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News Release

HANFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT CONDUCTING PRESCRIBED BURNING

RICHLAND, Wash. – March 17, 2005 – The Hanford Fire Department, in coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WDOT) and the Department of Energy, has begun annual prescribed burning activities. Controlled burns will be conducted in the WDOT easements along State Route 24 from the Vernita Bridge to 3.5 miles west of Hanford's Yakima Barricade, as well as along State Route 240 from the intersection with State Route 24 to Milepost 20. Prescribed burning activities will also take place on the Hanford Site where large numbers of tumbleweeds have accumulated.

The controlled burns are intended to remove large areas of volatile dried cheat grass and pockets of weed debris and tumbleweeds. The result is less nuisance vegetation along Hanford Site boundaries and better fire-management zones.

Burning will be scheduled on a day-to-day basis, weather permitting. Prior to each day's burn, fire line perimeters will be inspected for integrity and the day's burn plan will be reviewed. The burns are being conducted in small sections.

WDOT flagging crews will provide traffic control along the state highways. In addition, the Hanford Fire Department is using multiple ground personnel, two brush trucks, and a water tender to manage these activities.

(more)

With the potential for another extreme wildland-fire season, Hanford Site employees and visitors are reminded to always call 911 (or 373-3800 if using a cellular phone) to report any smoke or fire conditions.

A prime contractor to the Department of Energy since 1996, Fluor Hanford has approximately 4,000 employees and manages several major activities at the Hanford Site, including dismantling former nuclear processing facilities, cleaning up the site's contaminated groundwater, retrieving and processing transuranic waste for off-site shipment, maintaining the site's infrastructure, and operating the Volpentest HAMMER Training & Education Center.

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