



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98101

March 15, 2007

Reply To
Attn Of: ECL-112

Re: Drilling in the Area Affected by the Lakewood/Ponders Corner Superfund Site

Dear Drilling Contractor:

This is a follow-up to letters that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sent to drilling contractors in the Tacoma area in 1988 and 1997. In those letters, EPA informed drillers of contamination in an aquifer located in Pierce County and advised drillers of possible health and financial risks associated with drilling into the aquifer. The contamination is part of the Lakewood/Ponders Corner Superfund site, which is located south of Tacoma.

EPA has eliminated the source of the contamination, and the contaminated groundwater plume has decreased significantly in size. However, EPA recommends that the suspension of drilling in the area identified within the heavy lines on the map continue until the groundwater cleanup goals are met. EPA is also advising owners of properties that overlie the contaminated groundwater that they should not use or drill private drinking water wells during this period of time.

The remainder of this letter discusses drilling in more detail.

Drilling Risks and Future Drilling

Drilling into a contaminated portion of the aquifer could expose drillers to contaminated water. The chemicals of concern are dichloroethylene (cis-1,2 DCE), trichloroethylene (TCE), and tetrachloroethylene (PERC). All three chemicals are central nervous system depressants. PERC has been associated with liver damage, and TCE has been associated with irregular heartbeat. Although the likelihood of both PERC and TCE causing human cancer is currently being reviewed, there is sufficient evidence from animal studies for EPA to consider both chemicals animal carcinogens (cancer-producing agents), and therefore, suspected human carcinogens.

In addition, drilling could subject drilling contractors to financial liability under the federal Superfund law. Because the process of drilling through surface and subsurface soils and drawing up contaminated water would constitute a release of hazardous substances into the environment, drillers could be liable for all costs incurred by EPA for cleaning up the releases of the hazardous substances.

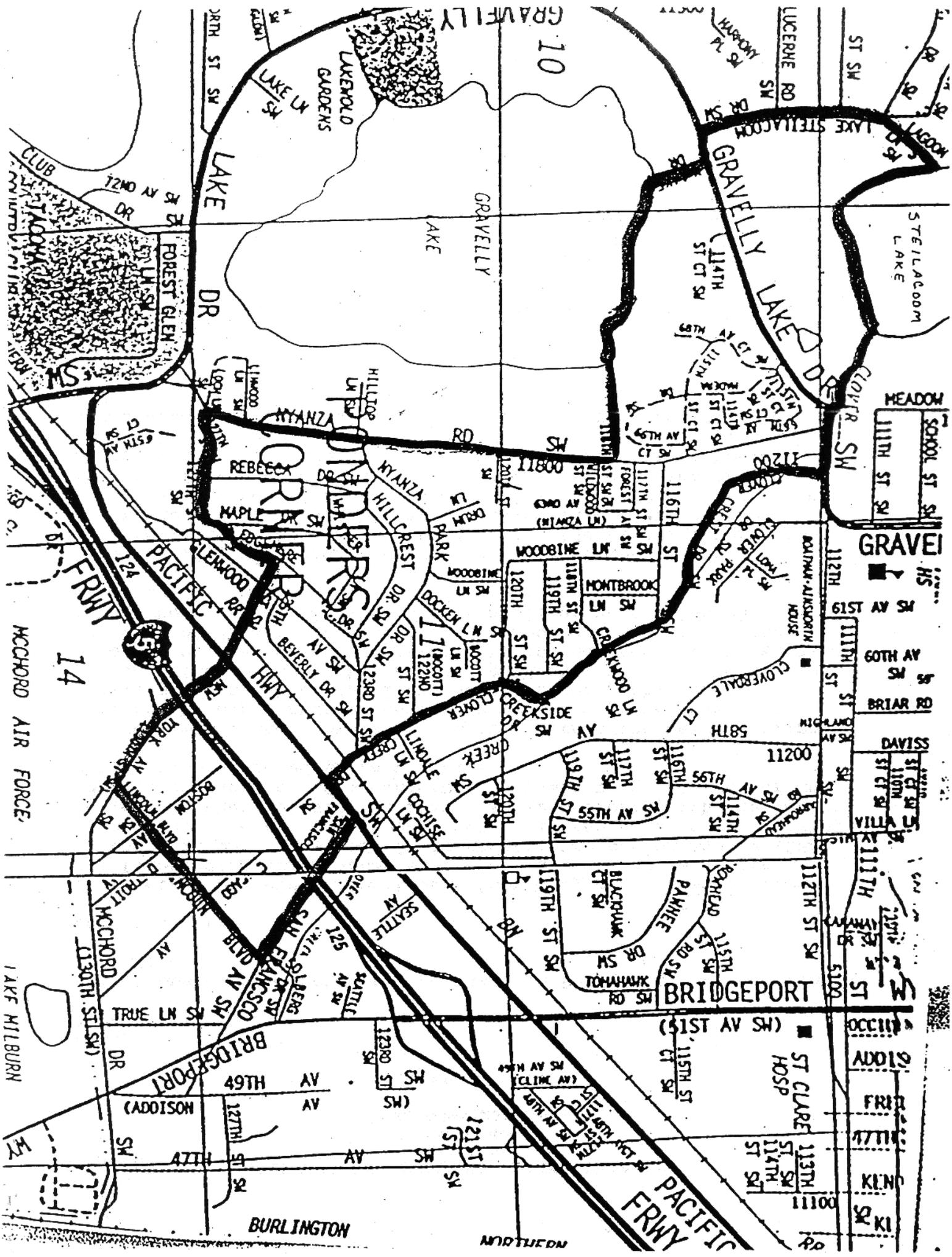
EPA anticipates that well drilling and private well use may be allowed in the future in the Lakewood area presently still affected by the Lakewood/Ponders Corner Superfund site. Contaminant levels in the groundwater, which is treated by the air stripping process, have decreased considerably.

You may direct questions about the site to EPA by contacting Superfund Project Manager Monica Tonel at (206) 553-0323, or toll free at 1-800- 424-4372.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sylvia Kawabata".

Sylvia Kawabata, Unit Manager
Assessment and Brownfields Unit #1



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