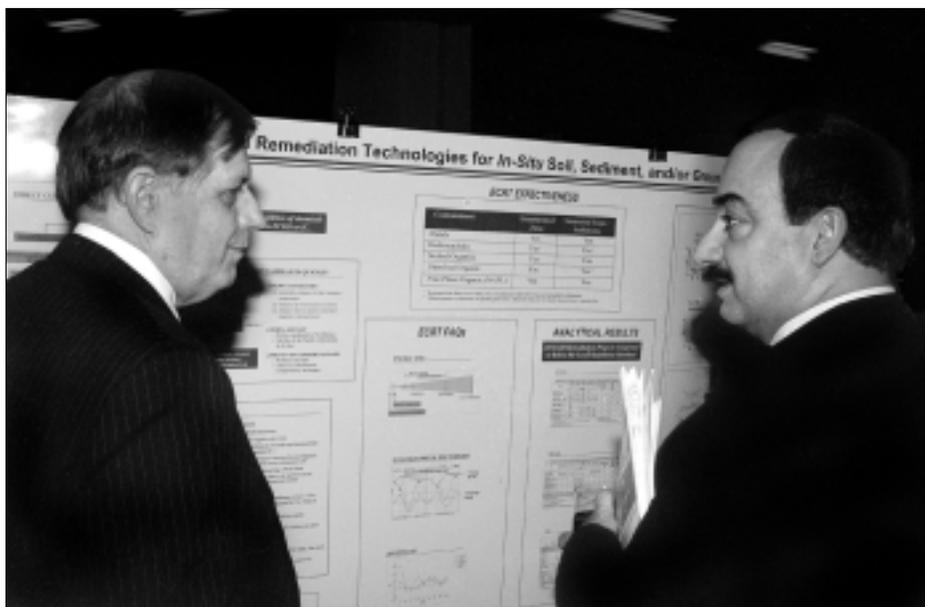


# cleanup date

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY/BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY/BROOKHAVEN SCIENCE ASSOCIATES

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION DIVISION — VOL.6/NO.1/FEBRUARY 2001



Roger Stoutenburg

At the Peconic River Remedial Alternatives Workshop, George Proios (right), of the Suffolk County Executive's office, talks with Kenneth Wittle, Vice President of Electro-Petroleum, Inc. Proios was among the more than 100 workshop attendees.

## Community, experts at workshop explore river cleanup options

In December, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) hosted a two-day workshop to explore sediment remediation technologies for potential use in cleaning up on-site portions of the Peconic River.

The workshop was held in response to community requests that technologies be further evaluated before a final sediment cleanup strategy is selected. More than 100 community members, regulators, BNL and DOE representatives, and others attended the highly publicized workshop. Its primary focus was to investigate the viability of cutting-edge sediment remediation technologies. It also provided a unique opportunity for participants and the Lab's project team to expand their knowledge about and share information on sediment remediation alternatives.

"Input from the community continues to be a key factor in the Peconic River cleanup project," said Frank Crescenzo, deputy manager of the Department's Brookhaven Group. "Ideally, such information exchanges will lead to greater consensus among the community, regulatory agencies, and the Department regarding the best way of cleaning up the river sediments."

### Community contributed to workshop planning

In preparing for the workshop, the Laboratory embarked on a nationwide search for companies offering innovative sediment cleanup technologies. A diverse committee, which included community members previously involved with the project, was formed to examine the 40-plus

(see *Peconic workshop*, page 4)

## Sewage plant cleanup plan moves forward

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and N.Y. State Department of Environmental Conservation are now reviewing the planned cleanup of Brookhaven Lab's sewage treatment plant. The Department of Energy recently sent a decision document to these agencies for their approval.

The Department plans to excavate localized areas within the sewage plant. These areas contain elevated levels of mercury and cesium. The excavated material will be disposed of off site.

Upon approval by the regulatory agencies, the Laboratory will prepare and obtain approval on a "remedial action work plan" describing in detail the planned cleanup actions. Brookhaven will then begin excavation of the contaminated sewage plant soils. The Laboratory hopes to receive this approval in spring 2001.

A second decision document will address Peconic River sediments on the Laboratory site. This document will be drafted after a proposed cleanup plan is released and a public comment period is held in summer 2001. See the article at left for more. ■

### inside

Tritium system completes job  
**see page 2**

Cleanup funding increased  
**see page 3**

Environmental system certified  
**see page 4**

## Tritium system finishes job, 'low flow' pumping continues

On September 29, 2000, following the approval of the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation and the US Environmental Protection Agency, Brookhaven placed its tritium pump-and-recharge system on standby. The Laboratory installed this system in 1997 after identifying the tritium leak from the High Flux Beam Reactor's spent fuel storage pool. The system has prevented the leading edge of the on-site tritium plume from moving south.

Groundwater monitoring shows that tritium levels in the vicinity of the system's three extraction wells have decreased to undetectable levels. The Laboratory predicted this decrease through groundwater sampling and computer modeling. The decrease is a result of the combined effects of radioactive decay, dilution and dispersion.

The Department of Energy is now focusing on removing the highest levels of tritium just south of the High Flux Beam Reactor, using low-flow pumping to remove the highest concentrations from the aquifer. Approximately 75,000 gallons of tritiated water have been pumped out and shipped off site for disposal.

The Laboratory will continue to monitor and model the tritium plume. This work is conducted as part of Brookhaven's Groundwater Protection Program, which encompasses monitoring and restoration activities as described at <http://www.esh.bnl.gov/esd/gpmp.htm>. ■

## Roundtable participants discuss future of reactor

On November 30, 2000, the High Flux Beam Reactor project team held a public roundtable discussion to present the alternatives for HFBR stabilization and decommissioning.

This research reactor, closed permanently in November 1999, operated from 1965 to 1996. The stabilization process involves securing the facility until decommissioning can be accomplished.

The roundtable gave participants an opportunity to learn about and become involved in this research reactor's decommissioning process. Equally important, participants informed the project team about their interests and concerns, and contributed to the decision-making process. Information from this discussion will be considered in the analysis of reactor decommissioning alternatives.

A report of meeting events, as well as the presentations given, is available at the HFBR web site, <http://www.bnl.gov/hfbr>, or can be obtained by calling Jen Clodius (631-344-2489). Notices about future roundtables and open houses will be made as activity dates are finalized. ■

## Web site revamped for easier use

The Environmental Restoration Division web site has been redesigned and reorganized to be more "user-friendly." We encourage you to visit <http://www.bnl.gov/erd> and send any comments to [clafon@bnl.gov](mailto:clafon@bnl.gov). ■

## hookupdate

An update from the U.S. Department of Energy

The U.S. Department of Energy and Brookhaven National Laboratory have completed another component of Brookhaven's final groundwater cleanup plan: identifying properties in the free public water hookup area south of the Laboratory whose owners have elected not to connect to the public water supply.

The results show that 10 property owners in this area chose to continue using their private wells for drinking water purposes. The Department will be offering these 10 property owners free yearly testing of their water supply. The testing would be performed through the Suffolk County Department of Health Services.

Approximately 1,500 homes south of the Lab were connected to the public water supply between 1996 and 1998. This hookup was a precautionary measure to prevent possible exposure to chemical contamination in groundwater from the Laboratory. ■

**cleanupupdate** A newsletter from the Environmental Restoration Division ([www.bnl.gov/erd](http://www.bnl.gov/erd)) at Brookhaven National Laboratory, *cleanupupdate* is part of an on-going effort to inform people about environmental restoration issues and activities at the Lab. If you would like to be on the Environmental Restoration Division mailing list, or if you have any questions about the cleanup, please contact:

John Meersman  
Division Manager  
631-344-8632 ([meersman@bnl.gov](mailto:meersman@bnl.gov))

Christine Lafon  
Community Relations  
631-344-8192 ([clafon@bnl.gov](mailto:clafon@bnl.gov))

# Secretary announces increased cleanup funding, ecological preserve

On November 9, 2000, former Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson, accompanied by Senator Charles Schumer, outlined plans to augment the environmental cleanup budget at Brookhaven National Laboratory. The budget will increase from \$22 million in Fiscal Year 2000 to \$35 million in FY 2001 and beyond. This will enable Brookhaven to accelerate the planned completion of its cleanup program from 2006 to 2004. The Secretary's plan also includes an additional \$1.2 million to deploy a new technology that will enhance reactor cleanup.

During his visit, Secretary Richardson also dedicated an area of over 500 acres within the Laboratory site for permanent preservation. Following the dedication ceremony, Secretary Richardson and Senator Schumer presented



Roger Stoutenburgh

*As children from Ridge Elementary School received certificates of achievement from former Energy Secretary Bill Richardson (back, right) and Senator Charles Schumer (second from right), celebrating with them were (from left) Lab Director John Marburger and Longwood School District staff and administrators Martha Lackner, Candee Swenson and Barbara Gerstenlaur.*

certificates of recognition to students from two local schools for scientific achievement and environmental research. ■

## Groundwater cleanup program accelerating

In November, the U.S. Department of Energy announced the infusion of \$8 million of additional funds into the Lab's environmental restoration program for 2001 (see story above). While these funds will be applied throughout the cleanup program, first priority will go to groundwater projects.

The Community Advisory Council, a group of community representatives that advises Lab management on many issues, played a key advocacy role in obtaining this additional funding. Council members contacted many government officials to recommend this increase. Senator Charles Schumer also supported the increased funding

and accompanied former Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson to the Laboratory when the increase was announced.

### Design, sampling continue

The Department, in cooperation with environmental regulatory agencies, is working on assigning priorities to all planned groundwater treatment systems. Brookhaven has completed the design for a system to be located on Laboratory property at Middle Road. Construction began earlier this winter.

Design work has also begun on an additional system destined for the southwest corner of the site, with construction planned for 2001. This system is a priority because it will prevent low levels of contami-

nants from potentially migrating into the Carmans River. The Department modified the groundwater remedy it selected to include this system in direct response to comments received from the community.

In the spring of 2001, additional off-site groundwater sampling and characterization will begin. The results will be used to design the five off-site treatment systems that will be placed south of the Laboratory.

Brookhaven will send mailings and/or conduct door-to-door canvassing to keep area residents informed as work proceeds. In addition, regular updates will be provided online at [www.bnl.gov/erd/](http://www.bnl.gov/erd/).

## cleanup date

Brookhaven National Laboratory  
Environmental Restoration Division  
Building 51  
Upton NY 11973

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



### Peconic workshop...

*(continued from page 1)*

submissions. Following that review, 16 companies were contacted to attend the workshop and present detailed information about their technologies.

Companies not offered speaking slots were invited to participate in a poster session held on the first evening of the workshop. This assured them an opportunity to present their information to attendees as well. The project team members also met individually with company representatives following the workshop to obtain greater detail about each company's capabilities.

### Process to continue

The committee met again on January 18 to recap and comment on the technologies discussed during the workshop. The committee and the Lab identified technologies that show potential, which will be investigated in greater depth.

Roundtable meetings, planned for the spring of 2001, will allow the community to examine the investigation results and further discuss sediment remediation options. Input from these roundtables will be considered during the development of a river cleanup proposal. The Department plans to release a proposed cleanup plan for the Peconic River in early summer, 2001.

More information on the workshop is available online at <http://web.ead.anl.gov/TechCon/projects/peconic/index.cfm>. ■

### Independent audit certifies division's environmental system

Brookhaven's Environmental Restoration Division is one of eight Laboratory organizations that have achieved registration under the international environmental standard known as ISO 14001. An independent team of auditors visited Brookhaven in August 2000 and certified that the division's environmental management system conforms to ISO's stringent requirements.

ISO 14001 is a globally-recognized standard developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). It requires an organization to identify and prevent potential environmental impacts; to monitor and communicate its environmental performance; and, to establish a process for continually improving its system of environmental protection. Fulfilling the requirements for ISO 14001 registration demands objective evidence demonstrating that the environmental management system is operating effectively.

In 1999, Brookhaven's Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider project became the first Department of Energy laboratory facility and the first Long Island-based organization to achieve ISO 14001 registration. By the end of 2001, the entire Laboratory expects to obtain registration under this standard. ■