OLEAN TIMES HERALD

May 6, 2022

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Photo submitted

Rick Miller

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 18 | May 10, 2022

Plans for EM Progress Detailed in New Budget Document

A crew at the Y-12 National Security Complex at Oak Ridge conducts deactivation work inside Alpha-2, a former enrichment facility that dates back to the Manhattan Project. EM's budget request for fiscal year 2023 supports the transition to a greater focus on the cleanup of Alpha-2 and other high risk excess facilities at Y-12 and Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

EM's budget request for fiscal year 2023 will support advancements across the program complex, including progress on treating tank waste, skyline-changing building demolition, and initiatives to bolster cybersecurity, workforce development and outreach to communities, according to a newly released document.

The program's plans for continued progress in environmental cleanup are discussed in a detailed accounting that was provided to Congress last week. DOE's 490-page "congressional justification" book for EM provides the most in-depth information about the program's plans for the next fiscal year.

"The FY 2023 investment of $7,643,202,000 in discretionary budget authority will fund activities to maintain a safe and secure posture in the EM complex, while maximizing cleanup activities," according to the document. "EM is ready to effectively and efficiently utilize the resources the request provides to make significant progress."

Among highlights:

- At the Hanford Site, the budget request is focused on work to begin hot commissioning and ramp up the capability of the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste Program. It also supports safe operations, including a robust tank integrity program at the site's tank farms to protect workers, the public and the environment, and meet regulatory commitments.
- At the Idaho National Laboratory Site, the request continues operation of the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit to begin treating sodium-bearing tank waste, and supports spent nuclear fuel activities such as continued progress to meet a state milestone of moving all spent nuclear fuel out of wet storage by 2023.
- At Oak Ridge, the budget request supports the transition to a greater focus on the cleanup of high risk excess facilities at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex, following successful deactivation and decommissioning activities at the East Tennessee Technology Park.
- At the Portsmouth Site, the request will support continued construction at the On-Site Waste Disposal Facility; completion of demolition of the X-326 process building; initiation of pre-demolition of the X-333 process building; and initiation of deactivation of the X-330 process building.
- At the West Valley Demonstration Project, the budget request continues to support the ongoing demolition of the Main Plant Process Building, the highest hazard facility remaining on the site.

The budget request also provides a significant focus on cybersecurity activities, and on initiatives that make investments and advancements in equity to address the concerns of underserved communities.

"To advance cleanup, EM will utilize science-based approaches; apply best practices and lessons learned; identify, develop, and deploy practical technological solutions derived from scientific research; and look for innovative and sustainable practices that make cleanup safer, more efficient, and more cost-effective," according to the document.

Full details of the DOE budget request for EM are available here.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 18 | May 10, 2022

West Valley, Seneca Nation Honor Mother Earth With Sunrise Ceremony, Walk

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. *– EM's West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) marked Earth Day this year by joining the Cattaraugus Creek Water Walkerz and Onondowaga' Water Protectors to pay tribute to Mother Earth and bring awareness to the importance of protecting the Cattaraugus Creek and Lake Erie watershed for future generations. Members of the Seneca Nation and local community and others gathered for a sunrise ceremony at WVDP. As the sun rose, Maria Maybee, Seneca Nation tribal member and event coordinator, asked everyone to form a circle as a symbol of togetherness, and they shared prayers to thank Mother Earth for all she provides. Participants then walked several miles, ending on the Seneca Territory. A cleanup of Cattaraugus Creek took place the following day. "We enjoy the many offerings Mother Earth provides, from the water we drink, the fish, deer, and vegetables we eat. It is important that we protect these natural resources from harm, especially for future generations so they, too, can benefit from these offerings. Water is life," Maybee said. Pictured are participants in the sunrise ceremony.*

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 18 | May 10, 2022

Emergency Services Organizations Receive $90,000 in Donations From West Valley

West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) representatives recently presented checks to three local emergency services organizations for providing services to the WVDP site. From left are Paul Bembia, director of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority; Jennifer Dundas, EM WVDP safety and site programs leader; Bryan Bower, EM WVDP director; Eric Boberg, chairman of the West Valley Fire District #1 Board of Fire Commissioners; Derrick Miller, West Valley Fire District #1 commissioner; John Rendall, CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) president and general manager; Dave Schuman, CHBWV safeguards and security manager; and Kevin Murray, CHBWV senior emergency management specialist.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – EM and cleanup contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) joined the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to give $90,000 in donations to Mercy Flight, West Valley Fire District #1 and Bertrand Chaffee Hospital on behalf of the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP).

The three organizations serve as valuable resources for WVDP employees and the surrounding community. The fire district, which handles fire and emergency services in the event of an incident, received $80,000. The hospital, which provides medical support, and Mercy Flight, which maintains air ambulance service, received $5,000 apiece.

“We understand the importance and benefit to our workforce for having trained emergency responders supporting the project,” said Jennifer Dundas, EM WVDP safety and site programs leader. “We appreciate their continued commitment and effort to protect the health and safety of our workers and the community. All three organizations ensure readiness at a moment’s notice, which makes a difference in the outcome of any emergency related situation.”

Paul Bembia, program director at NYSERDA, commended the organizations for their assistance. EM and CHBWV conduct cleanup at the site in cooperation with NYSERDA.

“The men and women who work and volunteer for these organizations play a vital role in providing care in emergency situations,” Bembia said. “Their partnership speaks volumes to their dedication and commitment to the site, but also to the community they serve. We thank them for their service.”

CHBWV President and General Manager John Rendall noted that the three emergency services organizations provide an extra level of care for all employees.

“Our employees are fortunate to have these dedicated organizations available should the need arise,” Rendall said.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

MAY 12 2022
COMMUNITY SOURCE CATTARAUGUS COUNTY
CATTARAUGUS • CONEWANGO • EAST OTTO • EAST RANDOLPH • ELLICOTTVILLE • FRANKLINVILLE • GREAT VALLEY • KILLBUCK
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[The following is on the Salamanca Press website, but not in the 05-12-2022 print edition:

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Photo submitted

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Vol. 154 - Issue 12 | Published Each Thursday by Neighbor-to-Neighbor News Inc. | May 12, 2022

Seneca Nation begins their Annual Earth Day Event at WVDP

Photo provided

Participants from the Seneca Nation and local community gather at the WVDP for a sunrise ceremony before beginning their Earth Day activities.

The Cattaraugus Creek Water Walkers and Onondowaga' Water Protectors began this year's Earth Day event at the West Valley Demonstration Project. This annual Earth Day event pays tribute to Mother Earth and brings attention to the importance of protecting the Cattaraugus Creek and Lake Erie watershed for future generations. The WVDP is an appropriate starting point due to its proximity to the Nation Territory and ongoing cleanup efforts to reduce environmental risks.

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Springville/Ellicottville Pennysaver & News
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Energy Communities Alliance

ECA Update

5/16/2022

GAO report: Over $310 billion to go - highlighting major EM projects and operations

Cleanup to be completed around 2081

ECA Staff

On May 4, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released an eye-opening report quoting over **$310 billion** as the total cost of completing cleanup at the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management's (EM) major sites. Of this total, $180.5 billion is expected for cleanup completion at the Hanford Site alone. The report reminds us of the challenges ahead and how much work still needs to be completed at the sites in the near term and long-term.

The report only covers known cleanup issues and does not address or identify areas/sites that EM is still characterizing, nor does it address the unknown of waste disposal. There is currently no plan for a permanent repository at Yucca Mountain or for interim storage of Defense high-level waste in EM's estimates. Many of the largest sites cannot be cleaned up without a disposition pathway for high-level waste, indicating that the total cleanup figure and the estimated time frames will likely be even higher. The report also highlights that the current completion schedule for all EM work will last until 2081 – nearly 60 years from now – assuming that the funding is available.

The GAO report, titled "Environmental Cleanup: Status of Major DOE Projects and Operations," reviews and summarizes the status and performance of EM's largest projects and operations.

Eleven EM Sites Have an Ongoing Operations Activity with a Lifecycle Cost of at Least $1 Billion

According to EM officials, as of September 2021, EM was managing 76 operations activities at its then-16 sites. GAO found that there are 11 EM sites that have an ongoing operations activity with a life-cycle cost of at least $1 billion each, and selected for detailed review the operations activity with the highest life-cycle cost at each of these 11 sites. The currently known life-cycle costs for these 11 operations activities range from **$1 billion** (Moab) to **$180.5 billion** (Hanford), according to EM officials.

EM currently manages DOE's radioactive and hazardous waste cleanup program across 15 active sites, but the report uses data reflecting 16 sites including Brookhaven National Laboratory, where work was completed earlier this year.

EM divides its cleanup work into capital asset projects – which have a defined start and end point and can include the construction of new facilities for treating and disposing of waste – and operations activities, which include reoccurring facility or environmental operations, as well as activities that are project-like, with defined start and end dates.

GAO found that most projects were expected to be completed within initial cost and schedule estimates. However, officials at several projects that experienced cost overruns and schedule delays cited staffing shortages as a contributing factor. In addition, the life-cycle estimates for cleanup operations were frequently out of date, and DOE was in the process of implementing a new policy to require annual updated estimates.

The report also provides information on each EM site and summaries of the selected EM projects and operations activities at the sites on which the report was based.

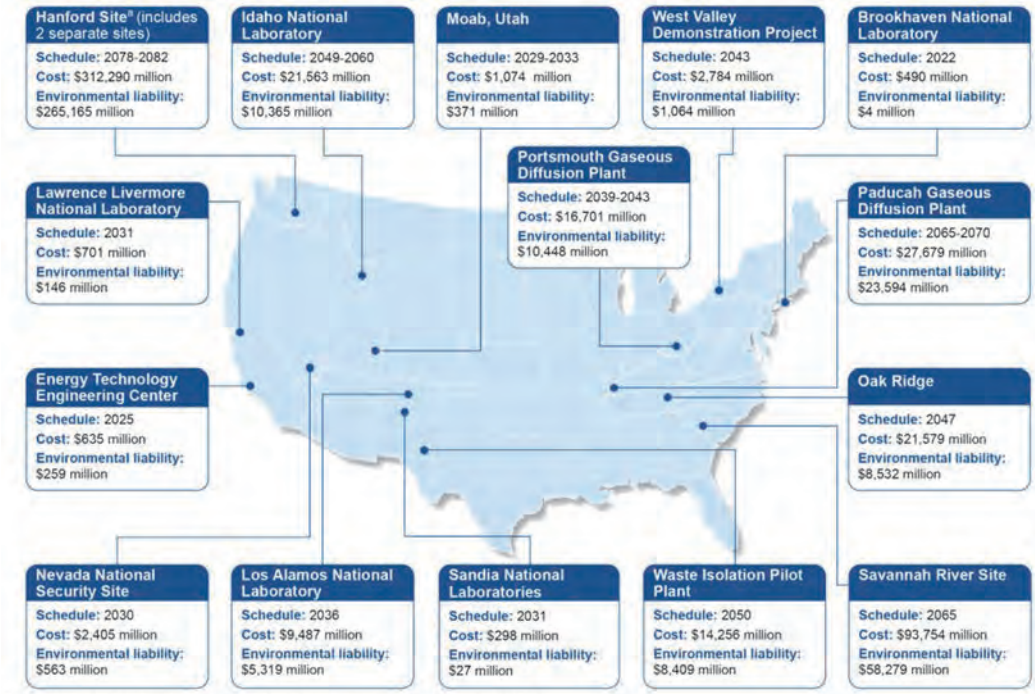
Table 2: Office of Environmental Management (EM) Nuclear Cleanup Sites with an Operations Activity with an Estimated Cost over $1 Billion

EM Site	Name of Operations Activity	Life-cycle cost estimate as of December 2021 (in billions of dollars)
Hanford Site: Office of River Protection	Radioactive Liquid Tank Waste Stabilization and Disposition	180.5
Hanford Site: Richland Operations Office	Hanford Central Plateau	22.9
Idaho National Laboratory	Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center Infrastructure	2.2
Los Alamos National Laboratory	Los Alamos Soil and Water Remediation	3.8
Moab Site	Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Project	0.93
Oak Ridge Reservation	Nuclear Facility Deactivation and Decommissioning-Y-12	3.08
Paducah Site	Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Deactivation and Decommissioning	35
Portsmouth Site	Nuclear Facility Deactivation and Decommissioning	12.2
Savannah River Site	Radioactive Liquid Waste Stabilization and Disposition	43.3
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	Waste Disposal Facility Operations	2.94
West Valley Site	West Valley Nuclear Facility Deactivation and Decommissioning	2.8

EM's Active Cleanup Sites

EM has estimated the life-cycle cost and schedule for completing the cleanup work at each of its 15 active cleanup sites, which, according to EM officials, includes the estimated cost of future cleanup and costs already incurred. EM also annually updates the estimated cost for future cleanup as part of calculating DOE's environmental liability.

The image below shows the cleanup costs and activities at EM's active cleanup sites (and Brookhaven National Laboratory).



Sources: GAO analysis of Department of Energy information; Map Resources (map). | GAO-22-104662

EM's 15 Active Capital Asset Projects

According to EM data, as of December 2020, EM was actively managing 23 capital asset projects. Of these 23 projects, 15 had reached at least the critical decision 1 milestone (approved alternative selection and cost range) and had an estimated total project cost of $100 million or greater, with total project costs ranging from $127 million to $16.8 billion. Most of these 15 projects involved ongoing cleanup work in one of three areas: treatment and disposal of radioactive liquid waste, demolition of excess facilities, or waste disposal.

Table 1: Office of Environmental Management (EM) Capital Asset Projects with Estimated Costs of at Least $100 million, by EM Site

EM site	Capital asset projects	Project cost estimate as of December 2021 (costs in millions of dollars)
Hanford Site: Office of River Protection	Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant(WTP)/WTP LBL Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste	16,813[a]
Hanford Site: Office of River Protection	Tank-Side Cesium Removal System	164
Hanford Site: Richland Operations Office	Plutonium Finishing Plant	209
Oak Ridge Reservation	Sludge Processing Facility Buildouts	127-171[b]
Oak Ridge Reservation	On-Site Waste Disposal Facility	175-375[b]
Oak Ridge Reservation	Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility	224
Portsmouth Site	X-326 Process Building Demolition Project	160
Portsmouth Site	On-Site Waste Disposal Facility (CAP-1)	275
Portsmouth Site	On-Site Waste Disposal Facility (CAP-2)	373
Savannah River Site	Saltstone Disposal Unit 7	127
Savannah River Site	Saltstone Disposal Units 8 and 9	280
Savannah River Site	Saltstone Disposal Units 10 through 12	496
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	Safety Significant Confinement Ventilation System	288
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	Utility Shaft	197
West Valley Site	Main Plant Processing Building	206

Most Capital Asset Projects are Performing within Baseline Estimates, but EM Faces Challenges Measuring Operations Activities' Performance

Based on the review of EM's 15 largest capital asset projects and 11 selected operations activities, GAO made the following observations:

Observation 1: *Nine of EM's largest capital asset projects were completed or are expected to be completed within their initial baseline cost and schedule estimates.*

Of the 15 EM capital asset projects reviewed, 13 had progressed far enough to have established cost and schedule baselines, and nine are expected to be completed within those baselines. However, the other four are expected to exceed estimates.

Of the four projects that are not expected to be completed within their baselines, the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) project and the Plutonium Finishing Plant project have completed the baseline change proposal process, and EM has approved updated cost and schedule estimates for these two projects.

EM officials stated that two projects at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) —the Safety Significant Confinement Ventilation System (SSCVS) and the Utility Shaft—will not be completed within their baselines, and baseline change proposals are under review for both projects.

Table 3: Performance of 13 Office of Environmental Management's Capital Asset Project's Performance against Cost and Schedule Baselines

Site	Project Title	Completed or expected to be completed within original baselines
Hanford Site: Office of River Protection	Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant/WTP LBL Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste	No
Hanford Site: Office of River Protection	Tank-Side Cesium Removal System	Yes
Hanford Site: Richland Operations Office	Plutonium Finishing Plant	No
Oak Ridge Reservation	Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility	Yes
Portsmouth Site	X-326 Process Building Demolition Project	Yes
Portsmouth Site	On-Site Waste Disposal Facility (CAP-1)	Yes
Portsmouth Site	On-Site Waste Disposal Facility (CAP-2)	Yes
Savannah River Site	Saltstone Disposal Unit 7	Yes[a]
Savannah River Site	Saltstone Disposal Units 8 and 9	Yes
Savannah River Site	Saltstone Disposal Units 10 through 12	Yes
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	Safety Significant Confinement Ventilation System	No
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	Utility Shaft	No
West Valley Site	Main Plant Processing Building	Yes

Legend: WTP LBL= the Low Activity Waste Facility, the Balance of Facilities, and the Analytical Laboratory.

Observation 2: *EM did not have sufficient staffing capacity to properly manage three capital asset projects, two of which are expected to overrun their cost and schedule baselines.*

Three capital asset projects—two at WIPP and one at the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) —experienced issues during either their design or construction phases that were, in part, due to the capacity of federal and contractor staff, according to EM officials.

GAO has previously reported that the Carlsbad Field Office, which oversees WIPP, had experienced staffing shortages for multiple years, and an EM document cited this problem as a factor contributing to problems with the SSCVS project. The flaws in the Utility Shaft project were also attributed to a limited number of staff with sufficient experience at the Carlsbad Field Office.

The Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility project at ORR encountered bedrock and soils problems during construction of the foundations of the project's two main buildings. EM officials said that the project staff did not have the necessary technical expertise to address these problems, so outside contractors were brought in with the necessary technical experience.

Observation 3: *EM has not completed updates to life-cycle estimates for operations activities, and prior data have limitations, which impacts EM's ability to accurately measure operations activities' performance.*

A recent EM protocol requires sites to update their life-cycle estimates for operations activities annually as part of a broader process for maintaining the overall life-cycle cost and schedule estimates for completing cleanup at each site. Officials at 10 of the 11 sites reviewed told GAO that they were in the process of updating their cost and schedule estimates for their operations activities.

The EM sites included in the report had not yet completed new estimates using the process established in the new protocol. Several of the estimates that GAO collected had not been updated in several years, though there have been

significant changes to the conditions at certain sites. For example, the estimate for the operations activity at WIPP has not been updated since 2013 and EM officials stated that the estimate does not take into account how operations at the site have changed following a radiological release in 2014.

In 2019, GAO reported that the tools EM uses to measure contractors' performance on operations activities do not provide a clear picture of performance for EM leadership, Congress, and other stakeholders. EM's ability to have the information EM needs to assess the performance of cleanup work managed as operations activities will depend, in part, on whether updates to the cost and schedule estimates for all operations activities are completed in accordance with EM's protocol.

Observation 4: *EM officials at multiple sites identified examples of ways in which current and future EM cleanup funding could affect cleanup costs.*

Examples of scenarios in which funding increases or shortfalls could have significant impacts on the costs for completing cleanup work were given for Hanford, Portsmouth, ORR, and Idaho National Laboratory (INL).

At Hanford, EM officials stated that annual appropriations are not sufficient to meet certain legal requirements for high-level waste treatment. Various analyses indicate that achieving certain milestones for the high-level waste and pretreatment facilities are improbable given the imbalance of reasonably anticipated congressional appropriations and the current anticipated funding requirements to complete the WTP project. EM officials also said that the Hanford Lifecycle Scope, Schedule and Cost Report forecasts a significant increase in life-cycle cost and schedule for completing the cleanup of the entire Hanford Site.

EM officials at the Portsmouth Site stated that funding to support the timely transition of experienced contractors from one decontamination or demolition project to the next is not always available when work on one project is completed. As a result, some of the experienced workforce has to be demobilized and is potentially lost to other work. In this case, EM will likely incur additional costs to transition a contractor to other projects once funds become available.

EM officials at both ORR and INL stated that the life-cycle cost and schedule estimates for site operations activities are directly dependent on the schedule for completing the cleanup activities they are supporting. For example, if additional funding were prioritized for completing deactivation and decommissioning of excess facilities at ORR, the cost for that work would likely decrease, as the schedule could be accelerated. This would also likely reduce the life-cycle cost for the operations activity with the highest estimated cost because EM would likely shorten the period it had to maintain surveillance and maintenance activities, according to EM officials.

Observation 5: *The extent of cost increases for EM capital asset projects and operations activities due to COVID-19 are not fully known.*

According to EM officials at multiple sites, contractors have tracked the costs incurred from implementing safety measures to address COVID-19, and EM had reimbursed contractors for some of these costs. EM officials interviewed at several sites told GAO that EM incurred other costs as a result of COVID-19, such as costs from new sanitization programs, installing new workspaces for social distancing, and higher commodity prices, and that the full extent of these other costs is not yet known. Additionally, a COVID-19 reemergence leading to a return to minimum on-site work is possible.

ECA encourages all members to review the full report. Additional information from the report, including site-specific details, will also soon be available in a forthcoming cleanup guide resource on the ECA webpage.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 19 | May 17, 2022

West Valley Supports Outdoor Environmental Competition for High School Students

The 2022 Cattaraugus County Envirothon champions hail from the Allegany-Limestone Central School District in New York state. Pictured, back row, from left, are Dan Waugaman, team advisor; Sughosh Kondur; Jesse Decker; and Megan Boberg with Cattaraugus County Soil and Water Conservation District; front row, from left, are Connor Ellison; Xavier Hilmey; and Andrew Opperman.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – The EM West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) cleanup contractor helped sponsor a recent outdoor competition that tests local high school students on their knowledge of the environment while challenging them to work together in teams.

An Allegany-Limestone Central School District team won the Cattaraugus County Envirothon after contending for the title with five other teams from five school districts. The victors advance to the New York State Envirothon, where they vie to become the state's representatives at the North American Envirothon.

Students at the Cattaraugus County Envirothon worked together to finish exams at various outdoor stations that addressed aquatic ecology, forestry, soils and land use, wildlife and other topics. They identified species of trees and wildlife, answered questions about habitat and other aspects of the environment and gave presentations on this year's special topic: developing a local comprehensive solid waste management program.

"Competitions like this help engage students' interest in the environment and sciences," EM WVDP Director Bryan Bower said. "It also encourages students to become more environmentally aware adults."

Team members from Olean High School gather around the aquatics station as they compete in the recent Cattaraugus County Envirothon.

The first Envirothon was held in 1979. It's now the largest conservation education program in North America. The contest begins at the local level, with several schools from each county competing to move on to the statewide, and ultimately, continent-wide event.

The Cattaraugus County Envirothon is organized by the Cattaraugus County Soil and Water Conservation District. WVDP is located in that county. The competition is supported by local environmental groups, civic organizations and businesses. More than 20 volunteers help carry out the event.

"We are glad to be a part of this environmental learning competition," said John Rendall, president and general manager of CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley. "Friendly competition stimulates learning, which motivates students to become future stewards of our environment."

Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL
Vol. 154 - Issue 13 | Published Each Thursday by Neighbor-to-Neighbor News Inc. | May 19, 2022

Ashford board discusses updates with COPS grant

Max Borsuk
Editor

The Ashford Town Board, at its May 11 meeting, heard updates on the COPS hiring program, which was previously awarded to the town to help advance the practice of community policing through the hire or rehire of additional career law enforcement officers.

Through the award of the COPS hiring program, funding will be used by local law enforcement agencies to hire and rehire career law enforcement officers necessary to increase the jurisdiction's community policing capacity to help prevent and disrupt crime and violence. Supervisor John Pfeffer said the town has received updated numbers from Cattaraugus County Sheriff's Office regarding salaries so the town has hard numbers to work into the budget for the coming year.

In other board news:

– Highway Superintendent Keith Butcher reported they would like to start grinding Cole Road around the third week in June.

– New York State Energy Research and Development Agency West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia reported NYSERDA's Sustainability and Community Services Committee conducted a lunchtime community cleanup at all of their offices during the month of May. NYSERDA's West Valley staff also walked an unpaved portion of Rock Springs Road on May 17 and 19 to pick up litter and other small trash.

– Bembia reported Cattaraugus County will be slip lining two culverts under Rock Springs Road, just north of the West Valley Demonstration Project. NYSERDA is supporting the efforts with whatever the county needs. One lane will be closed intermittently during some parts of the construction.

The next Town of Ashford board meeting will be Wednesday, June 8 at 7:30 p.m.

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

Vol. 154 - Issue 13 | Published Each Thursday by Neighbor-to-Neighbor News Inc. | May 19, 2022

West Valley Demonstration Project Quarterly Public Meeting

Wednesday, May 25, 2022
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Virtual Public Meeting

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) will hold a virtual public meeting to provide information on WVDP activities and progress. NYSERDA and DOE will provide the public with an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

If you would like to participate, please contact Joseph Pillittere at Joseph.Pillittere@chbwv.com or (716) 998-4900.

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EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 20 | May 24, 2022

West Valley Makes Progress Toward Reducing Cold War Footprint

Chuck Roesch, left, and Marty Regan, employees with EM West Valley Demonstration Project cleanup contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, conduct focused sampling as part of a closure plan for a former waste storage area site.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – EM and its cleanup contractor at the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) are working to close a former storage area for hazardous mixed waste, thereby reducing the site's Cold War footprint and helping protect the environment.

A team of employees from CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) and a subcontracted driller recently finished soil sampling at the former waste storage site. The sampling is required by a closure plan in accordance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, a public law that creates the framework for the proper management of hazardous and nonhazardous solid waste.

The team is awaiting laboratory results from the samples to determine whether the former waste storage site can be closed.

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EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 20 | May 24, 2022

A team at EM's West Valley Demonstration Project worked efficiently to complete sampling of a former waste storage area site in half the time planned. Pictured from left are K.T. Simmons, J.J. Nosal, Marty Regan, Chuck Roesch, Dave Baldwin, Terry Sullivan, Mike Weyand, and Vince Sabin. Team members not pictured include Hugh Foster, Doug Ruszczyk, Paul Fintak, Mike Pendl and Dave Klenk.

The crew completed the sampling in half the time scheduled after working with regulators to develop and implement a plan to evaluate Methyl ethyl ketone, a common laboratory contaminant that had been detected in two locations at the former waste storage site following initial sampling.

That plan included sampling at designated depths for the liquid substance to determine its extent. Methyl ethyl ketone is used as a solvent and to make plastics, textiles and paints.

"The team was able to complete all 21 sample locations within one day," said David Klenk, CHBWV regulatory strategy environmental compliance and monitoring manager, referring to the second round of sampling. "Everyone was well versed and prepared for their respective job functions, which allowed the whole project to operate safely, effectively and efficiently."

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Friday, May 27, 2022

Draft SEIS on Phase 2 West Valley cleanup due next year

By RICK MILLER
Olean Times Herald

WEST VALLEY — The draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Phase 2 decision on cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project will be published in 2023.

A decision on the Phase 2 cleanup probably will not occur until 2025, a spokesman for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority told those attending a quarterly public (virtual) meeting for the West Valley Demonstration Project on Wednesday.

Lee Gordon, the NYSERDA spokesman, said when released next year the draft SEIS will provide for extended public comment with a six-month comment period.

The West Valley Demonstration Project is the cleanup of the country's first nuclear reprocessing facility. It operated in the 1960s and early 1970s to reprocess spent nuclear fuel rods.

Since 1980, when the West Valley Demonstration Project Act was passed and signed by President Carter, the U.S. Department of Energy has spent about $3 billion on the cleanup and NYSERDA about $300 million.

Depending on the extent of the cleanup, the cost could exceed $10 billion.

While the highly contaminated main process building, due to be demolished beginning later this year, is the focus of Phase 1 of the cleanup, it is the tip of the iceberg.

The Phase 2 decision will decide whether to remove huge underground steel tanks that contain radioactive sludge and other material and low-level radioactive waste in two on-site landfills — one the State Disposal Area controlled by NYSERDA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission federally-licensed site.

The West Valley Citizens Task Force has been working for an unrestricted release of the West Valley site for more than 25 years.

The Task Force wants all the radioactive material removed from the site to protect public health and eliminate the possibility that materials from the landfills or the underground tanks end up in the Great Lakes. Members of the Seneca Nation have also expressed concern over leaving anything at the WVDP site.

The task force is still waiting for detailed information on erosion modeling of the site decades, even centuries into the future. Some of the radioactive material has a half-life of thousands of years.

Gordon said final scoping for the Phase 2 cleanup shows that "a vast majority of the waste" removed during cleanup would have a disposal pathway today. A very small amount of "orphan waste," or waste with no current off-site storage possibility is likely, he added.

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Friday, May 27, 2022

Bob Steiner, a CHBWV groundwater technician, also spoke during the quarterly meeting Wednesday about the 800-foot permeable treatment wall filled with zeolite that intercepts strontium 90 in the groundwater and treats it before discharging water free of the radioactive element

The strontium 90 is leaking from the foundation of the main process plant from a spill nearly 50 years ago.

The permeable treatment wall is a trench 30 feet deep in some places. Filled with zeolite, which looks something like kitty litter, the wall was installed in 2010 and continues to do its work as an ion exchange, Steiner said.

It was designed for a 20-year life, he said. Data from a series of wells on both sides of the wall show it is reducing the level of strontium 90 when it passes through.

Steiner said there are places where the zeolite in the permeable treatment wall is no longer working at optimum capacity. There are some places where additional zeolite could be added to beef up the efficiency.

(Contact reporter Rick Miller at rmiller@oleantimesherald.com. Follow him on Twitter, @RMillerOTH)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 23 | June 14, 2022

EM Responding to Challenges, Positioning for New Era, Mullis Says at Conference

Jay Mullis, EM acting associate principal deputy assistant secretary for regulatory and policy affairs, served as the keynote speaker at the 2022 RadWaste Summit, an annual conference focused on cleanup.

LAS VEGAS – EM has emerged from a challenging period with achievements under its belt and now is positioned for a new era of sustained progress in environmental cleanup, a program leader told a stakeholder and industry audience last week.

As it dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic, "EM continued its important mission and realized a set of pivotal accomplishments across the country. It is thanks for many of you here today that we achieved these accomplishments

and positioned EM for a new era," said Jay Mullis, acting associate principal deputy assistant secretary for regulatory and policy affairs.

"I'm optimistic that building on our accomplishments, we can work this year to address some longstanding issues and advance EM further into this new era of steady and sustained progress for years to come," Mullis said.

The EM official served as the keynote speaker at the 2022 RadWaste Summit, an annual conference focused on cleanup. A number of EM field managers and other program representatives also participated in the event.

In his June 8 remarks, Mullis recounted EM's recent progress on key initiatives, such as beginning treatment of tank waste at the Hanford Site through the Tank-Side Cesium Removal System; a focus on emptying tanks at Savannah River Site (SRS) with operations well underway at the Salt Waste Processing Facility; advancements in drawing down legacy transuranic waste at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and other sites; and skyline changes at Oak Ridge, Portsmouth, the West Valley Demonstration Project and the Energy Technology Engineering Center through progress in facility deactivation and decommissioning.

"As individual milestones, they are impressive, but together they are important and more impressive because of how they position the EM program today and for the future," Mullis said. "EM is now in a position to focus on 'clearing the decks,' so to speak, and tackling major hurdles to sustained success."

Mullis said EM challenges include:

- Defining a path forward for key sites like SRS and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant so they remain integral to DOE's national security and research missions.
- Developing a realistic and achievable approach to waste vitrification at Hanford, building upon the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste (DFLAW) approach.
- Strengthening relationships with regulators and stakeholders in key states.
- Building a high-quality and diverse workforce to fend off a "silver tsunami" of pending retirements among aging personnel.

"These are not going to be easy decks to clear," Mullis said. "But we believe now is the time to try, and we are committed to setting this course for the program."

EM field managers Connie Flohr of the Idaho Cleanup Project; Joel Bradburne of the Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office; Reinhard Knerr of the Carlsbad Field Office, which operates WIPP; and Laura Wilkerson of the Oak Ridge Office of EM delivered updates on progress at those sites and their work ahead. Angela Watmore, acting deputy assistant secretary for acquisition and project management, discussed the goals of the program's "end-state contracting" approach. Lois Jessup, EM director of program planning, updated the audience on EM project and program management.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 23 | June 14, 2022

Kristen Ellis, EM senior advisor for STEM and talent acquisition.

Joceline Nahigian, EM director of intergovernmental and stakeholder programs.

Underscoring the importance of workforce development, EM Senior Advisor Kristen Ellis spoke on the program's emphasis on recruiting and nurturing new talent, and encouraging student interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

"STEM and workforce and succession planning and future of work and all of those things get tied together very quickly," said Ellis, who fills a new position as head of STEM and talent acquisition.

Ellis noted there are only 15 EM employees across the workforce of roughly 1,200 people who are younger than 30, a striking statistic that is driving EM's urgency to develop a new generation of professionals in mission-critical jobs.

"We will need a workforce of the future with an increased focus on diversity, equity and inclusion," Ellis said. "It will require cutting-edge innovation to help us meet those needs. We need to create an environment that will attract and develop and retain the diverse and talented next-generation workforce. We are focusing on increasing our efforts in those areas."

On a panel discussing public and community engagement, Strategic Communications Specialist Stephan Tetreault noted EM was established during a period when DOE's culture was changing to increase public knowledge of its activities and foster new openness and accountability. He described the tools and methods EM employs to engage with its audiences.

"Engagement is in EM's DNA," Tetreault said. "I don't think we would be going too far out on a limb to say EM has perhaps the most developed and practiced communications in the Department."

Joceline Nahigian, director of intergovernmental and stakeholder programs, said EM strives for transparency in its relations with stakeholders. She encouraged the audience to "always stay in touch with EM."

"Everything we do in EM, we are transparent about it," Nahigian said. "You want to know where we've been? Go to our website. We have a detailed history. You want to know where we're headed? Go to our website, we have our vision there."

JUNE 16 2022
COMMUNITY SOURCE CATTARAUGUS COUNTY
CATTARAUGUS • CONEWANGO • EAST OTTO • EAST RANDOLPH • ELLICOTTVILLE • FRANKLINVILLE • GREAT VALLEY • KILLBUCK
LITTLE VALLEY • OTTO • RANDOLPH • SALAMANCA • STEAMBURG

WVDP partners with Boy Scouts troop to 'Adopt-A-Highway'

Photo provided
Members of Boy Scout Troop 643 cleanup a portion of Thornwood Drive as part of their community service. Pictured (from left) are Ben Fisher, Anthony Maul (obscured), Garrett Maul, Adam Fisher, Simon George (obscured) and Jay Maul.

WEST VALLEY — The Department of Energy (DOE) and cleanup contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley partnered with Scouts BSA Troop 643 and Cattaraugus County Department of Public Works' Adopt-A-Highway Program to cleanup Thornwood Drive in West Valley.

Sponsored by the West Valley Demonstration Project, Troop 643 worked with the County to adopt one mile of Thornwood Drive to enhance the attainment of a park-like appearance on this roadway.

The troop has an agreement with the County to clean this section of Thornwood Drive a minimum of two times per year.

"Scouting helps to provide basic skills and promotes teamwork," said Adam Fischer, Troop 643 scoutmaster. "However, this activity went beyond that by encouraging our youth to be environmental stewards in their community. In addition, it combined personal responsibility with a life-long value."

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The troop met on June 4 to clean Thornwood Drive from Fox Valley Road to Rock Springs Road. Before starting their cleanup efforts, the troop met with Public Works Operations Manager Scott Andrews for a safety briefing.

"Safety is the first priority," said Andrews. "It's important that we provide these volunteers with important information that will help to keep them safe during this activity." Andrews thanked the troop for volunteering their time to help the county with its Adopt-A-Road Program.

The WVDP provided funding, high-visibility vests, work gloves, bottled water, and a Sheriff's Deputy to slow down traffic while the Scouts cleaned the roadside.

"We are glad to be a partner in this cleanup effort," said Bryan Bower, DOE-WVDP Director. "This was an excellent opportunity for us to encourage our youth to perform community service while protecting the environment."

The county provided high-visibility hats for the volunteers; and special disposal bags that will be picked up and disposed of by the Public Works Department at no cost to the Troop. A sign will also be made by the Public Works Sign Shop to display the Troop's name.

"The Adopt-A-Highway Program recognizes the need for litter-free roadways," said Kip Morrow, Cattaraugus County legislator. "Roads help connect us to each other and to different communities across the county. The county is actively seeking other groups that perform community service to help support our cleanup efforts. I am proud of these Scouts who chose to take their day off to perform this community service."

June 16, 2022

DOE Awards New Contract for Probabilistic Performance Assessment (PPA) Modeling

Cincinnati –Today, the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) awarded a new contract to Neptune and Company, Incorporated (Neptune) of Lakewood, Colorado. This contract is jointly funded and managed by DOE and the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) to support Phase 2 decommissioning decision making for the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) and the Western New York Nuclear Service Center (WNYNSC) located in West Valley, New York.

This is an Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract from which Firm-Fixed-Price and Time and Materials task orders are anticipated to be issued during the performance period. The contract is valued at up to $8 million over five years.

The contractor will support the DOE mission at WVDP and WNYNSC by performing the following services including, but not limited to the following: development of the probabilistic performance assessment (PPA) modeling and statistical decision analysis of proposed decommissioning alternatives to support Phase 2 decommissioning decision making.

Additional information regarding the project is available at: **/em/west-valley-demonstration-project-wvdp**

MEDIA CONTACT:

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OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Thursday, June 16, 2022

WVDP partners with Boy Scouts troop to 'Adopt-A-Highway'

Photo provided

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(Contact editor/reporter Kellen Quigley at kquigley@oleantimesherald.com.)

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL
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Ashford board hears updates on work at WVDP

Max Borsuk
Editor

The Ashford Town Board, at its June 8 meeting, heard updates from Communications Manager for CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC Joe Pillittere regarding decommissioning work at the West Valley Demonstration Project.

Crews are continuing preparations for the demolition of the main plant building, with dry runs being performed on intermodals in and out of the proposed demolition area. Pillittere also said work is continuing at the product purification cell and the acid recovery cell. The foundation for the new guard house has also been poured for the new building.

In other board news:

– The board appointed Scott Irvin to the planning board to fill the seat of John Patti due to his resignation.

– The town has applied for FEMA grants for the planning and pre-construction of four slide areas, with two on Thomas Corners Road and two on Fox Valley Road. The grants will be a 10 percent match if awarded, with a total cost of around $26,000 to the town. The town does not have to accept the grants if awarded.

The next Town of Ashford board meeting will be Wednesday, July 13 at 7 p.m.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 14, Issue 24 | June 21, 2022

EM on Track for Success on 2022 Priorities

The recent demolition of the X-326 uranium process building at the Portsmouth Site fulfills an EM 2022 priority and marks the most significant cleanup milestone to date at the site. The half-mile-long behemoth is the first of three massive process buildings to be demolished at Portsmouth.

EM is on track for success in meeting most of its priority goals for 2022, including a handful that already have been completed.

The goals already met range from skyline changes with the completion of demolition of support buildings at the West Valley Demonstration Project in New York to prepare for the teardown of the site's Main Plant Process Building, to advancements in the treatment of liquid waste with the startup of tank waste pre-treatment at the Hanford Site through the operation of the Tank-Side Cesium Removal System.

Also already completed is the remediation of buried waste targeted for excavation at the Subsurface Disposal Area at the DOE Idaho National Laboratory Site, as well as the beginning of construction of a cocooning enclosure around the K-East Reactor at Hanford. See a related story in this EM Update issue about progress in the construction of that enclosure.

"Our workforce has gotten off to an impressive start in making progress on projects that EM has deemed priorities for this year," EM Senior Advisor William "Ike" White said. "The achievements so far and the many more we expect over the year are testament to what can be accomplished when everyone focuses on shared goals and the means to meet them."

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Carl Miller, an employee for DOE Idaho National Laboratory (INL) Site cleanup contractor Idaho Environmental Coalition, identifies the last drum of targeted waste exhumed as part of EM's Accelerated Retrieval Project. The cleanup program achieved one of its 2022 priorities by completing all Subsurface Disposal Area targeted buried waste remediation at the INL Site earlier this year.

EM at the beginning of the year published its "Calendar Year 2022 Mission and Priorities," a set of 30 goals aimed at reducing the EM footprint, executing key cleanup projects, achieving significant construction milestones, awarding contracts to enable accelerated progress and carrying out initiatives that drive innovation and sustainability, and improve performance.

Of particular note, EM workers recently completed demolition of the X-326 process building at the Portsmouth Site in Ohio, a major and challenging project due to its size and scope. Building X-326 is a two-story structure covering 56 acres under roof, and EM conducted extensive safety practices and environmental monitoring before and during demolition to ensure protection of workers, the public and the environment.

Among other anticipated achievements, EM is on track to remove another 1 million tons of uranium mill tailings away from the Colorado River at the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project in Utah, and to transfer the former

Biology Complex parcel to the National Nuclear Security Administration for new use at Oak Ridge following the completion of demolition and remediation at the 18-acre site. That project was among the 2021 priorities EM accomplished last year.

EM is preparing a scorecard on its 2022 efforts, which is set to be a featured topic at the National Cleanup Workshop to be held Sept. 21-23 in Arlington, Virginia. As well, the achievements will be detailed in the EM 2022 Year in Review to be published later this year.

EXECUTIVEGOV
DIGITAL NEWS COVERAGE OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING AND FEDERAL POLICY LANDSCAPE
June 21, 2022

Neptune Receives Energy Department Contract for West Valley Project Support

by Christine Thropp

Neptune and Company will perform a range of services in support of a Department of Energy project in West Valley, New York, under a five-year, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract.

The contractor is tasked to work on the Phase 2 decommissioning decision making effort for the West Valley Demonstration Project and the Western New York Nuclear Service Center, DOE said Thursday.

Under the potential $8 million IDIQ, Neptune will develop a model for probabilistic performance assessment and analyze proposed decommissioning alternatives to come up with a statistical decision. Task orders will be awarded as part of the contract.

DOE and the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority provided funding for the award. They also both manage the contract, which was awarded by the department's Office of Environmental Management.

Neptune offers decision analysis, radiological performance assessment, environmental modeling, statistics and risk assessment as well as quality assurance to nonprofits and public and private customers.