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SAN FRANCISCO – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Justice announced today that the Ordot Dump will stop accepting waste and work will begin to permanently close the dump.

It is expected to take at least two years to finish the work to permanently close the Ordot Dump, which includes installing a cap and constructing stormwater, leachate and landfill gas controls. Meanwhile, interim measures will be put in place immediately to protect the public health and the environment until permanent closure is complete. The Ordot Dump has had a long history of illegal discharges into the Lonfit River, garbage fires, and public complaints about odors, rats, and mosquitoes.

"Today marks the beginning of the end for the Ordot Dump. This source of garbage fires, noxious odors and health risks is finally closing for good," said Jared Blumenfeld, EPA's Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. "EPA, Guam EPA and the Receiver will be working together to ensure a safe closure that protects the environment and community of Ordot Chalan-Pago."

The new Layon landfill will open and begin accepting waste on September 1. The construction of the Layon landfill and the closure of the Ordot Dump are requirements of a 2004 federal Consent Decree between the United States and the Government of Guam. In 2008, in order to achieve compliance with the Consent Decree, the U.S. District Court of Guam appointed Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc. as the Receiver of the Solid Waste Management Division of the Guam Department of Public Works.

"Today we join the people of Guam in applauding the long-anticipated closing of the Ordot Dump's gates and the opening of the Layon landfill, two significant steps toward the enhanced protection of the environment and the public's health," said Ignacia S. Moreno, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "Under an agreement between the U.S. and Guam, as implemented by the court-appointed Receiver, the new Layon landfill will bring online a safer and environmentally sound system for waste disposal on Guam. Its opening will allow the Receiver to focus its continuing efforts on ensuring that the Ordot Dump is safely and permanently closed."

The new landfill at Layon is designed and constructed with a number of environmental controls, such as double liners, to protect Guam's environment and the public from waste contamination.

Along with permanently closing the Ordot Dump, the Receiver also will be developing and implementing an island-wide waste diversion and management program for household hazardous waste to prevent the land disposal of such waste.

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