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JOHNSTON ATOLL DECOMMISSIONING

Client

U.S. Air Force / CH2M Hill

Location

Johnston Atoll, South Pacific

Duration

2002–2004

Services

Environmental Cleanup
Demolition
Thermal Treatment

Project Description

Parsons completed this project to decommission the former nuclear weapons test site and nerve agent storage facility that formerly housed Agent Orange, as well as other products and by-products. Located 715 nautical miles west-southwest of Hawaii, the Atoll was successfully decommissioned and environmentally restored to become a bird sanctuary. Parsons completed five projects on Johnston Atoll.

Excavation / Demolition of Outer Islands

This project consisted of demolishing the majority of the existing structures on North and East islands (in support of upcoming soil thermal treatment), as well as a 570,000-gal fuel storage tank and other ancillary structures. The contract also entailed excavating, transporting, and stockpiling 15,000 tons of soil contaminated with Agent Orange and 15,000 tons of soil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and/or heavy oils. Incidental to this work was recovering floating product (fuel oil) from groundwater, mobilizing a wastewater treatment plant, asbestos and lead abatement, tank cleaning and decommissioning, backfilling, and site restoration.

Another component to this project was the demolition, decommissioning, and “bird safing” of structures on Sand, North, and East Islands—all of which are within Johnston Atoll. To make the area safe for birds, Parsons decommissioned buildings by removing physical hazards (pointed and sharp objects, debris,

glass, fence posts, fabrics, and other such hazards), as well as removing and/or mitigating entrapment hazards. On Sand Island, the work involved demolishing structures and bird safing activities. On North and East Islands, the work involved decommissioning and bird safing of structures (the structures on these two islands were not demolished).

Thermal Treatment

The contaminated soil that was excavated for the Outer Islands project required thermal treatment. For



this contract, Parsons treated the excavated 15,000 tons of soil contaminated with Agent Orange and 15,000 tons of soil contaminated with PCBs and/or heavy oils. The thermal treatment included screening of all soil and briquetting the fine-particle soil prior to treatment. This contract also required that Parsons put into operation an extensive air emission treatment system along with a wastewater treatment plant that was also required under the thermal treatment contract.

Johnston Island Demolition

For this contract, Parsons constructed a 10-acre RCRA Construction Rubble Debris Area (CRDA) landfill. This project also included



demolishing and downsizing more than 250 buildings (2 million square feet) existing on Johnston Island. Parsons also sorted, transported, placed, and backfilled over all demolition debris on the island and staged recyclable materials for off-island transport.

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