



# ATLAS AND COALINGA ASBESTOS MINES SUPERFUND SITES

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION 9 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA • DECEMBER 2001

## FIVE-YEAR REVIEWS COMPLETED

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announces the completion of five-year reviews for the Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mines Superfund sites in Fresno County, California. After completing the reviews, the EPA found that the cleanups at both sites remain protective of human health and the environment. This fact sheet includes a summary of the five-year reviews for both sites and explains how the public can get involved in the upcoming deletion process for the Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund site from the National Priorities List (NPL).

### A Five-Year Review and What it Means

According to Superfund law, if a cleanup leaves contaminants at a Superfund site above levels that allow for unlimited use and unrestricted exposure, the cleanup will be reviewed every five years. The purpose of the review is to make sure the cleanup continues to protect human health and the environment. During the review, the EPA studies information about the site and conducts a site

inspection. The methods, findings, and conclusions of the review are documented in the five-year review report. The report can include the following: a site background and history, an explanation of the cleanup measures in place, an explanation of documents and laws reviewed and why, an explanation of the site inspection conducted and sampling results, an explanation of how the community will be notified about the review, past actions conducted from previous reviews, site recommendations if warranted and a statement of protectiveness. The statement of protectiveness explains whether the cleanup continues to

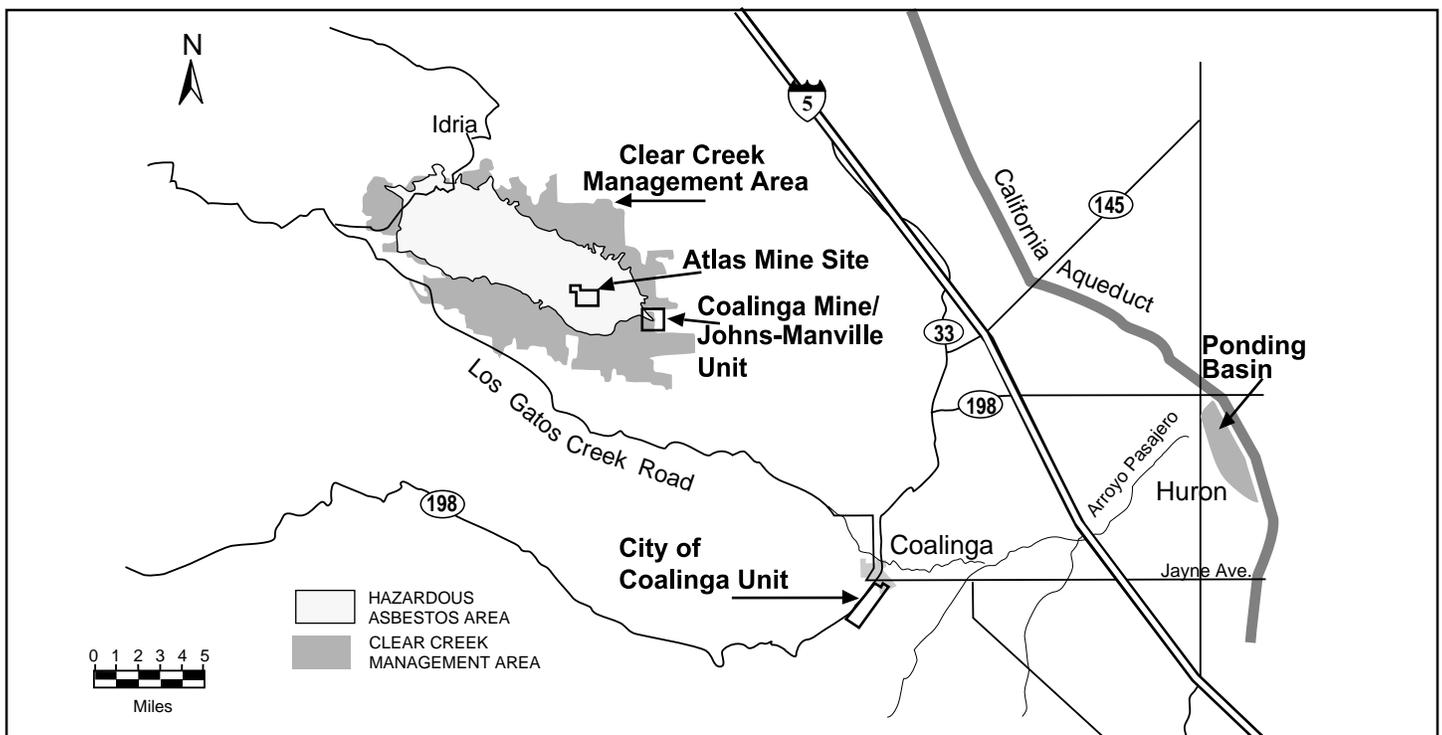


Figure 1: Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mines Superfund Sites

be effective, and can recommend improvements to ensure that the cleanup continues to be effective.

From July to September 2001, the EPA conducted reviews for the Atlas and Coalinga Mines Superfund sites. The report for each site is available for public review at the site repositories listed at the end of this fact sheet. This is the first review for the Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund site and the second five-year review for the Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund site. The City Operable Unit (City OU) is a designated OU for both the Atlas Asbestos Mine and Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund sites and is included as a part of both reports. An OU is a focused study area that allows the EPA to take each action as part of an overall, site cleanup.

The next five-year review for the Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mines Superfund sites is required in September, 2006.

## Second Five-Year Review for Coalinga Asbestos Mine Site

The Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund site consists of two operable units (OUs): the Johns-Mansville Mill (JMM OU) and the City OU. JMM OU is about 16 miles from the City of Coalinga and the City OU lies within the City limits. These facilities were active in the milling, manufacture, storage and/or transportation of asbestos materials from the 1950's until 1980.

### Cleanup Implemented at JMM and the City OUs

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As part of the cleanup at the JMM OU, the mill was dismantled and the area was graded, a cross-canyon stream diversion was built, the existing sediment trapping dam was improved, access to the site was reduced, a revegetation pilot study was conducted and the road leading into the site was paved.

The cleanup at the City OU included the removal of 1,600 cubic yards of chromite ore and asbestos-contaminated waste from the Marmac Warehouse located on Elm Avenue, the removal of stacked pipes contaminated with asbestos located at a storage yard approximately one mile south of the Marmac Warehouse, the removal of contamination from the Atlas shipping yard located near Glenn Avenue and 6th Street, and the removal of piles of raw asbestos from the U.S. Asbestos Company on the southern border of the site. The contaminated soils, equipment and other waste materials were removed from the various locations mentioned above and were permanently buried in the onsite Waste Management Unit (WMU). A protective

soil and vegetative cap cover the waste under the WMU. A deed restriction was placed on the property where the WMU is located, a fence restricts access to the site and the operation and maintenance of the unit continues. The Marmac Warehouse (later torn down for redevelopment purposes) and the Echo Transport Building were partially dismantled and the remaining steel superstructures were decontaminated by steam cleaning and a sealant was applied.

### Recommendations from Previous Coalinga Asbestos Five-Year Review

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In August 1997, an initial five-year review was conducted for the Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund site. The review found that the site remedy continued to be protective of human health and the environment. The report recommended that additional air sampling be conducted to compare asbestos levels in the redeveloped area of the site with an off-site area, and that the Echo Transport Building structure be removed. Presently, there are multiple sources of asbestos in the Los Gatos Creek drainage basin and streams that naturally erode and transport asbestos from abandoned mines to downstream areas, such as the City of Coalinga. Due to these conditions, drawing any meaningful conclusions from such a comparison study will be very difficult. Therefore, the EPA decided not to conduct the air sampling study. Union Pacific, the potentially responsible party (PRP), discussed with the EPA whether or not to remove the Echo Transport building and found that the structure's continued presence has no impact on human health and the environment. So at this time, it will not be removed. There were no recommendations for the JMM OU.

### Present Site Inspection

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The cleanup remedy at the City OU is functioning as intended. The WMU, fencing and signs noting what is contained in the area are in excellent condition. The site inspection found signs of damage where animals have burrowed into the soil cover of the WMU. However, the burrowing is not deep enough to compromise the integrity of the WMU (i.e., no waste is exposed). The maintenance crew that inspects the property monthly repairs this type of damage when they find it.

The JMM OU is secure, and the fence and signs are in good condition. The cross-canyon stream diversion and the paved road on the JMM OU are in satisfactory condition. Vegetation from the revegetation project appeared to be satisfactorily established.

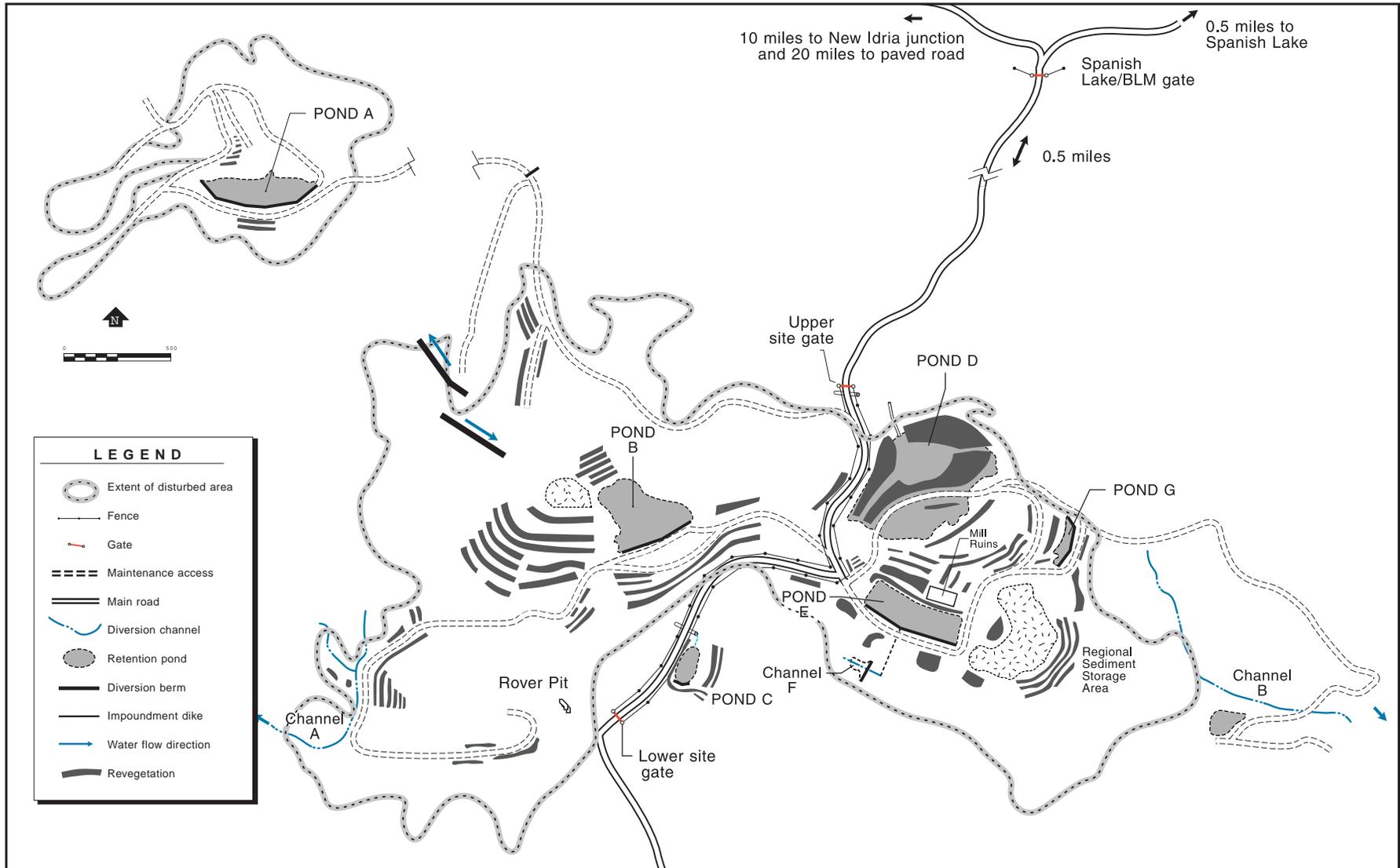


Figure 2: Overview of Revegetated Areas at Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund Site

## Statement of Protectiveness

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All threats at the City OU have been addressed through the burial of contaminated materials in the WMU, the installation of fencing and warning signs, the regular maintenance of the WMU and the recording of the deed restriction with the County of Fresno.

All threats at the JMM OU have been addressed through the removal of contaminated materials, the diversion of water around erosion prone surfaces/materials, stabilization of erosion prone areas, the installation of access controls and warning signs, and the regular maintenance program at the site.

Therefore, the remedies in place at both OUs remain protective of human health and the environment.

## Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund Site Five-Year Review

The Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund site consists of two OUs: the City OU described earlier in this fact sheet and the Atlas Asbestos Mine OU (AAM OU). The AAM OU is an abandoned asbestos mine within a large region of naturally occurring asbestos minerals. It is also within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Clear Creek Management Area. The OU is approximately 20 miles northwest of the City of Coalinga and consists of 140 acres of land.

Originally, the AAM OU included three open pit asbestos mine surface stockpiles of asbestos waste materials, an abandoned mill building, a settling pond, and debris. The area is drained by intermittent streams that end near the California Aqueduct. Adjacent land use includes mining, ranching, farming and recreation (camping, hiking, hunting and mineral collection). The site is accessible by either the BLM dirt road north of the site near Spanish Lake or from a private dirt road located near Los Gatos Road.

The primary purpose of the cleanup at the AAM OU was to reduce generation of airborne asbestos on-site by vehicles or human disturbance, reduce the transportation of asbestos by vehicles which have driven through the mine area, and reduce the release of asbestos from the mine into local creeks during heavy rains.

The cleanup of the AAM OU included controlling the release of asbestos from and restricting access to the Atlas mine area. This has been done by fencing the mine area, paving the road through the site area, building stream diversion and sediment trapping dams to minimize the release of asbestos into the local creeks, and removing the mill building and debris. Also, a revegetation study was

conducted, a deed restriction is to be filed with the County of Fresno for the property, and an operation and maintenance program will be implemented by State agencies.

## Present Site Inspection

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As part of the five-year review, the EPA inspected the AAM OU and found that the ponds, paved road, and diversion channels were in satisfactory condition. There was erosion noted to the road to the Rover Pit and the road to Pond A. Both roads did not completely fail, but their integrity is questionable. Erosion was noted on the steep slope outbound of the Regional Sediment Storage Area and revegetation project. This is reportedly in an area of naturally occurring asbestos. The revegetation project results varied and growth was minimal at best.

## Statement of Protectiveness

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According to documents reviewed and the site inspection, the cleanup remedy is functioning as intended. The remedy at the site is protective of human health and the environment, and avenues of exposure that could result in unacceptable risks are being controlled. We have recommended that the PRP continue to monitor the eroding areas on site and perform a study to determine the best means of addressing the issue. The deed restriction needs to be implemented to ensure long-term protectiveness.

## Site Deletion Process

The National Contingency Plan, which is the regulation that governs the EPA's Superfund program, provides that a site can be deleted from the National Priorities List (NPL) when no further response or cleanup is appropriate. The National Priorities List is the EPA's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term clean up. The EPA intends to remove the Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund site from the NPL and will consult with the California Department of Toxic Substance Control about this. When the EPA determines the site is ready to be removed from the NPL, a Notice of Intent to Delete will be published in the Federal Register (FR). A thirty-day public comment period on this proposed action will follow the FR publication date. The EPA will then send out a fact sheet to its mailing list and publish a notice in the City of Coalinga's local paper announcing the comment period dates and how people can comment. After considering all significant public comment, the EPA will publish a notice in the FR with its decision and a responsiveness summary to the public comments received. If you have any questions, please call Jackie Lane at (800) 231-3075.

# INFORMATION SITE REPOSITORIES

Copies of the documents and the Administrative Records that assist the EPA to make cleanup decisions at these sites are located at the following site repositories:

Superfund Records Center  
95 Hawthorne Street, 4th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
(415) 536-2000



Kings County Library  
401 North Douty  
Hanford, CA 9230  
(559) 582B0261

Coalinga District Library  
305 North 4th Street  
Coalinga, CA 93210  
(559) 935-1676

Huron City Hall  
36311 Lassen Avenue  
Huron, CA 93234  
(559) 945-2241

Avenal Public Library  
501 East Kings  
Avenal, CA 93204  
(559) 386-5741



## mailing list coupon

If you would like to be included on the mailing list to receive future mailings about the Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mines Superfund Sites, please fill out the coupon below and return to:

**Jacqueline Lane, Community Involvement Specialist**  
**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9**  
**75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-3)**  
**San Francisco, CA 94105**



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\*E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\*ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION:  
\_\_\_\_\_

(\*Optional items)

You may also provide the above information via e-mail to: Lane.Jackie@epa.gov or by calling the phone numbers on the back page.

# ATLAS AND COALINGA ASBESTOS MINES SUPERFUND SITES

## EPA CONTACTS

**Jackie Lane, SFD-3**

Community Involvement Coordinator  
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75 Hawthorne Street  
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(415) 972-3236 or (800) 231-3075

**Shea Jones, SFD-7-2**

Remedial Project Manager  
U.S. EPA Region 9  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 972-3148 or (800) 231-3075

Information about the Superfund program is available on the Internet at:  
Region 9 Web site: [www.epa.gov/region09](http://www.epa.gov/region09)  
EPA Superfund Program Web site: [www.epa.gov/superfund](http://www.epa.gov/superfund)



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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9  
75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-3)  
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Attn: Jackie Lane

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