



**Congressman Mike Simpson**

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June 2, 2016

Op-Ed Word Count 416

## **Great Achievements by INL Cleanup Operations** **By Congressman Mike Simpson**

Washington, D.C. – “This week, nuclear waste cleanup operations at the U.S. Department of Energy’s Idaho National Laboratory site transitioned to a new federal contractor. I want to express my gratitude to CH2M-Washington Group and BWX Technologies for their years of service, dedication, and commitment to environmental stewardship at the Idaho site.

“By all accounts, the job of cleaning up decades-old toxic materials – much of it left over from the World War II Manhattan Project – is a difficult task. Yet contrary to popular belief, Idaho’s cleanup contractors have made remarkable progress.

“Guided by strong and determined leaders, the employees working for CH2M-Washington Group have safely dispositioned 3,186 nuclear fuel units, completed 364 shipments of remote-handled transuranic waste, and exhumed enough targeted buried waste to fill 27,000 55-gallon barrels. In total, they have met 99.8 percent of the more than 700 regulatory milestones they were contracted to complete.

“Similarly, BWX Technologies’ workforce has shipped 57,000 cubic meters of above-ground waste out of the state of Idaho, with another 8,000 cubic meters scheduled to be retrieved by the end of this year. These waste shipments will be added to the nearly 800 shipments of waste that are certified and ready to be shipped to New Mexico’s Waste Isolation Pilot Project facility. During BWX Technologies’ tenure in Idaho, waste shipments from Idaho to New Mexico’s repository have accounted for nearly 50 percent of the nation’s waste shipments.

“While continued challenges exist in cleaning up the Idaho site, including the startup of the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit and transferring additional waste to New Mexico’s repository, I’m confident Fluor-Idaho, the new cleanup contractor, is up to the job. I look forward to working closely with them and the Department of Energy to ensure they have the resources necessary to ship the remaining waste out of the state.

“Whether we measure success by the cubic meters of buried or above-ground nuclear waste removed from the desert, the task of transferring spent nuclear fuel from wet to dry storage, the operation of complex and unique machinery, or the demolishing of dozens of aging buildings, it’s clearly evident the leadership and employees at CH2M-Washington Group and BWX Technologies

have made real, tangible progress in cleaning up the legacy of nuclear waste in Idaho. I am astonished at the progress that I have personally witnessed in the amount of waste removed from the site in the last several years. Today, I can say with confidence that the State of Idaho is better because of their commitment and service.”

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