



ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 10

April 2004

Community Involvement Plan Le Roi Smelter/Northport Project

A healthy environment and a thriving local economy are important to residents of Northport, Washington and people in surrounding communities. However, soil at the former Le Roi Smelter and nearby residential and common use areas contains elevated amounts of mine-waste contaminants. The contamination was caused by near and distant smelting operations, mine-waste disposal practices, and construction work using materials contaminated with mine wastes. During the next several months, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will test soils and clean up contaminated areas at the former smelter and several residential and common use properties in and around Northport.

This is EPA's plan for involving community members in the Le Roi Smelter/Northport project. EPA developed this plan based on input from state and local agencies and community interviews. We will continue to build on these efforts, and welcome your ideas for improvement.

This plan is designed to be flexible. It reflects our current knowledge about the community and will be revised as conditions change. The plan is intended to be a working document, changing as community concerns emerge and new information becomes available.

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Community Involvement Goals

EPA encourages meaningful community involvement in the Le Roi Smelter/Northport project. Our goals are to:

- Provide useful and timely information on site activities and progress
- Provide opportunity for public participation and comment
- Establish open communication, responding to questions and concerns as they arise
- Evaluate the effectiveness of community involvement activities, and make changes as needed

To view the latest version of this plan, visit www.epa.gov/r10/earth, click on *Index A-Z*, click on *L*, click on *Le Roi Smelter*.

What We've Heard So Far

Community interest in Northport is high due to EPA's voluntary soil-testing program, concerns about public health, and worries about potential economic impacts resulting from EPA's presence. Public awareness is also heightened due to EPA's work in and along the Upper Columbia River and the Agency's dealings with Tech Cominco during the past few years.

In February 2004, EPA staff held 14 interviews with various members of the Northport community. We also held meetings with the Stevens County Commissioners, the Northport Mayor and City Council, and the

EPA Invites Your Comments

If you have comments on this community involvement plan, or would like more information on the **Le Roi Smelter/Northport project**, contact:

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Superintendent of Northport schools and several teachers. In September 2003, EPA held a community meeting. Here is a brief summary of some major questions and concerns shared with EPA to date:

- Will EPA's work discourage people from moving to Northport, decrease property values, or hurt the local economy?
- Will the cleanup create job opportunities for local residents?
- Why did EPA take several decades to do something about the contamination?
- Should I be worried about the health of my family?
- How can I reduce my family's exposure to contamination?
- Why does the drinking water in Northport look and smell bad?
- Should I stop my kids from playing at the smelter?
- If I sign up for the voluntary sampling program, will I have to pay for any of the work?
- Will EPA test properties outside Northport?
- How long will the cleanup take?
- Will there be contaminated dust in the air during the cleanup?
- Why must EPA demolish the smokestack at the smelter property?
- What will the smelter and yards look like after cleanup?

How We'll Keep You Informed

EPA will use a variety of tools to keep you informed and involved in our work on the Le Roi Smelter/Northport project.

Fact Sheets

EPA will send fact sheets summarizing our work and technical findings. The fact sheets will be mailed to all addresses serviced by the Northport Post Office and people outside Northport, who have signed up to be on the mailing list.

Community Meetings

We will hold community meetings, as needed, to provide updates, discuss issues of concern, and report on project progress. Meetings will be announced in local papers and by postcard. They will usually be held at the Northport Grange.

Newspaper Announcements/Public Notices

EPA will announce public meetings in local newspapers.

Information Repository

EPA will keep site documents for public review at the Northport City Hall. The repository, which contains all technical documents and reports, will be kept current.

Website

Fact sheets and other information about the project will be placed on the EPA web site at www.epa.gov/r10earth/. Click on *index A-Z*, click on *L*, and then on *Le Roi Smelter*.

Completed Activities

EPA has completed the following community involvement activities:

- In September 2003, EPA held a community meeting at the Northport Grange to discuss the Le Roi Smelter project and soil testing.
- On February 9, 2004, EPA met with the Stevens County Commissioners to discuss their questions and concerns about the project.
- On February 10, 2004 EPA met with the Mayor of Northport and City Council to discuss the upcoming cleanup and voluntary sampling program.
- During February 10-12, 2004 EPA conducted 14 community interviews with a mix of residents, teachers, medical professionals, business owners, and people who work for local businesses.
- On February 12, 2004 EPA met with the Superintendent of Northport schools and about 15-20 teachers to discuss soil sampling results at the school and the upcoming work.

EPA has also released the following fact sheets, post cards, and newspaper notices.

- September 2003, fact sheet, Northport Soil Testing.
- February 2004, fact sheet, Soil Testing Completed, Cleanup Being Planned.
- March 2004, post card, Northport Community Open House.
- April 2004, fact sheet, Northport Community Open House.
- April 2004, newspaper notice, Northport Community Open House.

Upcoming Activities

EPA is planning the following community involvement activities.

- On April 20 & 21, 2004, EPA will host a community open house on the voluntary soil testing program, the upcoming cleanup, and local hiring and subcontracting opportunities.

About the Le Roi Smelter

The Le Roi Smelter caused soil contamination, mainly from 1896 to 1921, when it processed ores and produced large amounts of wastes containing lead, arsenic, and other heavy metals. By 1908, the Le Roi Smelter was one of the largest smelters on the West Coast, processing up to 500 tons of ore per day. Historically, wastes were either stored at the Le Roi Smelter site or flushed directly into the Columbia River. Some waste materials, such as slag bricks, may have been moved from the site to nearby properties for use as construction materials. The smokestack at the smelter also released contaminants into the air, which were then carried by wind currents to nearby properties.



For More Information

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the following people:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

General information:

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Technical information:

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*TTY users may call the Federal Relay Service at
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