



EPA's Proposed Cleanup: Understanding the Plan

You may have questions or concerns about EPA's Proposed Cleanup Plan for the Upper Coeur d'Alene Basin. EPA wants you to have the facts.

Topic Number 5:

Funding the Proposed Cleanup

\$1.34 billion is a big sum. That's because cleaning up contamination from a hundred years of past mining practices is a big job. EPA is committed to getting the job done most efficiently. At the same time, the site is large and complex. Problems are serious and widespread. Plus, capital costs and long-term operation and maintenance costs must be factored in. The good news is that taxpayers won't have to bear the full expense.

EPA would pay for much of the proposed cleanup with funds from legal settlements between mining companies and the federal government. At this time, the largest amount of available settlement funds—more than \$494 million—is from the Asarco

bankruptcy proceedings completed in 2009. These settlement funds can be used only for environmental cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. The funds cannot be used for work in the 21-square mile "Box" surrounding Kellogg, or for work not related to the cleanup. An independent Work Trust was established to manage these funds and complete cleanup approved by EPA. The cleanup could be paced over several years while interest accrues, to ensure funds are used most wisely.

State and local governments are understandably concerned about paying for a portion of the proposed cleanup. When the government pays directly for cleanup, the State has to fund 10% of the construction costs. But, when settlement funds are used for cleanup, the State is not required to pay the 10%. EPA is committed to careful use of existing funds to protect people's health and the environment over the long-term.

We want to hear from you. Your ideas and comments are important to help design and guide the cleanup. Send comments by November 23 to cdabasin@epa.gov or to Coeur d'Alene Basin Team, EPA, 1200 6th Avenue, Suite 900, ECL-113, Seattle, WA 98101.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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