

BASIN BULLETIN



Updates on the Coeur d'Alene River Basin Cleanup

November 2016

2016: Sustaining the Momentum Together

A note from Bill Adams, EPA Cleanup Team Leader

We owe a whole lot of thank you's. It's been another outstanding year for the cleanup, building on momentum achieved over the last several years. In 2016, over \$25 million was spent on the cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. Most of those funds supported work in community areas to protect people's health. We know that in several communities, also undergoing repairs to sewer and water infrastructure, this work has been disruptive and we appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation – thank you, local residents. This work employed over 400 people, nearly all of whom live in the Silver Valley.



Bill Adams
Photo Courtesy Jo Gallaher

Major work completed this year includes:

- Removing over 125,000 cubic yards of contamination from the Success site in Ninemile Creek to reduce the amount of metal going into surface water.
- Construction on three remedy protection projects totaling about \$1.8 million; this work protects past cleanup from the impacts of flooding in community areas.
- Paving 12.5 miles of roads (111 segments) in communities (370 segments total since the program began); the new pavement serves as a barrier to underlying mine waste.
- Cleaning up over 76 residential and commercial properties, representing over 1.1 million square feet.
- Pending final award for the design and construction of the expanded Central Water Treatment Plant and installation of a groundwater collection system; the system will capture about 30 percent of the dissolved zinc load from the Upper Basin – that will be a huge reduction in the amount of metals moving downstream; construction of this project will begin in 2017.
- Initiating a pilot project in the Lower Basin to assess the impacts of different caps on wetland areas to protect waterfowl.
- Continued operation of four repositories and development and operation of three 'Limited Use Repositories' for the roads program waste.

⇒ *Continued*

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⇒ Continued

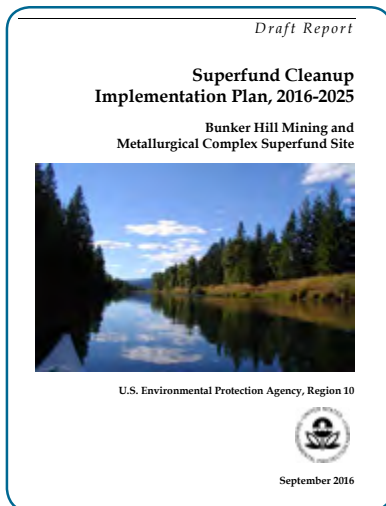
2016: Sustaining the Momentum Together

I couldn't be any happier with the accomplishments of our EPA team, the CDA Trust, and our partners at IDEQ and BEIPC who made this work happen. I also appreciate the local jurisdictions for their close coordination and their role in implementing this work. This has been particularly challenging since many of the roads and remedy protection projects were done in concert with sewer and water projects funded through bond elections and USDA Rural Development Grants. The solid coordination that has occurred has saved time and resources.

And finally, a big thank you to the local contractors who work so hard to provide a positive benefit to their communities. As the construction season slows, we are now looking ahead to even greater progress next year. We are setting our sights on completing more roads, remedy protection projects, and property remediation work in community areas, and making continued improvements to water quality in local streams. Let's continue the momentum together.

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EPA Updates 10-Year Implementation Plan



From October 12 to November 14, the EPA invited the public to review its 2016 10-Year Superfund Cleanup Implementation Plan, or SCIP. The plan spells out the general approach for doing Superfund cleanup work in the Coeur d'Alene Basin over the next decade. The EPA will carefully consider the public comments and tell the public what changes it made in response to them. The final plan is expected by early 2017.

The Implementation Plan is a technical document, about 100 pages long. The first Implementation Plan came out in 2012. Each year the agency adds an update, with a full revision every five years. This is its first full revision. It:

- Identifies the EPA's priority cleanup actions for the next 10 years.
- Provides the basis for the EPA's input into the Basin Commission's one-year and five-year work plans. Those plans summarize cleanup activities to take place in the Basin.

- Tells how the EPA will work with stakeholders and partners.
- Describes funding sources and management.
- Explains how the EPA will use adaptive management to evaluate and modify cleanup approaches.

Plans for the next 10 years include:

- Finishing property cleanups in the Basin.
- Completing repair of roads that may have been damaged by cleanup activities, so that those roads can serve as barriers to underlying contamination.
- Completing actions to protect cleanup work that has already been done.
- Upgrading the treatment plant that cleans the groundwater from the Box and discharge water from the Bunker Hill mine.
- Constructing a drain to intercept groundwater near the Central Impoundment Area in the Box.
- Continuing high priority cleanup work in the East Fork of Ninemile Creek.
- Beginning work in Canyon Creek to control sources of contamination.
- Conducting work in the Lower Basin that will support the prioritization of pilot projects and remedial actions to address risks.
- Continuing to manage repositories.

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Community Members Help Shape Recreational Sites Strategy

From September 6 through October 20, the public shared comments and ideas to help explore options for achieving healthier recreation in the CDA Basin. EPA, IDEQ, PHD, and the CDA Trust proposed a strategy to help reduce health risks from lead and other metals at recreation areas. It's called the "Coeur d'Alene Basin Recreational Sites Strategy." The strategy lays out goals, ways to inventory recreational areas, possible ways to manage risks to people, and current outreach activities. Find a fact sheet online at <https://semspub.epa.gov/src/document/10/100028352>.

Dealing with contamination at recreation sites is different than other cleanup activities. It's not often easy to just remove contaminated soil and replace it with clean. That's because many places get re-contaminated with each high water event or flood. Some places, like hiking trails or ATV areas, are just too big or spread out to get cleaned up. Other areas are remote or hard to access for cleanup purposes. So, different approaches are needed.

Thanks to everyone who shared comments. We appreciate the input! It will help us outline sensible ways to make recreation safer in areas with lead and other metals. Next, the agencies will consider those comments as we develop an Implementation Plan. Public input helps ensure that our approach will reflect local needs and values. The document will include information about how people's comments influenced our planning.

CONTACT: **Dana Swift**, IDEQ • 208-373-0296 • dana.swift@deq.idaho.gov

Coeur d'Alene Basin Recreational Sites Strategy Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex Superfund Site



Prepared by:



October 2016
Version 1

<http://go.usa.gov/xkzQt>

Children's Health Fair



So good to see so many community members in September at the Shoshone Medical Center's Kid's Health Fair! Even with the rain, over 400 people came. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our EPA/IDEQ/PHD booth to talk about healthy recreation.

Success Up in Ninemile

The CDA Trust is wrapping up the 2016 construction season in East Fork Ninemile Creek. Work began this year at the Success Complex with removal of over 125,000 cubic yards of contaminated waste rock and tailings. That waste is now in the Waste Consolidation Area. The four-year project will remove about 450,000 cubic yards of contamination from the hillside and creek. The work will protect recreational users and wildlife from exposure to metals.



A year of progress at Ninemile

– Photos provided by CDA Trust

For More Information...

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Protecting Public Health: Looking at Old Mine and Mill Sites

More than 1,000 mining-impacted sites dot the Coeur d'Alene Basin. Over the past few summers, field crews visited 75 mine and mill sites in the Upper Basin. They also visited 22 sites in the Bunker Hill 'Box.' Their task was to characterize remaining contamination that may require cleanup to protect people's health. These sites are located close to or above towns and residential areas. In addition, 84 mine and mill sites were identified in drainage basins upstream of four public drinking water systems. Crews characterized surface water upstream of the intakes and directly after treatment for each drinking water system. Results show that impacts of mining-related activities and remaining historic mine wastes are minimal. Lead was not detected within the source water for the public systems which provide water to the towns of Silverton, Wallace, Burke, and Mullan.



Field crews looked at mining sites in drainage basins to help set priorities for action.

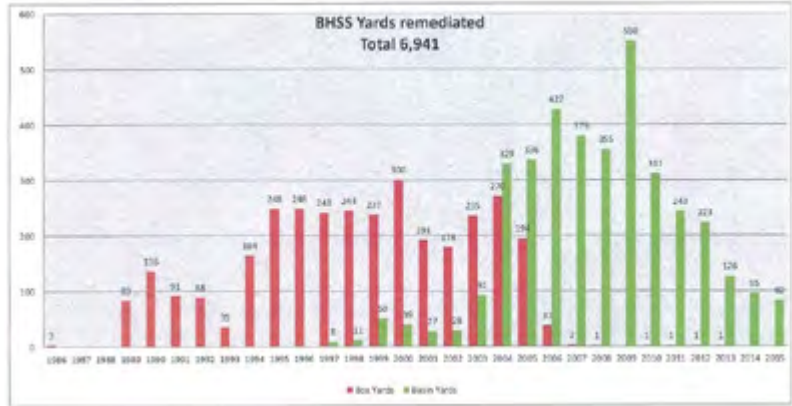
Courtesy IDEQ.

During 2017, these findings will be used to prioritize sites for further action to address human health risks. The prioritization will help with project sequencing as EPA and IDEQ determine next steps for each site. Next steps may include further characterization, remedial action, referral to other programs, or categorization as a current low priority for human health. Although some sites will be rated as a low priority based on the current observations, the status may change in the future based on changes in site use (e.g., new residential buildings, new recreational uses, etc.). Human health concerns may be re-evaluated based on these changes. This evaluation was completed by IDEQ and EPA with coordination and support from the IDEQ Source Water and Drinking Water Programs and local water systems.

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In the Box: Cleaning Up More Yards

To date, 3230 yards have been cleaned up in the “Box.” The Box is the original 21-square mile Superfund cleanup area around the old smelter in Kellogg. After this season, that number will increase by two because of what is referred to as “refusal flips.” Yard remediation in the Silver Valley first started in 1986 in areas where children were most likely to be exposed to heavy metal contaminated soils. (See chart) ➔



After 20 years and more than 3,000 yard cleanups, the EPA and IDEQ certified the Box as complete.

The few remaining refusals, or those that did not wish to participate, were accounted for and money was set aside to remediate in the future as circumstances changed.

Nine refusal properties have “flipped” since the Box yard program ended 10 years ago. Reasons for the change vary from change of ownership, desire to sell or improve property, and so on. When “refusal” property owners or managers contact PHD or IDEQ asking if they can change their minds, IDEQ arranges for the remediation.

Yard cleanups are still underway in the larger Coeur d’Alene Basin. See article below. ↓

Contact: **Jan Olsen**, IDEQ • 208-783-5781 • jan.olsen@deq.idho.gov



“Refusal flip” remediation in progress this summer.

Courtesy IDEQ

It’s not too late to get your yard sampled!



Testing and any cleanup is done at no cost to you. Landowners are encouraged to have their properties tested for soil contamination before the Basin Property Remediation Program is downsized. Help protect the health of your family and your community. Call the IDEQ Kellogg office at 208-783-5781 for information.

Coming Soon: Report on Basin Commission's Public Involvement Process



A report on the public participation processes of the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission is expected soon. Wendy Green Lowe of The Participation Company recently conducted the independent assessment for the commission. As part of her evaluation, she interviewed more than 30 people. She also reviewed background documentation, with a particular focus on the Citizens Coordinating Council. According to Executive Director Terry Harwood, the assessment will be an important topic of discussion at the commission's February 2017 meeting. As always, the public is invited to attend. EPA funded the assessment as part of its ongoing support to the Basin Commission and its CCC. The assessment will be posted at <http://www.basincommission.com>.

CONTACT: **Terry Harwood**, BEIPC • 208-783-2528 • terry.harwood@deq.idaho.gov

Basin Commission Tours Local Cleanup



A big thank you to the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission for their August tour. It was a great chance for people to see local cleanup work first-hand. The tour busses visited remedy protection and roads projects, a repository, mine cleanups up in Ninemile, and other locations. The Basin Commission typically offers a cleanup tour each August. The public is welcome.

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Photo: Rene Gilbert.

Update: Limited Use Repositories

Most of the concrete, asphalt and soils generated by roads and utility work are being placed in Limited Use Repositories. Current LURs are located in Government Gulch, at the Shoshone County Transfer Station, and in Osburn. Typically, this waste has lower levels of contamination, so this disposal option helps save room in the regular repositories that are used for more highly contaminated wastes. To date, LURs have received over 100,000 cubic yards of waste which has been placed so that future development may occur. That adds up to about 10 acres of developable land in Osburn and Government Gulch alone. Both Osburn and the Transfer Station will take waste through 2017. Government Gulch LUR is scheduled to be open longer.

Contact: **Bruce Schuld**, IDEQ • 298-783-5781 • bruce.schuld@deq.idaho.gov



Photos Courtesy of IDEQ



Cooperation in Mullan Yields Construction Progress



Photo courtesy Courtesy Rene Gilbert

Here's a great example of coordination to stretch resources and create efficiencies. Remedy protection and utility work began in Mullan's Copper Street neighborhood in July and wrapped up for the season as weather set in. Jurisdictions cooperated in order to pace and time the work to benefit all projects. Boulder Creek culverts at School Street were replaced and a system of subsurface storm water pipes, catch basins, roadside drainage ditches, and curbs was constructed by the CDA Trust. Water lines along Copper and School Streets have been upgraded, and the City of Mullan replaced most of the sanitary sewer lines in the neighborhood.

The CDA Trust prepared School, Eighth, Copper, and Montana Streets for paving as utility work progressed. Due to weather, the CDA Trust will pave next year after sanitary sewer lines are completed. A big thank you to the residents of Mullan for their patience as we work together to bring improvements to the community.

CONTACT: **Anne McCauley**, EPA • 206-553-4689] 800-424-4372 ext. 4689 • mccauley.anne@epa.gov

Bugs Against Weeds: The Fight Continues!

IDEQ's first foray against the spotted knapweed plant was done a decade ago by Jan Olsen when she released 1400 root-boring and flower-head weevils. The bugs have proven their ability to weaken the weed population. Her most recent release was in August of 250 more weevils. This year the weevils were released on five sites: four in Kellogg and Smelterville, and one in Wallace on reclaimed public land. These releases were recorded with the Nez Perce Bio-Control Center and Shoshone County for tracking and record keeping purposes.

IDEQ has been combating weeds since the EPA and IDEQ acquired properties released from the Bunker Hill bankruptcy. Weed control attempts have included bio controls and spraying. The EPA and IDEQ properties include parcels in Government Gulch and the CIA, or Central Impoundment Area, in Kellogg.

IDEQ continues to work with the Shoshone County Weed Superintendent, USDA Forest Service, the U of I, and the Nez Perce Bio-Control on managing, mapping, and surveying the weeds and bugs.

CONTACT: **Jan Olsen**, IDEQ • 208-783-5781 • jan.olsen@deq.idaho.gov



Area north of Smelterville with robust stand of spotted knapweed.

Photos provided by IDEQ



Spotted knapweed flower with seed eating weevil doing its thing.

Protecting Your Family: PHD Offers Home Consultations



PHD offers in-home consultations to help reduce kids' exposure to lead.

— Photo: Panhandle Health District

Did you know that it is estimated that half of the homes in the US built before 1978 have lead-based paint? The older the home, the more likely it has lead-based paint. Lead can be found in a number of other areas around your home. How can you identify these sources? Staff at Panhandle Health District's Kellogg office offer free in-home environmental consultations. PHD has educational materials and can sample in and around the home for potential sources. Most local residents are aware of the lead contamination in soils throughout the area. Over 7,000 residential properties have been cleaned up.

But, many of the areas where people recreate contain soils high in lead and other heavy metals. If you spend time along the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, the Lower CDA River, the 100 year floodplain, or at old mine and mill sites scattered through the CDA Basin, you may be coming into contact with contaminated soils. PHD's experienced staff can help if you are potentially tracking contaminated materials home.

Andy Helkey, PHD's Lead Health Intervention Program Manager, says there are a number of places lead exposure can come from. "We see exposures that are occupationally related, from contaminated soils, from historic reservoirs inside the home, and even from every-day items like terra cotta tableware. The key to preventing exposure is to identify the source." PHD's new X-Ray Fluorescence Analyzer (XRF) allows them to sample materials for lead and other heavy metals contaminants and get immediate results. Helkey says, "The XRF is a great tool in helping us find potential sources of exposure or for even easing a parent's concerns about an item."

PHD strongly encourages parents with young children identified with elevated blood lead levels to utilize this service. For a consultation or lead health information, please contact the PHD at 208-783-0707.

Fond Farewell, Denna Grangaard

A warm and heartfelt thank you and best wishes to Denna Grangaard, IDEQ Public Outreach Analyst. Denna has served local Silver Valley communities with dedication for the past seven years.

She has helped ensure that cleanup decisions reflect local values and that community members have the information they need to protect the health of their families. We will miss her so.

All the best to you as you move on to other endeavors, Denna!



Want Timely Updates? Visit us on Facebook!



One of the best ways to stay up-to-date on the cleanup work is to sign up for our Facebook page. Watch for two or three short posts a week. We invite you to check it out!

 <https://www.facebook.com/CDAbasin>

Documents

North Idaho College Library

Molstead Library
1000 Garden Avenue – Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-769-3355

Wallace Public Library

415 River Street – Wallace, ID 83873
208-752-4571

Spokane Public Library

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

EPA Field Office

1910 Northwest Boulevard, Suite 208
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-664-4588

EPA Seattle Office

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

St. Maries Library

822 W. College Avenue – St. Maries, ID 83861
208-245-3732

Kellogg Public Library

16 West Market Avenue – Kellogg, ID 83837
208-786-7231

Opportunities to Get Involved

Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (BEIPC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Terry Harwood

208-783-2528

<http://www.basincommission.com>

Citizens Coordinating Council (CCC)

CHAIR:

Jerry Boyd

509-220-1453


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

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

Alternative formats are available.

For reasonable accommodation, please call



 Andrea Lindsay at 206-553-1896

 TTY users, please call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.



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