



Release date: November 30, 2000

For more information contact: Erik Olds

Phone: (509) 372-8656

Energy Department Announces Preferred Alternative for Nuclear Infrastructure

We've had an incredible year of intense work and progress at the Spent Nuclear Fuel Project at Hanford. With the installation and testing of a state-of-the-art fuel moving system, we are soundly positioned to embark on a process that will see 2,100 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel moved safely away from the Columbia River.

While we are poised to move forward, we must first make certain that both the system and our workforce are fully prepared for the task ahead. Our goal is not simply to move a single container of spent fuel, but to begin a sustainable and consistent process for moving all of the spent fuel out of the K-West and K-East Basins.

The Department of Energy's (DOE) Operational Readiness Review, the final step in this rigorous preparation process, is nearly complete and we are only days away from moving the first container of spent fuel out of the K-West Basin.

A lot of people - both contractor and DOE - have worked long and hard to get us to this point. We appreciate the tireless dedication of our project employees, the detailed reviews conducted by the DOE and Fluor readiness review teams, and we look forward to moving the first spent fuel in the very near future.

###

RL 01-020

Historical Note: The U.S. Department of Energy's Richland Operations Office manages the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington State. Hanford was established during World War II as part of the top secret Manhattan Project to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. Weapons material production was halted in the late 1980s. The Hanford Site is now engaged in the world's largest cleanup effort to deal with the legacy of radioactive and hazardous wastes that resulted from the plutonium production era. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington Department of Ecology regulate Hanford's cleanup program under a long-term compliance contract called the Tri-Party Agreement. This agreement sets the framework and timelines on the cleanup work so that Hanford meets environmental standards. Hanford cleanup is focused on three outcomes: restoring the Columbia

River Corridor for other uses, transitioning the Central Plateau to long term waste treatment and storage, and preparing for the future.

[\[Hanford Home Page\]](#) [\[Press Index\]](#)

For questions or comments about this page, please send email to theodore_e_erik_olds@rl.gov