

Removal Action Planned for September 2014

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to notify the community of a plan to conduct a controlled burn of nitroglycerin waste materials and some detonation cord at the Apache Powder Superfund Site (Site) located near St. David, seven miles south of Benson, in Cochise County, Arizona in September 2014.

The Site includes approximately 1,200 acres of land owned by Apache Nitrogen Products, Inc. (ANPI), formerly known as the Apache Powder Company. The Fact Sheet also discusses other environmental activities and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2012 Five Year Review at the Site.

Discovery of Explosive Waste Materials

ANPI recently discovered two hods (wooden carts) containing nitroglycerin mixed with other waste materials in Building #51 (see Figure 1). ANPI also discovered approximately 50 feet of detonation cord containing pentaerythritol tetranitrate (PETN) in Building #232. These buildings are located along this historic Powder Line at the Site. EPA and ANPI have determined the explosives materials, as well as the deteriorated structures, pose a health and safety risk and need to be removed.

ANPI has submitted a Removal Action Work Plan to EPA to remove the explosive materials in September 2014.



Figure 1. Wooden Hods with Nitroglycerin Waste Materials

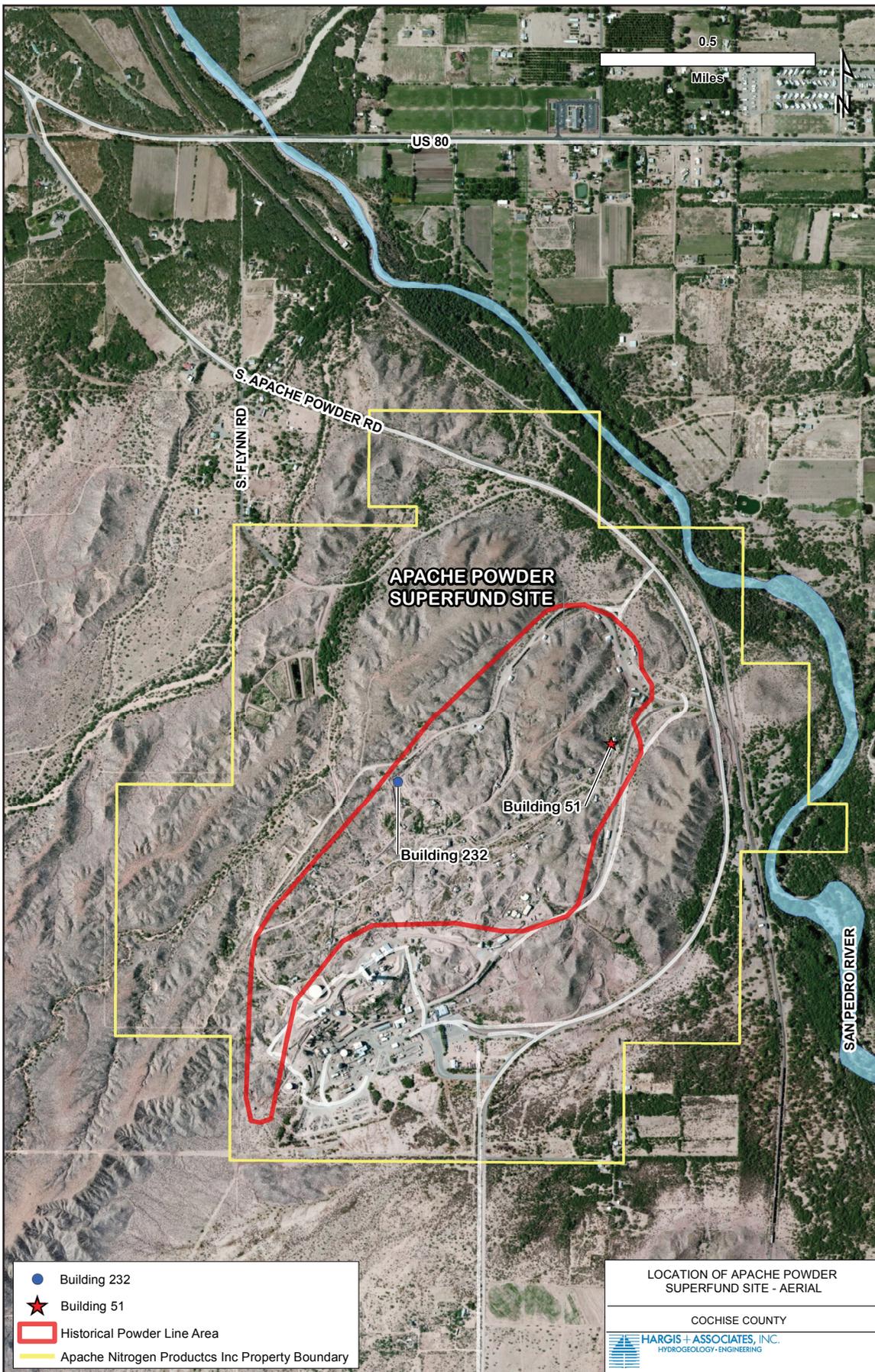


Figure 2. Location of Buildings #51 and #232 and ANPI Property Boundary

Scope of Nitroglycerin and PETN Removal Action

ANPI will conduct a controlled burn of Building #51 to destroy the nitroglycerin waste materials and the PETN detonation cord in place at the same time (see Figure 3).

The removal action will be conducted with oversight and technical support from EPA, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), the Cochise County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), the Benson and St. David Fire Departments and other technical experts. Personnel from all these agencies have been involved in the planning process and will be present on the burn-day as part of a training exercise. ANPI will also hold a health and safety briefing for the nearby neighbors of the facility on August 20, 2014, to answer any logistical questions about the controlled burn.

Air monitoring will be conducted to measure the air quality prior to the controlled burn, during the burn and after the burn. Samples will also be collected of the ash after the controlled burn to ensure that there is no residual presence of hazardous or explosive materials. All the work plans and air monitoring data and reports will be available from EPA or at the Benson information repository. For more information, please see the contact information on the last page of this Fact Sheet.



Figure 3. Exterior View of Building #51

Legacy Issues at Historic Powder Line

In late 2012, ANPI began work to remove “legacy” health and safety concerns at the plant site. EPA approved an ANPI work plan to decommission and demolish selected site buildings, including identifying and remediating any asbestos containing material or lead-based paint in the structures, and to identify any potentially hazardous materials that would need to be removed before the buildings could be demolished.

Due the age of many of the buildings on the historic Powder Line, ANPI has also conducted an historical architectural survey under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to comply with federal and state historic preservation requirements.

Other On-Going Activities Including Five Year Reviews

For sites such as Apache Powder where the remedial construction activities are complete, but the long-term operation and maintenance of the remedy is still on-going, EPA continues to conduct Five Year Reviews. The purpose of the Five Year Review is to determine if the remedy continues to be protective of human health and the environment. Five Year Reviews for the Site were completed in 2002, 2007 and 2012.

The most recent 2012 Five Year Review Report concluded that the groundwater remedy is functioning as intended in the Northern Area, but not as planned in the Southern Area. Consequently, other remedy alternatives for the Southern Area groundwater are now being considered by EPA and ANPI, in coordination with ADEQ. However, because the Southern Area contaminated groundwater is hydraulically contained in this area and there are restrictions on drinking water from any on-site wells within the contaminated plume, there is no health risk. In 2012, no other new information was discovered that called into question the protectiveness of the selected remedy. The Five Year Report concluded that the Site remedy is protective of human health and the environment for both groundwater and soils because there is no current exposure.

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The Superfund program places a high value on community input in addressing hazardous waste cleanups. Your comments are invited and encouraged. If you have any questions or concerns about cleanup activities at the Site, please contact:

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Information Repository

The Administrative Record for this Removal Action, including all documents pertinent to the Site, are available for review at:

Benson Library
300 South Huachuca St.
Benson, AZ 85602
(520) 586-9535

For More Information

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**Apache Powder
Superfund Site**

