energy, water, transportation, environmental, nuclear and industrial facilities. The firm has long been recognized as a most-admired company and leading employer, including being named by FORTUNE as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For and one of America’s Most Admired Companies (2008). Visit [www.ch2mhill.com](http://www.ch2mhill.com).*

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