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PRESS RELEASE

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The Delaware Solid Waste Authority Accepts Bid for Wetlands and Landfill Phyto-Cap Project

The Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA) has accepted a bid from Tetra Tech, Inc. to construct a wetlands and landfill phyto-cap (vegetative covering) at the Central Solid Waste Management Center in Sandtown. This project will use constructed wetlands to treat the leachate generated by area A/B, a closed area of the landfill. Leachate is the fluid in a landfill generated by rainfall and decomposition of landfilled materials. Currently, area A/B generates an average of 8,000 gallons of leachate each day, which is collected in storage tanks and taken periodically by tanker to a treatment facility in Wilmington. The new project will construct a 3-cell vertical Wetland Biofilter System atop the landfill cell to treat leachate. The treated fluid will drain to an existing storage pond, which will be covered, and will be pumped from there to spray-irrigate the phyto-cap. The project will include the installation of four storage tanks, a 25 acre irrigation system, pond liner and floating cover, and disassembly and removal of a leachate recirculation valve house.

Phyto-caps help to prevent precipitation from entering a landfill—leaves and blades of grass catch rain before it can be absorbed by soil, and the roots from trees and grasses utilize the fluid within the landfill. Phyto-caps have been used safely and successfully in U.S. landfills and around the world. Tree growth in the phyto-cap on Delaware's closed Pigeon Point landfill was successful enough that trees were actually available for harvesting. The phyto-cap on area A/B will utilize existing soil cover and will be composed of four tree types—American Sycamore, Loblolly-Pitch Pine, Box Elder, and Hybrid Poplar. The conclusion of an Environmental Assessment Report developed for this project indicated that the project will not have a detrimental impact on the environment. In fact, the project will mean a reduction in air emissions because it will no longer be necessary to truck leachate to Wilmington for treatment.

Tetra Tech, Inc. is a California-based company committed to providing sustainable engineering services related to waterways, harbors, and coastal areas. Tetra Tech provides environmental services, water and wastewater management, infrastructure services, security design, and outsourced technical services. Founded in 1966, Tetra Tech now has nearly 7,500 employees located in 250 offices worldwide.

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