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Media Contacts:

Peter Bengtson, Washington Closure Hanford, (509) 372-9031, Peter.Bengtson@wch-rcc.com

Cameron Hardy, DOE, (509) 376-5365, Cameron.Hardy@rl.doe.gov

DOE, Washington Closure complete recycling project at Hanford

About \$400,000 saved by recycling electrical substation components in 300 Area

RICHLAND, Wash. – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently teamed with contractor Washington Closure Hanford to complete a major recycling effort during cleanup of the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington State. The work involved removing an electrical substation in the 300 Area, a former industrial complex about a mile north of the city of Richland that was the center of Hanford's radiological research and nuclear fuel fabrication facilities for nearly 60 years.

Cleanup of the 300 Area is part of the River Corridor Closure Project. The River Corridor is a 220-square-mile section of the Site that borders the Columbia River and is DOE's largest environmental closure project.

To complete the recycling effort, Washington Closure worked with a small business, Transformers Technologies of Salem, Ore., on a "materials for service contract." The contract allowed Transformer Technologies to keep the recovered material – copper, steel and oil – as payment. A local company, Lampson Crane of Kennewick, Wash., performed the rigging and lifting activities.

This is the third electrical substation recycled and removed on the River Corridor in 2014. The electrical substations in the B and D reactor areas were taken down in January and February, respectively.

Mark French, DOE's Federal Project Director for the River Corridor said, "Recycling the substation material saves taxpayers \$400,000. And beneficial reuse of the materials instead of disposal is good for the environment."

The substation was constructed in 1949 and expanded as needed to meet the growing needs for power in the 300 Area. It is the third substation Washington Closure has removed since beginning work on the River Corridor in 2005.

Bill Wahler, who oversaw the project for Washington Closure, said all of the work was performed safely and compliantly, and resulted in the recycling of more the 400,000 pounds of transformer, oil circuit breakers, wire, and other electrical components.

Transformer Technologies specializes in dismantling and recycling used electrical equipment and has access to disposal and reprocessing facilities authorized by the Environmental Protection

Agency. All of the substation components were sampled for Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) contamination, the scrap metal is treated and the PCB-contaminated oil is processed to remove the PCBs.

“More than 16,500 gallons of PCB-contaminated oil was safely shipped off of the Hanford Site to licensed facilities in Oregon and Alabama for reprocessing and reuse,” Wahler, said.

The River Corridor was home to Hanford’s nine plutonium production reactors, fuel development facilities, and hundreds of support structures that operated during the Manhattan Project and Cold War era. Nearly 50 years of operations resulted in hundreds of contaminated buildings, waste sites and burial grounds along the Columbia River.

The Department of Energy’s Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL) manages the Hanford Site near Richland, Washington. Along with the DOE Office of River Protection (ORP), DOE-RL is responsible for the federal government’s cleanup of the legacy of more than 40 years of plutonium production at Hanford for the nation’s defense. Except for the tank waste mission managed by ORP, DOE-RL is responsible for cleanup of all remaining Hanford waste streams and is currently focused on cleaning out and demolishing the high-hazard Plutonium Finishing Plant, excavating and disposing of contaminated soil and solid waste, treating contaminated groundwater, moving radioactive sludge out of the K West Basin and away from the Columbia River, and configuring Hanford Site infrastructure for the future. The office oversees Hanford Site work that is conducted by a federal and contractor workforce of approximately 4,300 personnel. Visit www.hanford.gov.

Washington Closure, which began work on the River Corridor Closure Project in 2005 for the Department of Energy’s Richland Operations Office, is more than 90 percent complete with its contract. It has completed field work in 178 square miles, having demolished 319 of 331 buildings and cleaned up 513 of 585 waste sites. Washington Closure also has transported, packaged and disposed of nine million tons of contaminated material in the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility, the landfill it operates in support of all Hanford contractors. All of the work has been accomplished while saving the taxpayers money. Thanks to cost efficiencies and safe performance, Washington Closure has saved taxpayers nearly \$250 million in cleanup costs and reinvested the savings toward additional work. Visit <http://www.washingtonclosure.com>

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