



September 26, 2011 Nevada Site Office Environmental Management

# EM NEWS FLASH

## NNSS Wraps Up RA Work with a List of Major Achievements!

As [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) activities wind down, the U.S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office is reporting numerous successes on the Recovery Act front. Key accomplishments include the demolition of 50,000 square feet of facilities, the on-site disposal of 222,835 cubic feet of Recovery Act-related waste, and a number of major site closures.\*

In 2009 and 2010, the [Nevada Site Office](#) was granted nearly \$54 million in Recovery Act funding to accelerate cleanup and enhance waste management operations at the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS, formerly the Nevada Test Site) and the Tonopah Test Range, north of the NNSS. Originally-planned Recovery Act activities have been completed, with all related performance metrics achieved **ahead of schedule**. These activities include:

- demolition of several structures located at the Test Cell C facility;
- full demolition of the Pluto and Reactor Maintenance, Assembly, and Disassembly facilities;
- drilling of two groundwater characterization wells (each approximately 3,400 ft. deep) in Pahute Mesa;
- clean closure\*\* of seven locations at the Tonopah Test Range by removing buried ordnance and depleted uranium; and
- characterization of 17 historic atmospheric test locations at the NNSS.

Efficiencies in scheduling and planning allowed for the addition of \$5 million in Recovery Act work.

This “buy back” funding allowed crews to perform these additional activities:

- closure of the above 17 historic atmospheric test locations and contaminated railroad tracks;
- characterization and closure of an additional historic atmospheric test location;
- completion of *Streamlined Approach for Environmental Restoration* (SAFER) plans for two historic atmospheric test locations (the SAFER approach is applied at sites where extensive knowledge exists regarding the nature and extent of contamination);
- removal of depleted uranium and ordnance at an additional Tonopah Test Range site, allowing for the elimination of use restrictions;

- completion of additional groundwater modeling at Pahute Mesa; and
- construction of drilling pads for two planned groundwater wells.

Nevada Site Office personnel are proud to conclude their Recovery Act activities on such a successful note, according to Deputy Federal Project Director, Robert Boehlecke. “We are very pleased with the quality and efficient pace of our Recovery Act work,” said Boehlecke. “The workers performed extremely well, safely, and efficiently... allowing us to make the progress that will ultimately save costs associated with long-term operations, maintenance, and infrastructure.”

## Historic Nuclear Test Areas Closed!

A significant amount of Recovery Act funding has gone into characterizing or closing a number of historic nuclear test locations at the NNSS. The NNSS remains one of the largest restricted access areas in the United States.

In August 2011, the Nevada Site Office completed closure activities at *Danny Boy*, which was one of 68 underground tests conducted at the NNSS from 1961-62. Workers (shown on the right) recorded radiological measurements from the rubble surrounding the *Danny Boy* crater in July 2010.



Closure activities at *Danny Boy*, and other key historic NNSS test locations like *Sedan*, *Schooner*, and *Buggy*, represent a significant achievement for both the Nevada Site Office and the DOE Complex as a whole.

\* **Closure** is a formal process involving the remediation of a site where the implementation of use restrictions and long-term institutional controls are necessary.

\*\***Clean Closure** is the status applied to sites where cleanup has been achieved and use restrictions are not required.

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