



News from

Fluor Hanford

October 13, 2003

CONTACT:
Geoff Tyree (509) 372-1145
Geoffrey_t_tyree@rl.gov

News Release

Fluor Hanford awards contract for system to remove sludge from the K-West Basin

Richland, Wash.— Fluor Hanford has awarded a contract valued at approximately \$5 million to a contract team led by BNFL Inc. to design and fabricate equipment that Fluor will install and operate to retrieve approximately seven cubic meters of radioactive spent fuel sludge from the K-West Basin at Hanford.

“We’re making progress on our effort to remove radioactive sludge from Hanford’s K Basins,” said Fluor Hanford President and Chief Executive Officer Dave Van Leuven. “This contract award is another significant step in addressing this complex environmental challenge and reducing the risk posed by this material.”

The K-West Basin is one of two large, indoor water-filled pools near the Columbia River that once held 2100 metric tons of spent fuel. Working with the Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office, Fluor Hanford has moved approximately 1,450 metric tons of spent fuel out of those basins to date. Crews are also preparing to remove approximately 50 cubic meters of sludge from both basins for interim storage in a former processing facility, known as T Plant.

“In addition to letting this important contract, we are working with our technology partner, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, to evaluate alternate methods for removing the sludge from the basins and accelerating its ultimate disposal,” said Kent Smith, Fluor Hanford’s Director of the Sludge Retrieval and Disposition Project.

(more)

K-West contract awarded, page 2 of 2

Approximately seven cubic meters of sludge is in the K-West Basin, and approximately 43 cubic meters of sludge are in the K-East Basin, which contains fuel that is more highly corroded. Fluor has already installed a system for removing sludge in the K-East Basin and is making final preparations to demonstrate operation of that system in the coming weeks.

Under the contract awarded today, BNFL will be expected to design, fabricate, and deliver a sludge removal and packaging system for the K-West Basin. Fluor Hanford will install and operate the system. While there is less sludge in the K-West Basin, the uranium concentration is higher, presenting additional process and safety challenges.

BNFL will design a system to retrieve the K-West sludge into containers that will be specially designed to mitigate the expected buildup of heat and hydrogen. The containers will be sized to allow Fluor Hanford to move the containers with the same equipment workers are currently using to remove spent fuel from the Basins.

The BNFL Inc. contract team includes BNFL's wholly owned subsidiaries BNFL Fuel Solutions, PN Services, and Fauske & Associates, as well as the local small business expertise of LATA and Vista Engineering Technologies.

###