Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility

Fact Sheet – May 2021

The Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility consists of eight cells and two super cells capable of receiving over 20 million tons of cleanup waste from across the Hanford Site.

The U.S. Department of Energy and contractor Central Plateau Cleanup Company are safely and compliantly operating the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) at the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state.

Background

The ERDF is a large, engineered landfill in the center of the Hanford Site used for the disposal of low-level radioactive, hazardous, and mixed wastes generated from Hanford cleanup activities. The ERDF is composed of eight disposal cells, two supercells (size of two disposal cells each), and a double-lined system protecting the environment from the contents inside the cells.

Mission

The ERDF is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act*. The facility is designed to keep the environment safe by isolating waste and leachate (rain and dust suppression water in contact with the waste) from the environment. On average, the ERDF receives 10,000 to 15,000 tons of waste each month. The ERDF allows cleanup to progress across the 580-square mile Hanford Site by providing a safe and compliant place to dispose of contaminated items.

Progress

- Over 18 million tons of waste have been disposed of at the ERDF
- Drivers picking up waste and delivering it to the ERDF have logged nearly 30 million miles since the facility began accepting waste

Future

The ERDF is designed to be expanded as needed, and will vertically expand as it continues to accept Hanford Site waste. Vertical expansion is a safe, cost-effective method to increase capacity; it allows the ERDF to continue full operations, avoiding potential cleanup delays across the Hanford Site. A permanent cap will ultimately cover the entire facility. Meanwhile, a temporary cap is placed over the cells as they are filled and each operations lift is compacted after disposal.

Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility containers are weighed, characterized and staged for disposal.

Workers safely dispose of waste at the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

Efficiency

The onsite landfill keeps Hanford waste on the Central Plateau of the Hanford Site and away from the Columbia River, major roads and general public. It also avoids costs associated with offsite transportation and disposal. ERDF disposal costs are significantly below those of other disposal facilities, including municipal landfills.

The ERDF can be viewed using the self-guided Hanford Virtual Tour.