

Fifth report released on groundwater project

The Department of Energy Richland Operations Office and its Environmental Restoration Contractor, Bechtel Hanford, have released their fifth semiannual report to Congress on Hanford's Groundwater/Vadose Zone Integration Project.

The report provides an overview of the Integration Project's progress from October 2000 through this past March to protect the Columbia River from radiological and chemical constituents in Hanford's groundwater and the area above it called the vadose zone.

Two feature articles are included in the report. One article describes projects aimed at fostering partnerships in science and technology. The other details progress in assembling the inventory estimates for 10 Hanford Site radiological and chemical constituents and will be used for the initial System Assessment capability.

The Integration Project was initiated in 1997 to provide a coordinated site-wide focus on the migration of radioactive and chemical constituents toward the Columbia River. Various experts and stakeholders are involved in the project, bringing a vast range of expertise, opinions and concerns to bear on the issue. Independent review of the project's work is provided by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences and an eight-member panel of nationally recognized experts from academia and private industry.

Oregon Senator Ron Wyden requested a semiannual report about the Integration Project's progress to help him and other members of Congress stay abreast of the effort. Although directed to Congress, the report also provides an update for DOE decision-makers, Hanford stakeholders, regulators, tribal nations and the State of Oregon.

The report can be found on the Groundwater/Vadose Zone Integration Project's Internet site at www.bhi-erc.com/projects/vadose/docs/sareport.htm. Printed copies may be obtained by contacting Karen Strickland of BHI at 372-9236. ♦