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BP Cherry Point adding new buildings at the refinery

DAVE GALLAGHER / THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

One of the largest construction projects in Whatcom County is well under way.

The Maintenance Facility Relocation Project at BP Cherry Point will combine the general shop, machine shop and storage area into two new buildings on the northeast side of the property. The new buildings will be 91,000 square feet and 27,000 square feet in size. Here's an update on the construction project:

What is happening? This project will improve efficiency, safety and reduce congestion at the refinery, said Michael Abendhoff, spokesman for BP Cherry Point. The project started in July, and piling work was expected to finish up this month. With much of the piling work - driving beams about 75 feet into the ground - complete, the rest of the project is expected to be fairly straight-forward, said Dan Abbey, project manager.

At the same time, the company is doing remediation work on its nearby Terrell Creek property, including putting in 77,000 new plants to create better habitat for local wildlife.

Where is it? On 27 acres at the BP Cherry Point facility on Grandview Road.

How much does it cost? Around \$50 million.

Who is doing the work? Dawson Construction is the general contractor. Several local contractors also are on the project, including IMCO Construction, Ferndale Ready Mix, Veca Electric and Blythe Plumbing & Heating. During the project up to 50 people are working on site at one time.

Scheduled completion date? It is scheduled to be substantially completed by December 2010.

What is noteworthy about the project? It is comparable in size to the \$60.4 million Miller Hall project at Western Washington University.

In related news, BP is going through a hiring phase, adding about 40 new employees over the next few months, increasing its workforce to 850.

SOURCES: MICHAEL ABENDHOFF, DAN ABBEY, BP

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