



ANACONDA / YERINGTON MINE

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Yerington, Nevada

Upcoming Removal Actions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed this fact sheet to explain upcoming removal actions at the Anaconda Yerington Mine site. During the removal work, other site activities (such as monitoring domestic wells and remedial investigation work) will continue. Information on these other activities will be presented soon, including at an evening community meeting on Thursday, September 24, 2009, 7-9 pm, at the Yerington Elementary School, 112 N. California Street.

What is a Removal Action?

A “removal action” addresses a specific environmental and/or health concern in a streamlined manner. A removal is not a final solution to a problem, but an expedient way to prevent a toxin or hazard from spreading or causing harm in the short term. Our intention is for the upcoming removal actions to contribute to the performance of long-term remedial actions.

Administrative Order on Consent (AOC)

The planned removal actions are required under an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) between EPA and the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARC). ARC is responsible for four removal actions: 1) Capping of Four Inactive Evaporation Ponds, 2) Process Area Characterization and Radiological Materials Removal, 3) Transite Pipe Removal and 4) Electrical Threats Removal (see figure on page 2). The agreement also requires ARC to maintain the Arimetco Fluids Management System. These removal actions will be conducted by ARC at an estimated cost of \$8 million. In addition, ARC has reimbursed EPA \$2.2 million for costs of overseeing ARC’s work in the past. ARC has agreed to pay future EPA oversight costs for the work under the AOC. The removal actions are anticipated to be completed over the next two years. In coordination with ARC, EPA will also conduct limited removals of a tire pile and a building that contains asbestos.

Implementing the AOC requires a partnership between the responsible party (ARC) and the regulatory agencies (EPA, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, Bureau of

Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service), and is a culmination of negotiations that took place over approximately one year. EPA works with all potentially affected parties in the planning process. To this end, we will continue to work closely with the Yerington Paiute Tribe, the Walker River Paiute Tribe and community stakeholders towards sound technical decisions and good results.

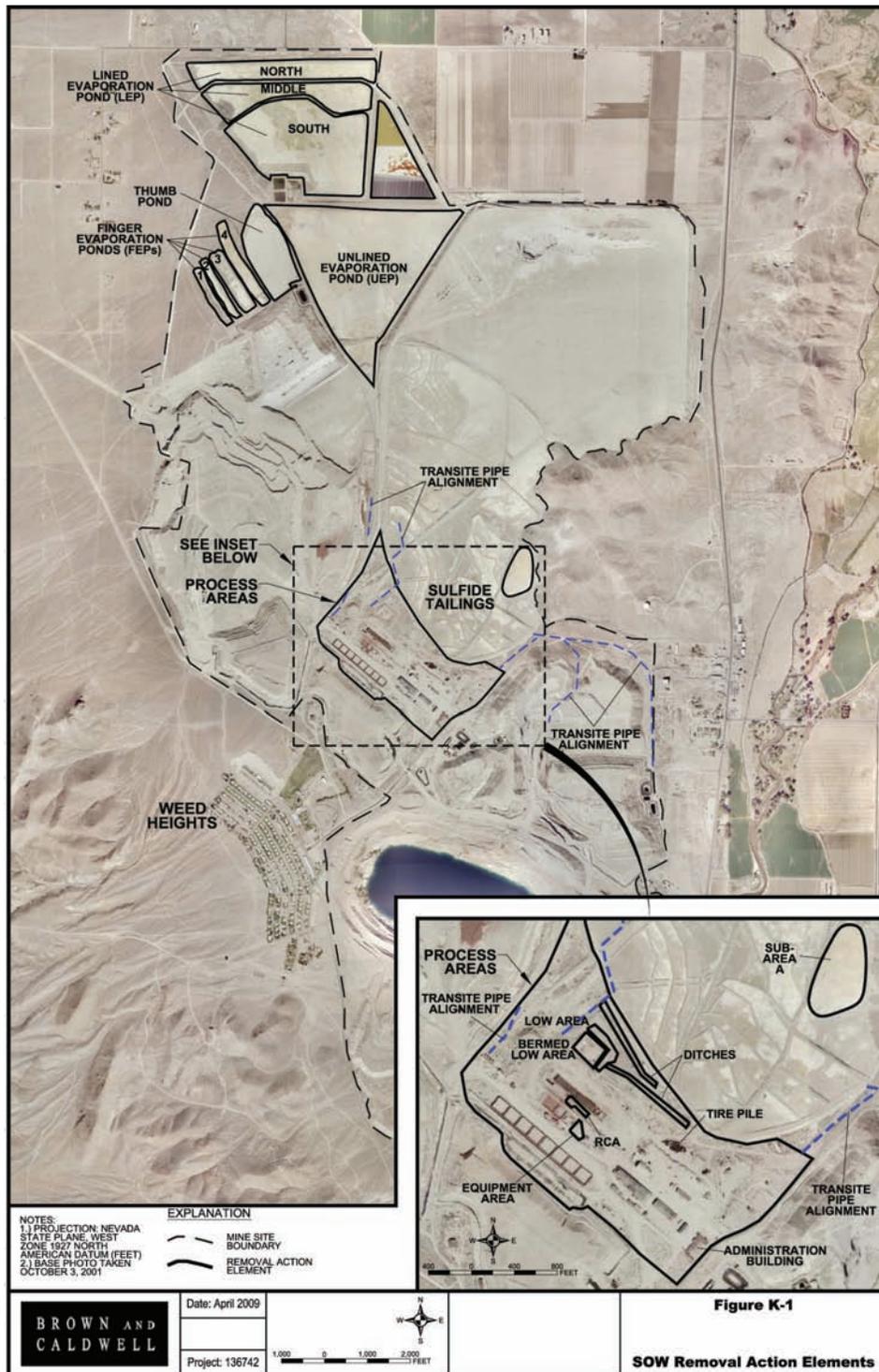
Removal Actions

Capping of Four Inactive Evaporation Ponds (lined, unlined, thumb and a portion of the sulfide tailings)

The inactive evaporation ponds will be capped with on-site vat leach tailings (VLT) to: 1) mitigate potential threats to wildlife (so that wildlife will not come into contact with acidic water in the ponds that have elevated metal concentrations) and 2) control fugitive dust. This action is not intended as a groundwater cleanup. It will take several years to investigate and develop a permanent solution to protect groundwater.

Approximately 250 acres of evaporation ponds will be capped using more than one million cubic yards of VLT material at an average 18-inch thickness. The VLT material consists of naturally occurring rock which, in the past, was subjected to an aggressive leaching process to remove metals for recovery in previous mine related operations and then washed three times. VLT has been selected due to its low potential for impact to groundwater, favorable grain size for dust suppression and high soil moisture storage. Test results of the VLT material demonstrate that radiation levels are similar to background (unimpacted areas). The VLT material is on site and close to the pond areas and is a cost-effective solution to mitigate

the immediate concerns associated with the evaporation ponds. EPA is reviewing a Draft Removal Action Data Characterization Summary Report, submitted by ARC on June 12, 2009. After the Removal Action Work Plan is approved, ARC will submit an Implementation Work Plan for approval prior to fieldwork. The fieldwork is expected to begin in early 2010. EPA and ARC have received comments from the community and tribes on the evaporation ponds removal action, which we are taking into account.



Process Area Radiological Characterization and Removal

The planned removal action will reduce potential exposure to on-site workers from radiological contamination that exceeds standards for industrial safety. Once this removal action is completed, the Radioactive Hazard signage can be removed from the site perimeter and moved, if necessary, to internal areas of the site. ARC will conduct additional characterization of the area prior to finalizing a removal action work plan. Details for the planned characterization are provided in the Draft Process Areas MARSSIM (Multi-Agency Radiation Survey and Site Investigation Manual) Characterization Work Plan, submitted June 17, 2009 and currently under EPA review.

Transite Pipe Removal

Approximately 20,420 feet of above ground asbestos-containing pipe runs across the site. The purpose of the removal is to prevent possible asbestos inhalation risk to workers if they inadvertently damage the pipes and potentially create a release of asbestos. This pipe will be removed and placed in an on-site repository, or landfill, to be constructed near the current landfill that holds construction debris. Details of this work are proposed in the Transite Pipe Removal Action Work Plan, dated August 19, 2009 and currently under review by EPA. There have been concerns raised by the community that pipe scale buildup is a radiological threat. EPA is requiring additional sampling of the transite pipe to ensure that the disposal is adequate to address any radiological materials in the pipe scale.

Electrical Threats

Because of concern for on-site workers from the risk degraded electrical system can pose to cleanup operations at the site, the old, inactive electrical systems will be de-energized. Exceptions will be for portions of the existing system that

are currently being used for site operations or may be used in the future. EPA is reviewing ARC's Potential Electrical Hazards Removal Action Work Plan, dated July 24, 2009.

Fluids Management System Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

This ongoing activity associated with the Arimetco Heap Leach System includes ponds, perimeter ditches, pipes, pumps, etc. On behalf of EPA, ARC had been conducting O&M through an earlier agreement. Now, ARC's responsibilities for this area have been expanded to include assisting EPA with any emergency measures that might be needed to control fluids – maintaining system components so they do not deteriorate, making routine repairs, monitoring various aspects of the ponds including levels, inflow rates and pumping rates as well as sampling the ponds twice a year. ARC must also maintain a bird deterrent system to keep birds from landing on standing water that may potentially be harmful to wildlife and will continue to monitor wildlife per agreements between EPA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. An updated O&M Manual was submitted to EPA by ARC on June 9, 2009 and is currently under review.

EPA-Lead Removal Actions

Asbestos-Containing Material in Mine Office Building

The Mine Office Building contains asbestos material and is on the perimeter of the site, posing potential inhalation exposure to site visitors or trespassers as the building deteriorates. EPA will demolish the building and, as with the transite pipe, dispose of the building material in a new disposal cell. EPA will prepare plans for this work after ARC has defined their plans for disposal of the transite pipe.

Tire Pile

A tire pile is located on site within the former Anaconda process area. Since the tire pile could pose a threat of fire, the tires will be removed. Disposal options (on site or off site) and recycling options are being evaluated.

Other Activities Ongoing at the Site

Although this fact sheet concentrates on the removal actions occurring or planned, other site activities are ongoing. Please note that EPA will hold a **groundwater-specific community meeting on Thursday, September 24, 2009, 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm, at the Yerington Elementary School, 112 N. California Street.**

Ongoing site activities include:

- Finalizing the Sitewide Conceptual Site Model
- Finalizing the Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Data Summary Report
- Finalizing plans for the Human Health Risk Assessment for the Inhalation Pathway
- Planning the Process Areas (OU3) Remedial Investigation approach
- Continuing Arimetco investigations, including installation of groundwater monitoring wells
- Continuing the monitoring and evaluation of the groundwater pumpback system and shallow groundwater investigation studies
- Evaluating the current domestic well sampling and drinking water supply program

For More Information

If you have questions or concerns regarding the Anaconda Yerington Mine site, please contact any of the staff below:

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EPA toll-free number
(leave a message and your call will
be returned): (800) 231-3075

Anaconda / Yerington Mine

Upcoming Removal Actions

Information Repository

Site reports and other information on the Anaconda Yerington Mine can be found at:

Lyon County Library

20 Nevin Way
Yerington, NV 89447
(775) 577-5042

Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri – 9 am to 6 pm
Tues, Thurs – 9 am to 7 pm
Saturday – 9 am to 4 pm

EPA Superfund Records Center

95 Hawthorne St. (4th floor)
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 535-2000

Hours: Mon through Fri – 8 am to 5 pm

EPA website:

www.epa.gov/region09/anaconda



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