



Proposed Plan Public Comment Period Is Now Closed

EPA Contacts

Coeur d'Alene Basin Team Leader

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Community Outreach

Dick Martindale, 208-664-4588

Marianne Deppman, 206-553-1237

EPA Website

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

Contact Marianne Deppman at 206-553-1237 with any comments or suggestions.

NewsBriefs Submissions

Contact Pamela Moore at 206-438-2236 with any comments, suggestions or submissions.

NewsBriefs Available Through Email

NewsBriefs issues can be sent as a pdf or Microsoft Word file to your email address. Please send requests to: pamela_moore@urscorp.com

NewsBriefs Mailing List Corrections

Please direct your update to:

Pamela Moore

206-438-2236

Email: pamela_moore@urscorp.com

Documents/Information Recently Added To The Information Repositories

There were no new additions to the Information Repositories in the past month.

Comment Period Closes For Proposed Plan

The public comment period on the Proposed Plan closed on February 26, 2002. Thank you to all who contributed letters, email and public testimony.

EPA has recorded over 600 comment submissions, with many more to be tallied from those who just met the deadline. We'll now begin the process of reviewing and responding to the comments and preparing the Record of Decision.

Free Residential Sampling Offered Again This Year

Free residential soil testing will be offered again this year to Basin residents.

A toll-free number will soon be available for people who are interested in signing up for testing. The number will be advertised in local newspapers and posted on EPA's Basin website within the next couple of weeks.

Again this year, the priority for soil testing will be homes where young children or pregnant women reside in the following areas: west of Pinehurst in the flood plain of the Coeur d'Alene River, including Harrison and Cataldo; east of Elizabeth Park including Osburn, Wallace, Silverton and Mullan; and areas near historic mining operations along the tributaries of the South Fork.

For residents who volunteer, testing will be done for lead and other metals in yard soils and in drinking water at homes where the water comes from a private well. Sampling will take place this spring.

To be eligible for sampling, your home must meet one of the following criteria:

- A child seven years old or younger lives in the home full time;
- A pregnant woman lives in the home;

- The drinking water source for the residence is a private well; or
- The home is a licensed day-care facility.

Note:

Since 1997, EPA has cleaned up 104 properties in The Basin including:

- 91 residences,
- 7 school yards or day-cares, and
- 6 recreational or common areas.

We have also provided 37 residences with a clean source of drinking water either by treating tap water, providing municipal hook-ups or supplying bottled water.

Questions & Answers

Starting with this issue, each month in NewsBriefs we will answer some of the questions we've heard over the last month.

Q. I'm confused, is the entire 1,500 square miles of the Coeur d'Alene River Basin watershed a Superfund site?

A. No.

Only the parts of the Basin where mine waste is present are part of the Superfund site. The areas that need cleanup are mainly near historic mining and milling operations, in areas where tailings were used as fill material and in a narrow ribbon in the River system and its flood plain. These areas represent only a small portion of the 1,500 square mile watershed. Areas where no contamination exists are not part of the Superfund site.

Q. Is it true that once the Record of Decision (ROD) is issued it cannot be changed?

A. No.

In fact, it is quite common for Records of Decision to be amended after they are issued. For example, if new information or new technologies become available, EPA can formally amend the ROD or can issue what's called an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD).

Across the country, between 1996 - 1999, more than 300 RODs were modified either by

amendments or ESDs. About half of these modifications were initiated by parties outside of EPA.

For more information about how RODs can be modified you can go to the following website:

<http://www.epa.gov/oerrpage/superfund/programs/reforms/reforms/3-2.htm>

Q. Is EPA proposing a \$1.3 billion cleanup for the Basin?

A. No.

EPA is proposing a 20 to 30-year plan estimated to cost \$359 million. There may be some confusion because EPA has said that in order to fully protect human health and the environment and comply with all environmental laws, additional cleanup work would be needed.

However, EPA is proposing to select only the 20 to 30-year cleanup plan at this time, not the \$1.3 billion cleanup alternative described in the Basin Feasibility Study. If additional work is needed after the first 30 years, that work would have to go through a public review and comment process similar to the Proposed Plan process.

Other Agency / Entity Contacts and Highlights

Bureau of Land Management

Contact: David Fortier, 208-769-5022

Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Contact: Phillip Cerner, 208-667-4119.

Panhandle Health District

Contact: Jerry Cobb, 208-783-0707

Private Land Owners / Managers

Contact: Frank Frutchey, 208-682-2077

Spokane Tribe

Contact: Randy Connolly, 509-258-7709

Contact: Fred Kirschner, 509-924-0184

State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Contact: Rob Hanson, 208-373-0290

Contact: Geoff Harvey, 208-769-1422

Contact: Luke Russell, 208-783-5781

Contact: Nick Zilka, 208-783-5781

State of Washington Department of Ecology

Contact: John Roland, 509-625-5182

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Contact: Dan Audet, 509-893-8001

United States Forest Service

Contact: Jeff Johnson, 208-765-7442

United States Geological Survey

Contact: Paul Woods, 208-387-1353

A recent newspaper article contained a statement attributing the metals at the bottom of Lake Coeur d'Alene to outboard motors and metal boats that have sunk to the bottom. This statement is incorrect.

To clarify, the data collected over more than 15 years clearly establishes the presence of metals in various forms in the lakebed sediments including sulfides, oxides and dissolved metals. The data clearly show that these metals are a result of contaminated sediments moving through the Coeur d'Alene River system and settling at the bottom of the Lake.

Much of the scientific data for metals contamination in the lake and its contributing drainage basin has been collected by scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey. If you would like more information about the data and its interpretation, contact Paul Woods, USGS lead scientist for the Coeur d'Alene studies.

Upcoming Events

Coeur d'Alene Basin Citizen Advisory Committee (CBCAC)

March 6, 2002 – 7 to 9 p.m.

Rose Lake Historical Society Building – Rose Lake, ID

Agenda: Updates on the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River Sediment TMDL and the 319 Lake Education Proposal. Coeur d'Alene Tribe Presentation of the Coeur d'Alene Lake Management Plan Review: Reservation Fisheries Projects presented by Angelo Vitale; Reservation Water Quality Programs presented by Scott Fields. Lake Management Plan Review Summary Report.

Please see CBCAC's website at www.cbac.org for meeting agendas, past meeting minutes, posted reports, readings and other valuable information.

Contact: Geoff Harvey, 208-769-1422

Shoshone Natural Resources Coalition (SNRC)

March 12, 2002 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

March 26, 2002 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Brooks Hotel - 500 Cedar Street, Wallace, ID

(Group meets second and fourth Tuesday of each month.)

Contact: Connie Fudge, 208-753-6022

Coeur d'Alene Basin Interagency Group (CBIG)

March 13, 2002 – 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Idaho Department of Fish & Game – Kathleen Ave., Coeur d'Alene

Agenda: USGS Presentations: "Assessment of Mining Effects on Aquatic Life in Streams of the Coeur d'Alene River Basin" by Terry Merritt, USGS Biologist; "Modeling of Stream Flow and Trace Element Loads, With Two USGS Models (DAFLO, LOADEST), Water Years 1999 and 2000, Coeur d'Alene River Basin" by Greg Clark, USGS Hydrologist; "Trace Element and Nutrient Loads for Coeur d'Alene River During Early January 2002 Rain-On-Snow Event" by Paul Woods, USGS Limnologist.

Contact: Jack Gunderman, 208-667-4119