

REACH

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New equipment will speed Spent Nuclear Fuel Project

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Equipment to speed removal of irradiated reactor fuel from the K West Basin arrived at the Hanford Site during the past two weeks as a part of initiatives to meet or improve Spent Nuclear Fuel Project commitments. The fast-track improvements, designed and approved just this spring, are a few of the many project changes planned for the movement of K Basins fuel away from the Columbia River shore. ("Major changes occurring in Fluor Hanford Spent Nuclear Fuel Project," *Hanford Reach*, April 16.)

Two new process tables, where fuel can be packed manually into stainless steel baskets for loading into Multi-Canister Overpacks, were built by Hiline Engineering and Fabrication in Richland. The tables will process the fuel after it has been washed in the Primary Cleaning Machine, part of the SNF Project's underwater Fuel Retrieval System. The two new tables will handle fuel that is good or relatively intact, while more damaged fuel will be handled by automated equipment servicing the existing table.

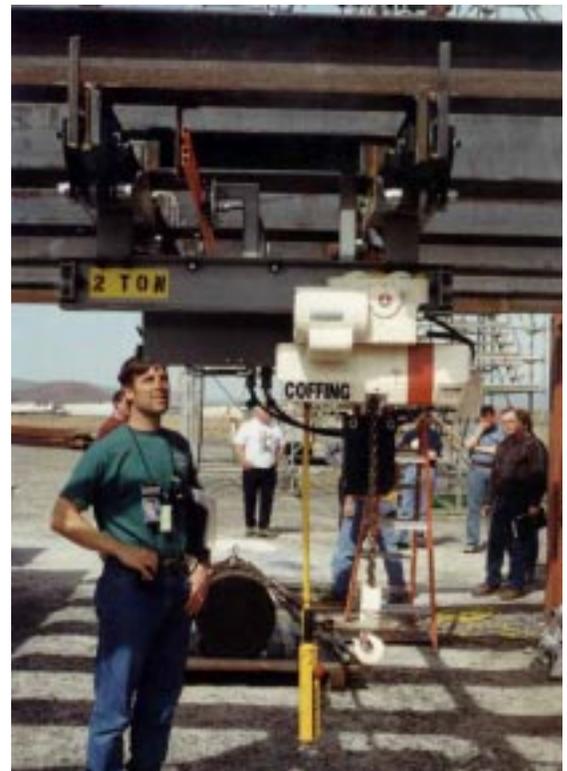
SNF Project moves 10th load of fuel

Ten Multi-Canister Overpacks, each loaded with nearly 300 fuel assemblies, have been moved out of the K West Basin since fuel movement began in December. The 10 fuel loads represent nearly 50 metric tons of irradiated uranium, and contain about 1.5 million curies of radioactivity.

Hiline Engineering and Fabrication also fabricated a new transfer crane for loading Multi-Canister Overpack fuel baskets, plus other basket-handling tools. This equipment will enable SNF Project operators to move baskets from any of the fuel processing tables to multiple underwater locations, optimizing operator efficiency during fuel-loading activities.

Manual fuel-handling tools built by Peters Machine and Welding of Beach Island, S.C., will move fuel through processing steps on the new process tables.

Inspection, installation and testing of the new equipment is ongoing, with in-basin testing and training to occur during June and July. All of the new equipment is scheduled to begin operating after the SNF Project's next maintenance outage in July. ♦



Brian Koons, left, project lead engineer for the K West Basin processing enhancement equipment, inspects a new transfer crane at the vendor's shop as acceptance inspector Greg Chinery looks on at right.