WASHINGTON — A key Senate committee Thursday restored more than $20 million in 2008 funding for the West Valley Demonstration Project that the Bush administration had proposed cutting from the Cattaraugus County nuclear waste cleanup site.

Under a spending bill approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee, West Valley would receive $78.9 million in federal funding for the year. That's up from $76.3 million last year — and far more than the $54.4 million that President Bush had suggested for 2008.

While the Senate spending bill will have to pass the full Senate, be reconciled with a House version of the measure and then signed by the president, the Senate committee's action dramatically reduces the odds of a big funding cut that local officials had been dreading.

"This is great news for Western New York," said Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-NY. "The funding for the West Valley Project will provide the resources necessary to accelerate the cleanup at this toxic site."

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-NY, agreed.

"The president's budget cuts would not only have jeopardized local jobs but would have hindered the cleanup work efforts at the site," Clinton said. "I will continue to press the administration and DOE to fulfill their responsibilities to fully remediate this site for the people of Western New York."

When Bush's proposal was announced in February, Terry Dunford, communications administrator for West Valley Nuclear Services Co., said the funding cut would most likely slow down the cleanup process and result in layoffs.

Dunford said at the time that Washington Group's West Valley Nuclear Services Co., which manages the facility, had 312 employees at the site. An additional 113 employees work for the federal and state governments as well as subcontractors at the site.

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e-mail: jzremski@buffnews.com
Energy Department Awards West Valley Demonstration Project Interim End State Cleanup Contract to West Valley Environmental Services, LLC

CINCINNATI – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today awarded an Interim End State Completion contract to West Valley Environmental Services, LLC headquartered in Aiken, South Carolina to manage the next phase of cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) in the town of Ashford, New York. West Valley Environmental Services, LLC is a limited liability company comprised of Washington Group International, Inc; Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc; Environmental Chemical Corporation; and Parallax, Inc.

West Valley Environmental Services, LLC will provide waste disposition, decontamination, deactivation, and disposition of facilities, and infrastructure/landlord activities under this cost-plus-award fee contract. The estimated value of the contract is approximately $159.3 million with a period of performance through June 30, 2011. The current contract with West Valley Nuclear Services Company (WVNSCO) will be extended to September 30, 2007 through the exercise of an existing contract option to permit an orderly transition to the new contractor.

The WVDP is a DOE managed, contractor-operated, environmental remediation project located on the site of the Western New York Nuclear Service Center, owned by the state of New York and administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. Located on approximately 200 acres about 40 miles south of Buffalo, the WVDP occupies the site of the only commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing facility to have operated in the United States.

The “WVDP Interim End State” is an interim step for final decommissioning of the site consistent with the West Valley Demonstration Act (Public Law 96-368). DOE will proceed toward Interim End State completion by performing waste disposition, decontamination, deactivation, and disposition of facilities, and infrastructure/landlord
activities. To date, the Department has solidified over 600,000 gallons of high level waste into 275 canisters and shipped over 800,000 cubic feet of low level waste in accordance with the West Valley Demonstration Act of 1980.

Notice of contract award will be posted at http://www.fedbizopps.gov.

For further information, contact:
Anne Wickham, 513/246-0463
Anne.Wickham@emcbc.doe.gov
Press Release

Source: Washington Group International

PR Newswire via Yahoo! Finance - Jun 29 2:17 PM
Washington Group International Team Wins Four-Year Contract for DOE's West Valley Project
Friday June 29, 5:17 pm ET

BUFFALO, N.Y. and BOISE, Idaho, June 29 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced today that it awarded a four-year contract for management and operation of the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) to West Valley Environmental Services Company, LLC (WVES), a team led by Washington Group International.

The team consisting of Washington Group International, Jacobs Engineering, Parallax, and ECC brings together leaders in safety, site closure, cost management, and performance for the WVDP, a DOE environmental cleanup and waste-management project conducted in cooperation with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. The contract is valued at about $159 million over the four-year period, which runs from October 1, 2007, through June 30, 2011. The scope of the cost-plus-award-fee contract includes waste disposition, decontamination, deactivation, and disposition of facilities, and infrastructure/landlord activities.

The announcement came on the heels of a three-month contract extension for Washington Group subsidiary West Valley Nuclear Services Company (WVNSCO), which will continue to operate the site until October 1, 2007, when WVES takes over site management. Since the WVDP's inception in 1982, WVNSCO has delivered engineering, construction, and management expertise at the DOE-led environmental cleanup and waste-management project located approximately 35 miles south of Buffalo. Under WVNSCO's management, the WVDP was the first site in the nation to successfully design, construct, operate, shut down, and dismantle a full-scale high-level radioactive-waste-solidification system. During its operation, the WVDP successfully solidified the site's inventory of liquid high-level waste, eliminating the potential for release of the dangerous liquid into the environment. The full-scope waste-treatment project was completed in 2005. Recent work has included removal of obsolete systems and facilities from the site and shipments of low-level radioactive waste.

"The selection of WVES as site contractor is indicative of the level of confidence the DOE has placed in Washington Group International and its partners," said Vice Admiral Albert H. Konetzni, USN (ret), president of newly formed WVES. "The entire management team of WVES is dedicated to build on the strong tradition of providing value for our customers, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, as well as taxpayers. We have a dedicated workforce with a proven track record, and we intend to build on that record."

Washington Group International (NYSE: WNG - News) provides the talent, innovation, and
proven performance to deliver integrated engineering, construction, and management solutions for businesses and governments worldwide. Headquartered in Boise, Idaho, with more than $3 billion in annual revenue, the company has approximately 25,000 people at work around the world providing solutions in power, environmental management, defense, oil and gas processing, mining, industrial facilities, transportation, and water resources. For more information, visit http://www.wgint.com.

This news release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which are identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as may, will, could, should, expect, anticipate, intend, plan, estimate, or continue or the negative thereof or other variations thereof. Each forward-looking statement, including, without limitation, any financial guidance, speaks only as of the date on which it is made, and Washington Group undertakes no obligation to update any forward-looking statement to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which it is made or to reflect the occurrence of anticipated or unanticipated events or circumstances. The forward-looking statements are necessarily based on assumptions and estimates of management and are inherently subject to various risks and uncertainties. Actual results may vary materially as a result of changes or developments in social, economic, business, market, legal, and regulatory circumstances or conditions, both domestically and globally, as well as due to actions by customers, clients, suppliers, business partners, or government bodies. Performance is subject to numerous factors, including demand for new power generation and for modification of existing power facilities, public sector funding, demand for extractive resources, capital spending plans of customers, and spending levels and priorities of the U.S., state and other governments. Results may also vary as a result of difficulties or delays experienced in the execution of contracts or implementation of strategic initiatives. For additional risks and uncertainties impacting the forward-looking statements contained in this news release, please see "Note Regarding Forward-Looking Information" and "Item 1A. Risk Factors" in Washington Group's annual report on Form 10-K for fiscal year 2006.

Source: Washington Group International
U.S. names new firm to supervise $159.3 million nuclear waste cleanup

By Kathy Kellogg CATTARAUGUS CORRESPONDENT
Updated: 06/30/07 7:11 AM

ASHFORD — The next phase of the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project will be conducted by West Valley Environmental Services LLC of Aiken, S.C., the U.S. Department of Energy announced Friday.

West Valley Environmental Services will be paid about $159.3 million through June 30, 2011. This is not the last step in the cleanup. That is being negotiated between state and federal agencies.

The new contractor will perform radioactive waste disposal, decontamination, deactivation and disposition of facilities, and infrastructure/landlord activities.

Bryan Bower, federal project director at West Valley, said Friday that under the new contract, the former Western New York Nuclear Service Center’s main process plant will be decontaminated and prepared for demolition. Also, all facilities no longer needed for future operations will be removed, and waste OK’d for acceptance at disposal facilities will be removed.

West Valley Environmental Services comprises Washington Group International, Jacobs Engineering Group, Environmental Chemical Corp. and Parallax Inc. The company will work with the outgoing contractor, West Valley Nuclear Services Co., under a 90-day transition period beginning Sunday. Just the state-owned site — where the only U.S. commercial nuclear fuel-reprocessing facility operated — has been the focus of cleanup efforts for more than 30 years.

Ninety percent of the West Valley budget is paid by the federal government. The project will receive $75 million in funding during 2007. The workforce, which has been reduced from 1,200 to about 300 in
the past decade, will be determined during the transition period.

In the meantime, a future decommissioning decision will decide the fate of building foundations, high-level waste canisters and waste created by the high-level waste-solidification project, along with two burial grounds containing high- and low-level wastes, underground high-level waste tanks and other types of high-level and low-level wastes in other forms.

During a meeting Wednesday of the advisory West Valley Citizen Task Force, representatives of the site administrator, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), unveiled a proposal to remove controversial issues from consideration in the decommissioning and/or long-term stewardship plan.

Three key areas in the plan are removal of the main process building, remediation of a migrating radioactive plume of underground water containing strontium, and formation of an advisory panel of scientists on issues such as the potential for soil erosion over the next several thousand years.

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SENATOR YOUNG: WEST VALLEY CONTRACT GOOD FIRST STEP

Monday, July 2, 2007

State Senator Catharine Young (R.I,C-Olean) said that "a good first step" has been taken by the U.S. Department of Energy's awarding of a partial cleanup contract at West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP), but she urged DOE to put in place a plan that entirely cleans up the site for the sake of the community and the environment.

"Having the contract in place with this newly-formed company, West Valley Environmental Services, is a step forward because it's a four-year agreement. We've been living with year-to-year contracts that have hindered long-term planning. I also urge West Valley Environmental Services to maintain the current workforce with this $160 million federal allotment so more complex cleanup activities can be addressed," Sen. Young said.

"While the new contract will provide some waste disposition, decontamination, deactivation and disposal of facilities, there's much more that must be tackled," Sen. Young said.

She cited removing the high level waste canisters in the main process building so that structure may be removed, excavating the migrating contaminated ground water plume that is under the building, digging out radioactive underground tanks, and cleaning up the disposal area.

"These tasks are critical to thoroughly addressing the contamination problems that have plagued us for so long. Leaving cleanup undone would be a terrible tragedy for Western New York. The momentum from this new contract should be an impetus to finally and completely solving the West Valley Demonstration Project," Sen. Young said.
West Valley Environmental Services Company, LLC will conduct the next phase of cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project. The approximately $159.3 million Interim End State Completion contract with a period of performance through June 30, 2011 was awarded by the United States Department of Energy on June 29.

West Valley Environmental Services, a team led by the project’s incumbent operator, Washington Group International, will provide waste disposition, decontamination, deactivation and disposition of facilities and infrastructure/landlord activities under this cost-plus-award contract. WVES is comprised of Washington Group International, Jacobs Engineering Group, Environmental Chemical Corporation and Parallax Inc.

“The selection of WVES as site contractor is indicative of the level of confidence the DOE has placed in Washington Group International and its partners,” said West Valley Nuclear Services Company and WVES President Albert Konetzni.

The current contract with West Valley Nuclear Services Company, a Washington Group subsidiary, will be extended to Sept. 30, 2007 through the exercise of an existing contract option to permit an orderly transition to the new contractor. WVNSCO’s contract had previously been set to expire in December but the company was granted a six-month extension through June 30.

Konzetni said the winning of the contract was due 100 percent to the workforce, adding the unionized workers and the management “won the day.”

DOE project director at West Valley, Bryan Bower, said the DOE submitted a request for proposals and then evaluated the technical aspects, as well as the cost, while putting an emphasis on the technical aspect, before awarding the contract.

“The DOE recognizes the level of expertise West Valley Environmental Services brings to the project.” Bower said. “Washington Group and their site will be. An additional contract will be needed at that time, he added.

State Senator Catherine Young (R, I, C Olean) said that a “good first step” has been taken by the DOE’s awarding of a partial cleanup contract at WVDP, but she urged DOE to put in place a plan that entirely cleans up the site for the sake of the community and the environment.

“Having a contract in place with this newly-formed company, West Valley Environmental Services, is a step forward because it’s a four-year agreement,” Young said. “We’ve been living with year-to-year contracts that have hindered long-term planning.”

Konzetni said the four-year contract, as opposed to the past one year and six month contracts, will increase efficiency at the project. The past contracts were difficult on engineers, planners and the workforce, he added. Konetzni personally promised the project would now be done in “rapidly and safely as we can.”

Young added that while the new contract will provide some waste disposition, decontamination, deactivation and disposal of facilities, there is much more that “must be tackled.” She cited removing the high level waste canisters in the main process building so that the structure may be removed, excavating the migrating contaminated ground water plume that is under the building, digging out radioactive underground tanks and cleaning up the disposal area.
WVDP receives four-year contract...

(Continued from Page 1)

"These tasks are critical to thoroughly addressing the contamination problems that have plagued us for so long," Young said. "Leaving cleanup undone would be a terrible tragedy for Western New York. The momentum from this contract should be an impetus to finally and completely solving the West Valley Demonstration Project."

As for employment at WVDP, Bower said the new company will look at the needs of the workforce and make hiring decisions during the transition period but a preference will be placed on incumbent employees.

Konetznik said he was unable to answer any questions about employment because he doesn't have any at this time. He added there would be some changes but many variables, such as federal funding for next year and organizational charts, still have to be decided upon. Konetznik, a retired vice admiral in the United States Navy, though, considers himself lucky to be "in the middle of things."

Young urged West Valley Environmental Services to maintain the current workforce with the $159.3 million federal allotment so more complex cleanup activities can be addressed.

"The entire management team of WVES is dedicated to build on the strong tradition of providing value for our customers, the U.S. Department of Energy and the New York Energy Research and Development Authority, as well as the taxpayers of this nation," Konetznik said. "We have a dedicated workforce with a proven track record, and we intend to build on that record."

Under WVNSCO's management, the WVDP was the first site in the nation to successfully design, construct, operate, shut down and dismantle a full-scale, high-level radioactive-waste-solidification system. During its operation, the WVDP successfully solidified the site's inventory of liquid high-level waste, eliminating the potential for release of the dangerous liquid into the environment. The full-circle project was completed in 2005. Recent work has included removal of obsolete systems and facilities from the site and off-site shipments of low-level radioactive waste.

To date, the project has solidified over 600,000 gallons of high-level waste into 275 canisters and shipped over 800,000 cubic feet of low-level waste in accordance with the West Valley Demonstration Act of 1980, according to a DOE press release.

The West Valley Demonstration Project has been operated by Washington Group International subsidiary West Valley Nuclear Services Company for the DOE since the project's inception in 1982. The WVDP is a DOE managed, contractor-operated, environmental remediation project located on the site of the Western New York Nuclear Services Center, owned by the state of New York and administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. Located on approximately 200 acres, the WVDP occupies the site of the only commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing facility to have operated in the United States.
IS A PROTEST ON THE WAY FOR WEST VALLEY CLEANUP CONTRACT?

The lengthy process to award a new contract for interim cleanup of the West Valley Demonstration Project could stretch on even longer, as losing bidders are considering filing a protest of the Department of Energy's decision earlier this month to award the contract to a team led by incumbent Washington Group International. The other two bidders were a team of Fluor, CH2M HILL, Areva and EnergySolutions and a team led by Stoller. The WGI-led West Valley Environmental Services, LLC did not receive the highest technical score, WC Monitor has learned, leaving the losing teams looking for more information on how costs were adjusted by federal evaluators—and by the winning team during two revised bids—before a protest decision is made. Debriefings for both losing teams are scheduled for this week.

Under the cost-plus-award-fee contract, worth approximately $160 million and set to run through mid-2011, West Valley Environmental Services, LLC, will carry out waste disposition, facility D&D and other landlord activities at the upstate New York site (WC Monitor, Vol. 18 No. 29). In addition to Washington Group, West Valley Environmental Services consists of Jacobs Engineering, Environmental Chemical Corporation (ECC) and Parallax, which has since been acquired by EnergySolutions.

INDUSTRY CONCERNED ABOUT LOOMING ACQUISITIONS 'TRAINWRECK' AT DOE

With a number of major cleanup procurements underway and more in the offing, contractors are bracing for what they fear will be a trainwreck at Department of Energy headquarters when an already overwhelmed acquisitions infrastructure is faced with evaluating a number of complicated bids nearly simultaneously. In recent weeks, DOE has issued final Requests for Proposals for a new managing contractor at the Savannah River Site and for three prime cleanup contracts at Hanford, covering Mission Support, cleanup of the site's Central Plateau (WC Monitor, Vol. 18 No. 29) and Tank Farms (see related story). By the end of the summer, the Department is expected to also issue RFPs for the Savannah River liquid waste cleanup contract and for the recompete of management of the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Plant at the Idaho National Laboratory. "They've been beaten up for not getting anything done and so they've cleaned out their inbox and now it's our problem," one industry official said last week.
Proposal Due Dates Bunched Together

The Department of Energy’s looming procurement challenge becomes rapidly apparent upon examination of the due dates for the RFPs already on the street:

— June 6 for the Savannah River M&O contract;
— July 16 for the Hanford Mission Support contract;
— Sept. 21 for the Hanford Plateau Remediation contract;
and
— Sept. 17 for the Hanford Tank Farms contract.

Such tight schedules have prompted criticism from the DOE contracting community. “The feedback from the beginning on all this work coming out was to stagger it. A week apart? During Fourth of July week? With the tanks having a shorter turnaround than PRC? It’s just absolutely illogical,” a second industry official said of the Hanford contracts. “Wait until you see the schedule. I guarantee you it won’t be MSC awarded and then six weeks later PRC awarded and tanks a week after that. It won’t track that way because they don’t have the resources to do it. Yet they put the RFPs out with no consideration of contractor resources at all.” Added a third industry official: “No matter who is on the [Source Evaluation Board], there’s the same reviewers at headquarters. It makes no sense to put the contracts out almost simultaneously when you know that when they get them, they can only do one at a time. They automatically get staggered anyway so why not stagger the release of the RFPs and the due dates?”

A Lingering Issue

DOE is no stranger to criticism over its procurement processes and resultant delays. Most recently, the Department awarded earlier this month the West Valley Demonstration Project interim completion contract, worth approximately $160 million, to a team led by the site incumbent contractor approximately two years after first announcing plans to recompete the contract. In response to such concerns, Assistant Energy Secretary for Environmental Management James Rispoli has focused on improving the cleanup program’s procurement practices through the creation of an “acquisition machine” comprised of revised procedures and increased amounts of contracting personnel. DOE officials have acknowledged, though, that such reforms would not be in place in time to fully affect the Hanford and Savannah River procurements (WC Monitor, Vol. 18 No. 20).

DOE Has Been Preparing for Workload

At the 2007 Waste Management conference in February, Ed Simpson, director of DOE’s Office of Procurement, acknowledged both the pending flood of procurements and the Department’s own limited resources (WC Monitor, Vol. 18 No. 10). “One of the issues facing the Department really is we’ve got contracts in place that have to be administered. There’s work that oversight has to occur,” Simpson said. “At the same time, we’re running one of the heaviest competition schedules in the Department’s history. So there is a balancing of resources that has to occur at each of the field sites, and at headquarters, to ensure that we strike the proper balance to not only sustain the work that’s being done there but also put us in a position to affect the competition schedule over the near-term.” DOE officials last week, though, defended the Department’s ambitious procurement schedule. “We feel like we’ve staged these well,” a senior Department official told WC Monitor. “We’re confident that we have the resources to do this and do it in a timely fashion.”
Capitol Hill Concerned

Even so, concerns over DOE's ability to effectively manage so many complex procurements at once are not limited to industry. "It's insanity. How can they award all of these? They can barely award one," said a Congressional staffer last week. "Does DOE think that issuing these RFPs shows progress? That's the easy part. They have no capacity to make timely, well-considered awards and trying to do this all at once will just make things worse." The staffer noted the potential impact of a change in Administration in approximately 18 months, with the November 2008 presidential election. "There's going to be a new president and a new DOE," the staffer said. "If something is going to be hanging around, do you think they are going to award it quickly or are they going to want to put their mark on it, make sure everything is OK?"

Of course they're not going to put it out quickly."
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Petition speaks for Ashford residents who are in favor of water district

By SUE FELDMAN
Journal Correspondent

"The petition has done its job," Supervisor Bill King stated at the June 30 Town of Ashford work session. The petition referred to had been circulating among the current customers of the West Valley Crystal Water Company in an effort to get a general feeling as to how the town should handle the water situation in the hamlet of West Valley.

King acknowledged the receipt of the petition, which, though not a legal binding document requiring the town to take action, did serve as a "future informational instrument."

"The feelings of the residents presently served by the water company are well understood," King noted.

"I want to thank those who were responsible for getting these signatures," he added. The water company presently serves about 200 customers and 103 signatures were gathered. King stated in a report to the board that, "Upon the receipt of this informal petition, I recommend that the board initiate the procedures to create a water district and upon advice of our attorney, I make the motion that contains two actions: (1) the town board and the attorney for the town be required to proceed with the investigation of this matter, and (2) as soon as possible, a place and date be set to hold a public informational meeting, at which time the general public would be informed of the reasons why the town board should continue to work on the creation of a water district. I further recommend that the town board appoint a water district committee, such as a member of the town board, a member of the planning board, a resident within the area now served by the water company, a resident from outside the area served by the water company, a member of the school board and others. This committee should be charged with seeking as much information as possible from other towns that have created water districts and their costs." Councilmen John Pfeffer and Charlie Davis agreed by adding, "Some steps should be taken today to get an idea of the initial costs to the taxpayers. This is something we are all going to have to do together."

"This is probably one of the biggest decisions the town will have to go through," King said. The entire board realized that, while this matter affects those mostly in the hamlet, there would be an initial impact on those in the outlying areas as well.
"A town is a town and everything we do affects some of us in different ways," King summed up the feelings of the board. "Look at the highways, for example. A major part of the taxpayers' money goes to the town roads but we don't all live on town roads.

"These are all things that need to be looked into and worked out," he added. "The main idea we want to get across is we will take the steps needed to establish a water district. This does not mean we are buying a water company. The decision where to get the water supply comes later." A motion was made and passed that authorized the town board and town attorney to proceed with the investigation, including costs, maps, etc. A place and date for a public information meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible.

In other news, the board made a motion to send a form to the New York State Department of Transportation requesting that a traffic study be completed on County Road 85 (Schwartz Road) between Autumn View and Edies Road. A resident of the area had contacted King earlier in the month expressing his concern with the high rate of speed on the partially blind curve.

King also reported news concerning the West Valley Demonstration Project. A recent news release reported that the U.S. Department of Energy awarded the West Valley Demonstration Project Interim End State Completion contract to West Valley Environmental Services, LLC to conduct the next phase of the cleanup at the WVDP. The estimated value of the contract is approximately $159.3 million, which will run through June 30, 2011.

Councilwoman Beverly Hess requested the town board acknowledge all the graduates of the Town of Ashford. The board agreed and congratulated all graduates and wished them well in their future endeavors.

The next regular town board meeting will be held on July 11 at 7:30 p.m.