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November 13, 2007

Dear Citizen:

Thank you for coming to the community meeting in October on the East Mission Flats Repository. We were happy to be invited to speak with you about this project.

There are many questions and concerns about this new repository. Time was limited at the meeting. We did not have a chance to explore many issues that were important to some of you. This letter gives you more information.

The need for a repository: Yard cleanups are going on to protect public health. The soil from those cleanups needs a safe place to go. With much of the cleanup ahead of us, we know that there is not enough room in the repositories we have now. Plus, there is no repository in the lower Basin, where yard cleanups are starting. Also, the site is needed to serve the community's new Institutional Controls Program. Residents who do work on their own properties need a nearby place to take their contaminated soils. East Mission Flats will securely contain the cleanup soils. It will help reduce people's exposure to contaminants.

Location: The repository is not located at the Old Mission. It will not affect Mission grounds. The repository is across I-90, away from the Mission. The site will be sculpted and vegetated as it is built. That way, it will blend in with natural surroundings.

34 Feet High: The agencies made a big change to the site design. The design now tops out at 34 feet high, instead of 62 feet high. This change was made in response to public concerns about possibly being able to see the repository from the Mission. This change assumes that an additional repository site will be found. If another site isn't found, then the design may be revisited after a decade or so.

Wetlands: There are wetlands north and west of the site. The repository is being designed to avoid those wetlands. Those wetlands, like all land in this area, are very contaminated.

Floods: This site floods. The agencies have carefully studied this topic. Flood waters in this area generally move slowly and recede quickly. The repository will be designed so that it will not be eroded. It will be engineered and vegetated to be stable.

Contamination is widespread in the Coeur d' Alene Basin. It is EPA's policy to site repositories within the "area of contamination." This means that repositories will typically be sited in the floodplain. It is simply not an option to haul the material out of state or to another site.

Won't Harm the Environment: The river is far from the site, and the site will be engineered to keep sediments in place. It will be designed to keep flood waters from carrying contamination away from the site. With the proper management by the State of Idaho for the long term, this site will not have a negative effect on the river. Because this entire area is already very contaminated, placing a cap of clean material over the site will actually reduce contamination in the long term.

Proper Management: The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality will manage this repository very tightly, just as it does at Big Creek Repository. Citizens have voiced concerns about the repository at Page, which is managed by Panhandle Health District as a 24/7 repository. Unauthorized dumping has been noted at Page. Panhandle Health District is taking steps to prevent it from continuing.

Not a Dump: This site will be used for contaminated waste (soil) from local community cleanups and residential cleanups. Hazardous waste and residential garbage won't be accepted. Waste from outside the Coeur d'Alene Basin won't be accepted. The site will be carefully managed over time by the State.

We hope this information is helpful to you. We are committed to being good neighbors while making a safe place to keep contaminants away from citizens.

For more information, visit the Basin Commission website at www.basincommission.com. Go to Latest News, then click on East Mission Flats News. One item that might be extra helpful is the Frequently Asked Questions. We would be happy to send you hard copies, as well.

Sincerely,

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