



BASIN BULLETIN

The Periodic Review of Cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin

In This Issue:

- Basin Institutional Controls Program Coming this September
- East Mission Flats Repository Update
- Basin Property Cleanups on Track
- New DEQ System Tracks Property Cleanups
- Work Started to Provide Safe Feeding Place for Waterfowl
- Starr Road Recreation Area Cleanup Complete
- Blood-Lead Testing Wraps Up for the Summer
- Upper Basin Land Management Issues Meeting
- Mine and Mill Sites Update
- Canyon Creek Water Treatment Studies
- Realtors Speak to EPA: Silver Valley Compliance Assistance Effort
- Citizen Council Chairs Selected
- Clean Water Act Project Reports Online
- Basin Commission Work Plans Online
- Basin Monitoring Data Online
- Comings and Goings
- Get Involved

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The Basin Bulletin is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency three times a year. The Basin Bulletin offers updates about activities related to Superfund cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. For mailing list changes, to send comments about this newsletter, contact the editors, or submit articles for consideration, call Andrea Lindsay or Debra Sherbina at the phone numbers provided. Mention of trade names, products, or services does not convey, and should not be interpreted as conveying, official EPA approval, endorsement, or recommendation.

Basin Institutional Controls Program Coming this September

The Institutional Controls Program, or ICP, for the Basin is a locally-enforced set of rules and regulations. The ICP is designed to make sure clean soil and other protective barriers are placed over contaminated soil left throughout the Basin. The goal is to ensure human health and the environment are protected over the long term.

The ICP rule was developed and adopted by the Panhandle Health District (PHD) and passed both Idaho State Senate and House Health and Welfare Committees in early 2007. Since passage of the rule, PHD has been busy preparing for on-the-ground implementation. The ICP is expected to be fully operational in September. Until then, PHD will purchase equipment to operate the ICP and provide training opportunities for contractors who will be working in the Basin.

The rule will be applied to activities within its administrative boundaries which cover the Coeur d'Alene River Basin from Harrison to the headwaters.

For more information, contact Jerry Cobb, PHD, at 208-783-0707, or Bill Ryan, EPA, at 800-424-4372, x8561, or ryan.william@epa.gov.

East Mission Flats Repository Update

Planning continues for the East Mission Flats repository west of Cataldo, Idaho. In June, EPA and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) hosted a public tour of the site. Over 25 people joined the bus and walking tour to learn more about the plans. Project managers walked participants through the site, talking with them about its layout, wetland boundaries, limited early construction, future uses, and environmental protection measures. Participants viewed maps, asked questions, and shared concerns.



Citizens bus to repository for walking tour.



Tour participants learn about the site's environmental conditions.

Public Comment Period. DEQ shared an early site design document with the public. The document is called the "Coeur d'Alene Basin East Mission Flats Repository 30% Design Report." The review period invited comments on technical design options. It gave the public a more detailed view of the site's scientific investigations. It also offered the public a chance to raise issues that they feel may not have been addressed so far in the process of site design and construction. The comment period closed July 6. DEQ received over 100 comments and one petition. DEQ will respond to comments by September 2007.

Need for Repository. EPA and DEQ are committed to protecting public health and the environment. The repository is critical to the Superfund cleanup. The goal of the cleanup is to make the Coeur d'Alene Basin a cleaner, safer place to live, work, and recreate. The cleanup includes placing contaminated material in repositories to contain it safely. Once the material is secured in the repository, the exposure to the community is reduced and measures can be taken to manage public health and environmental concerns. The repositories we have now are filling up. To continue the

cleanup, new repositories are needed. East Mission Flats was selected as a location to support Lower Basin cleanups. The search for more repositories continues.

Why East Mission Flats? Since July 2004, EPA and DEQ have been communicating with affected stakeholders about the potential use of the East Mission Flats area as a waste repository. This was done through door-to-door visits, public meetings, and presentations. East Mission Flats is the only viable location found so far to serve the Lower Basin cleanup. The site is already heavily contaminated; no clean land will be used. The site was available for acquisition. The site is shielded from fast flowing water during floods, so erosion is less likely. The site is accessible from the highway, and won't increase traffic in residential neighborhoods. There are not clusters of homes in the area or drinking water wells directly down-gradient of the site. The site can serve cleanup needs for 20 years or more.

Workers will control erosion, dust, and site access. The agencies will monitor surface and groundwater. There are portions of the site that are next to wetlands – which are also highly contaminated – and EPA and DEQ are

designing the repository boundaries to protect them. The site is designed to take cleanup waste from projects to protect human health, including the Basin Yard cleanup program and the Institutional Controls Program.

Cultural Significance. The agencies recognize the historic importance of this area. To date, DEQ has consulted with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), University of Idaho, and local sources regarding the site's cultural significance. An archaeological evaluation was done of the proposed disposal area under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Surveys reveal that the area has at least three feet of contaminated soils. Even so, an archaeological expert will monitor activities whenever the ground could be disturbed. Should the archaeologist detect the presence of cultural resources, work will be halted until a thorough evaluation can be conducted. Protection of sacred cultural resources is a priority during all phases of this project. EPA and DEQ will continue to work with SHPO and the Tribe to address concerns about visibility and the final site design.

What will it look like? Depending on the final design, the repository could hold up to 700,000 cubic yards, with materials being placed over an estimated 20-year period. However, this is the maximum design volume and may be decreased based on further site considerations. Once each

area of the repository has been completed, its slopes will be sculpted to blend with the surrounding hills. The site will be capped with clean soil material, to offer a clean and safe surface for use by wildlife and for the run-off of stormwater. At the conclusion of the cleanup, the final volume of soil in the repository will be maintained over time under the watch of DEQ.

Some work is going on now. Workers placed clean fill for a temporary access road and constructed a vehicle turn-around pad. At this time, there is only one site access point from Canyon Road to construct the entrance. Clearing of 1-2 acres is underway to prepare a small part of the site for use under the Institutional Controls Program, or ICP. The ICP is now in effect. Under that ICP, established by the Idaho legislature, waste from local community clean-ups needs a place to go. To accommodate the ICP needs, a small part of the repository opened in July so residents and cleanup workers can dispose of contaminated yard soil. The minimal amount of material disposed will not affect the design options for the site.

For more information contact Ed Moreen, EPA, at 208-664-4588 or moreen.ed@epa.gov; or John Lawson, DEQ, at 208-373-0141 or john.lawson@deq.idaho.gov.

Basin Property Cleanups on Track

This April, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and its contractors began the 2007 property cleanup season. The Basin Property Remediation Program's goal is to clean up 390 properties this season. About one-third of these are expected to be high-risk properties. These are properties which exceed established cleanup levels for contaminants, and where children under the age of seven and/or pregnant women live.

In order to complete the cleanup efficiently, the program emphasizes target areas. Property cleanups in Mullan and other upper-Basin communities are being emphasized this season. So far, 124 properties have been cleaned up this year. This includes 15 high-risk properties. Properties are chosen for cleanup based on criteria set by EPA.

Local contractors are doing the 2007 property cleanups: Stewart Contracting, in Pinehurst, and Ferguson Contracting of Kellogg. For more information contact Mark Stromberg, DEQ, at 208-783-5781 or mark.stromberg@deq.idaho.gov; or Bill Ryan, EPA, at 800-424-4372, x8561, or ryan.william@epa.gov.

New DEQ System Tracks Property Cleanups

Since 2002, when the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) began managing the “Yard Program,” over 1,400 properties have been cleaned up. Managing the Yard Program is complex, with each year involving several contractors remediating many properties, owned by numerous persons in multiple communities. No two of the 350 projects completed each year are the same. As the Yard Program has grown, so have the administrative details. With the help of consultants, DEQ selected a system that would integrate the data and effectively measure and manage the project. The program helps DEQ manage project tasks, prepare invoices, and perform accounting functions.

The new program assigns each property a unique identifier to which many pieces of information are digitally attached. The information includes ownership, scheduling, contractor, production, complaints, warranty, and health and safety information. Site photographs, drawings, and maps are also included. All information is integrated into one database. Data is now more accessible, detailed, accurate, and current. For more information, contact Mark Stromberg, DEQ, at 208-783-5781, or mark.stromberg@deq.idaho.gov.

Work Started to Provide Safe Feeding Place for Waterfowl

This summer, EPA will continue the conversion of nearly 400 acres of Coeur d’Alene River valley farmland near Medimont to healthy wetland habitat. You may have noticed project signs posted along the Highway 3 roadside and Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes. This area is being made into safe feeding habitat for both migratory and resident swans, ducks, and other wetland bird species.

For decades, significant numbers of waterfowl deaths have been recorded in the Basin. This project, part of the interim Coeur d’Alene Basin Superfund cleanup plan, will reduce their exposure to toxic levels of heavy metals. It is the first project of its kind in the Basin, and an important step in addressing the Basin’s ecological contamination issues.

The first steps are:

- Cleaning up nearly 50 acres by reducing metals concentrations in the soils,
- Creating a meandering channel and filling some agricultural ditches,
- Installing a water diversion structure with a fish screen to provide a clean wetland water source and prevent fish from entering the wetland, and
- Rebuilding about 880 feet of the Canary Creek levee to prevent failure during floods.

Many partners are cooperating to make this project happen. The key partners are the property owner, EPA,

FWS, and Ducks Unlimited, Inc. CH2M Hill completed the design. The cleanup work is being done under EPA’s 2002 Basin cleanup plan, using an innovative legal agreement. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will do the construction through a contract with DG&S Company of Kingston, Idaho.

After the first stage of the project is complete, the Coeur d’Alene Basin Natural Resource Trustees, led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in coordination with Ducks Unlimited, Inc. will begin wetland restoration. FWS and Ducks Unlimited will do the restoration work, and FWS will coordinate maintenance of the site over the long term under the Trustees’ Coeur d’Alene Basin Interim Restoration Plan.

The work will be done using settlement and Asarco Trust monies. The property is owned by a private party and will not be open to the public.

“Many partners, working together, made this important wetland restoration a success. By protecting Basin waterfowl and other wildlife, we’re helping bring back the health of the entire Coeur d’Alene River corridor,” said EPA Regional Administrator Elin Miller.

For more information, contact Anne Dailey, EPA, at 800-424-4372, x2110 or dailey.anne@epa.gov or Kathleen Moynan, FWS, at 503-231-2228 or kathleen.moynan@fws.gov.

Starr Road Recreation Area Cleanup Complete

The Starr Road recreation area has re-opened for public use. This area runs along the Spokane River in Washington, near Starr and River Roads, close to the Idaho border. EPA—with support from the Washington Department of Ecology, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Washington Parks and Recreation Commission—recently finished an environmental cleanup to protect public health. The area was contaminated with lead and arsenic from historic mining activities. Workers took out contaminated material from the shoreline and upland, brought in clean material, and planted vegetation. A new footpath leads to the cleaned up areas, and parking is available. The cleanup was part of the Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund Project.

For more information, contact Ravi Sanga, EPA, at 800-424-4372 x4092, or sanga.ravi@epa.gov. Or, contact Zach Hedgpeth, Ecology, at 509-329-3484 or zaha461@ecy.wa.gov.

Blood-Lead Testing Wraps Up for the Summer

Each summer, over a two-week period, the Panhandle Health District (PHD) offers testing for blood-lead levels. This summer, testing took place both in the Box and the Basin. PHD was in communities in the Box during the week of July 9-13, and in Basin communities from July 16-25. The opportunity for testing was publicized in local newspapers and over local radio stations. PHD also sent out mailers to get the word out. For more information, call Jerry Cobb, PHD, at 208-783-0707.

The Basin blood-lead screening program focuses its

services on young children six months to six years old. The Box testing program covers children aged six months to nine years. Younger children are more at risk from exposure to lead.

PHD Offers Brochures and Vacuums

The PHD office at 114 W. Riverside in Kellogg offers free brochures about lead, and posts these brochures at local doctors' offices. The brochures cover how lead affects the body, how lead can affect pregnant women and unborn children, and other topics. PHD also loans vacuum cleaners to Box residents.

Upper Basin Land Management Issues Discussed at June Meeting

On June 21, a meeting was held to coordinate and discuss current land management activities in the Upper Coeur d'Alene River Basin, primarily the North Fork. Participants were the U.S. Forest Service, the Idaho Departments of Land (IDL) and Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Kootenai Environmental Alliance (KEA), The Lands Council, and EPA. Discussions covered the following topics:

- DEQ - the outputs from the analysis for the sediment TMDL are focused on fish habitat impacts in the headwater drainages. This evaluation is not capable of addressing the issue of modification of flow regimes and the potential impact of recontamination in the Lower Coeur d'Alene River. This will require a larger landscape scale analysis.
- The U.S. Forest Service with Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the Bureau of Land Management are analyzing the temperature in the Lower Coeur d'Alene River and the side-channel habitats. The Panhandle National Forests is now carrying out the PACFISH-INFISH Effectiveness

Monitoring approach for their analysis of the aquatic ecosystems.

- IDL is working with Shoshone County on the issue of converting forest land to subdivision developments and associated private road development. They are also looking at the impacts of increasing recreational activities along the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River.
- The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is working with DEQ on stormwater education with developers and contractors throughout the Basin.
- The KEA shared its concerns for addressing the cumulative impacts of activities in the Upper Basin, particularly the changes in the hydrologic regimes associated with land management activities.
- The Lands Council indicated that there needs to be analysis on the connection of the flows from the Upper Basin on the recharge of the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer.

For more information, contact Don Martin, EPA, 208-665-0458, or martin.don@epa.gov.

Mine and Mill Sites Update

Golconda and Rex

The construction work at the Golconda site has been completed and the temporary access bridge has been removed. Construction at the Rex site began in June 2007. MCS, a subcontractor for the Corps of Engineers, is doing the work. Workers are grading and capping the tailings and waste rock piles, and re-routing the water away from the tailings area. This work is expected to be finished this September, and will permanently close the lower access road through the site. For more information, contact Bill Adams at 800-424-4372, x2806, or adams.bill@epa.gov.

Site Near Osburn

Design work continues for the U.S. Bureau of Mines site located near Osburn. Soils with high levels of lead and arsenic have resulted in increased exposures to recreational users at the site. A cleanup plan is being developed to eliminate the potential for exposures to those soils. For more information, contact Bill Ryan, EPA, 800-424-4372, x8651, or ryan.william@epa.gov.

Canyon Creek Water Treatment Studies

Work continues to evaluate approaches to treat metal-contaminated groundwater in Canyon Creek. Canyon Creek is in the upper portion of the Coeur d'Alene Basin. The creek runs west and southwest through a narrow, steep canyon and enters the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River just upstream from Wallace, Idaho. Historical mining and milling activities in the Canyon Creek watershed have contaminated water and sediments with metals. Canyon Creek contributes more dissolved metals load to the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River than any other tributary – an estimated 20 to 25 percent of the load in the South Fork where it meets the cleaner water of the North Fork (EPA, 2002). Zinc is among the primary contaminants of concern in Canyon Creek water.

The hydrological investigation within Canyon Creek is also wrapping up. Reports on these activities will be available for stakeholder review later this summer. Based upon the findings of this work and community and Project Focus Team involvement, a cleanup design using the most favorable technology and approach will begin this fall. For more information, contact Bill Adams at 800-424-4372, x2806, or adams.bill@epa.gov.

Realtors Speak to EPA: Silver Valley Compliance Assistance Effort

A compliance assistance effort, led by EPA's Javier Morales and Robyn Hoffmann, has wrapped up with interesting results. Last fall, the team sent about 1,300 letters to real estate agents in Idaho's Silver Valley and in Spokane, Washington. The letters reminded agents of their responsibilities under the lead disclosure rule, and emphasized that the rule covers lead-contaminated soil, not just lead-based paint. The team also hosted educational workshops in the area. This year, the team followed up with a phone survey, calling over 200 agents to check their knowledge and implementation of the rule.

The overall survey response rate was 20 percent. The team heard a mix of comments, many of them positive. Some agents reported that EPA is doing a good job getting information out, that they found EPA's workshops helpful, and that the survey served as a good recap and reminder. Some agents urged EPA to coordinate with the real estate community to host more workshops. EPA also heard from several realtors that their offices already gave them adequate information and education on the lead-based paint rule. Some said EPA is overdoing outreach on the lead-based paint rule and, in general, making too much of lead issues in the area.

The survey results show increased awareness of disclosing information about lead-contaminated soil regardless of the source of the lead. EPA found that real estate agents are making an effort to change their environmental management practices, and to comply with record keeping requirements.

For more information, contact Javier Morales, EPA, at 800-424-4372, x1255, or morales.javier@epa.gov.

Citizen Council Chairs Selected

The Citizens' Coordinating Council, or CCC, concluded its election process in the spring. John Snider will continue to serve as Chair. Jerry Boyd has been named as Vice-Chair. Both will serve for two-year terms. The CCC provides local citizen input to the Basin Commission Board and Executive Director on Basin work. New members are welcome.

Those interested in receiving information about the CCC or attending meetings should contact Mr. Snider (jasduke5@imbris.com, 208-664-9773) or Tom Beierle (tom.beierle@ross-assoc.com, 206-447-1805). Congratulations and thank you for your service, John and Jerry.

Find Clean Water Act Project Reports Online

A list of Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (Basin Commission) Clean Water Act Project reports is available online at www.basincommission.com. Click on Project Work, then CWA Project Reports. The reports contain findings and recommendations from demonstration projects and studies of water quality in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. The studies focused on heavy metals contamination, wastewater infrastructure improvements, sediment and nutrient loadings in watersheds feeding Lake Coeur d'Alene, and water quality impacts on fish and wildlife habitat.

To review or copy the reports, visit the Office of the Basin Commission Executive Director, Terry Harwood, 1005 W. McKinley, Kellogg, Idaho 83837. Contact Terry at 208-783-2528, or terry.harwood@deq.idaho.gov.

Basin Commission Work Plans Available Online

The Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (Basin Commission) Final 2007 Work Plan and Five-Year Work Plan are now available online. These documents cover plans for environmental cleanup work in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. The documents were prepared by the Basin Commission's Technical Leadership Group and Executive Director, with review by the Citizens' Coordinating Council. Find them at www.basincommission.com, click on Tech Group, then BEIPC Workplans.

Basin Monitoring Data Online

Under the Basin Environmental Monitoring Program, data is collected under the Bunker Hill OU3 Record of Decision for the Coeur d'Alene Basin to monitor the surface water, sediment, and biological resources. The U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prepare annual reports summarizing the water and biological resources monitoring results.

See the data at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/cda>, click on "Technical Documents" and "Environmental Monitoring." This water quality data can also be found in EPA's online data repository at www.storet.org.

Real-time stream flow data for the Basin is also available online at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/id/nwis/current?type=flow>

Comings and Goings

Angela Chung will be on maternity leave from the end of August through November. In Angela's absence, Anne Dailey will serve as the Acting Coeur d'Alene Team Leader. Anne has been a member of the Team since 1998. Congratulations to Angela and Anne!

In May, Mike Beckwith was elected as the Technical Leadership Group Chair, and Kenny Hicks was elected as Vice Chair. Congratulations to Mike and Kenny, and thanks to Brian Spears for serving as the previous Chair.

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Updated August 2007

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Water Treatment/Mullan I/I – Mark Stromberg	Phone: 208-783-5781	FAX: 208-783-4561	mark.stromberg@deq.idaho.gov

CCC Project Focus Team Volunteer Leads

Human Health/Recreation – Kathy Zanetti	Phone: 208-752-7612	FAX: 208-777-1615	hkzanetti@usamedia.tv
Lake Monitoring – Kristy Reed Johnson	Phone: 208-777-1588		kristyr@earthlink.net

Opportunities to Get Involved

Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission

Executive Director: **Terry Harwood**, 208-783-2528

www.basincommission.com

Next Meeting: November, 2007

Citizens' Coordinating Council (CCC)

Contact: **John Snider**, 208-664-9773

Visit the website for meeting information:

www.basincommission.com/CCC.asp



Shoshone Natural Resources Coalition (SNRC)

Contact: **Robin Stanley**, 208-744-1118

Groups meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month

11:30 am to 1:30 pm at Brooks Hotel, 500 Cedar Street, Wallace, ID

Silver Valley Community Resource Center

For information on meetings or how to contribute funds,

Contact: **Barbara Miller**, 208-784-8891

PO Box 362, Kellogg, ID 83837

Washington Citizens Advisory Committee (WCAC)

Contact: **Lloyd Brewer**, 509-625-6968

<http://spokane-river-wcac.org>

Information Repositories

These locations offer collections of documents:

**North Idaho College
Molstead Library**
1000 W. Garden Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-769-3355

Wallace Public Library
415 River Street
Wallace, ID 83873
208-752-4571

St. Maries Library
822 W. College Ave.
St. Maries, ID 83861
208-245-3732

Spokane Public Library
906 West Main Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201
509-444-5336

EPA Field Office
1910 Northwest Blvd., Suite 208
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-664-4588

EPA Seattle Office
Superfund Record Center
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101-1128
206-553-4494 or 800-424-4372



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Community Involvement and Outreach
1200 Sixth Avenue, ETPA-081
Seattle, WA 98101-1128

Pre-Sorted Standard
Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. EPA
Permit No. G-35
Seattle, WA

*Basin Bulletin
Cleanup Newsletter
Coeur d'Alene Basin, ID
August 2007*

Websites:



EPA Coeur d'Alene Basin

<http://Yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/cda>

**Basin Environmental Improvement Project
Commission**

<http://www.basincommission.com>

Technical Leadership Group (TLG)

www.basincommission.com/TLG.asp

Citizens' Coordinating Council (CCC)

<http://www.basincommission.com/CCC.asp>



*If you need information in an alternative format, please contact Andrea Lindsay
at 800-424-4372. TTY users, please call 800-877-8339.*