



Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund Sites

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency · Region 9 · San Francisco, CA · December 2006

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW COMPLETE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completed the 2005 Five-Year Review for the Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund Sites located in Fresno County, California. This fact sheet provides a brief summary of the review for both sites. The site was divided into separate areas or operable units (OUs) to more effectively address the contamination at the sites. The final report is available at the sites' information repositories (see page 4 for more information). This fact sheet discusses the review results, protectiveness of the remedies, issues identified and recommendations to ensure continued effectiveness of the remedies.

A Five-Year Review is required by statute when hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants remain at a site above levels that allow for unrestricted use and unlimited exposure. The Five-Year Review

makes the determination whether the implemented remedy is functioning as intended by the Record of Decision (ROD) and is protective of human health and the environment. The ROD is a formal document that selects the remedy and sets the cleanup goals for the site.

This is the second Five-Year Review for the Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund Site and the third Five-Year Review for the Coalinga Asbestos Superfund Mine Site. Previous reviews determined that the remedies for the Sites were protective of human health and the environment, and recommended specific actions. The recommended actions were completed prior to this review. The triggers for these statutory reviews are the dates of the previous Five-Year Reviews (September 27 and 28, 2001).

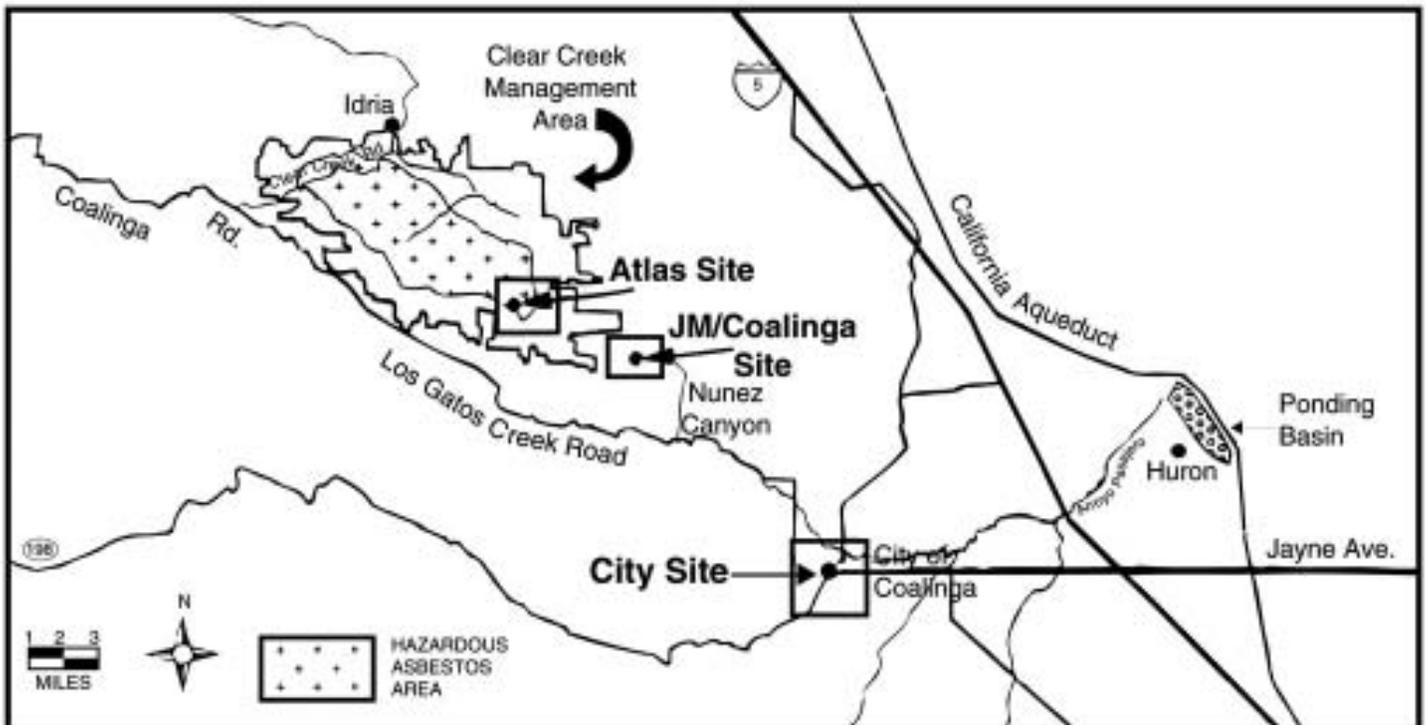


Figure 1: Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mines Superfund Sites

Description of Sites

Atlas Asbestos Mine Superfund Site

This site consists of two OUs and two geographic areas: the Atlas Mine Area (OU1), City of Coalinga (City-OU2), the Clear Creek Management Area (CCMA), and the Arroyo Pasajero Ponding Basin (Ponding Basin)(See Figure 1, Pg. 1). The Atlas Mine Area is an abandoned asbestos mine within a region of naturally-occurring asbestos minerals (the CCMA). Prior to cleanup, the Atlas Mine Area included surface stockpiles of asbestos waste material generated from three open-pit asbestos mines, an abandoned mill building, a settling pond, and debris. The area is drained by intermittent streams into Los Gatos Creek, a tributary to the Arroyo Pasajero drainage basin (Ponding Basin). During historic heavy flooding, asbestos-laden water has filled the Ponding Basin and been released into the California Aqueduct.

Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund Site

This site consists of two operable units: the Johns-Manville Mill (JMM-OU1) and the City-OU2, mentioned above. Prior to cleanup, the abandoned JMM-OU1 consisted of a processing mill, support buildings, and asbestos tailings. The area is drained by Pine Canyon Creek, which flows into the Los Gatos Creek, a tributary to the Ponding Basin. This Site was deleted from the National Priorities List in 1998 (See Figure 1, Pg. 1).

City of Coalinga Operable Unit

Asbestos product from both the Atlas Mine Area-OU1 and JMM-OU1 was transported to the 107-acre City-OU2, located approximately 20 miles to the southeast, along Highway 198 at the southwestern end of the City of Coalinga. Within the City-OU2, asbestos was stored, handled and shipped. Since contamination in the area originated from both the Atlas Mine Area and Johns-Mansville Mill, USEPA designated the area as a single operable unit shared by the two Sites.

CCMA and Ponding Basin

The ROD for the Atlas Mine Area prescribed specific activities for two “geographic areas,” the CCMA and Ponding Basin. These activities were intended to

address concerns about potential asbestos risks in these areas. In 1992 USEPA published a public notice which stated that USEPA would take no further action regarding the Ponding Basin under Superfund regulations. USEPA continues to work with the Bureau of Land Management, which manages the CCMA, to determine how to address asbestos risks to human users of the area. Since the activities prescribed by the ROD for the CCMA and Ponding Basin have been satisfied, and since these areas are not OUs, they are not considered in this Five-Year Review. However, updated technical information for these areas is provided in an appendix of the Five-Year Review Report.

Main Concerns and Remedies

Based on concentrations of asbestos detected prior to cleanup activities, USEPA concluded that Atlas and Coalinga Mine Superfund Sites presented an elevated risk of lung cancer. When inhaled, asbestos can be permanently lodged in the lungs, creating a chronic source of irritation. The longer the exposure and greater the number of fibers inhaled, the greater the potential for developing lung cancer, mesothelioma, or asbestosis.

The cleanup remedies for the Atlas Mine Area OU1 (See Figure 2, Pg. 3) and the JMM OU1 included stabilization of erosion-prone areas, revegetation, removal and disposal of contaminated structures and debris, road improvements, access controls, and land use covenants.

The remedy for the City-OU2 included the onsite burial and capping of contaminated soils and materials, as well as a land use covenant. Land use covenants are legal documents that restrict the use of the property and “run with the land,” which means that the restrictions apply even if the property is transferred to a new owner. For these Sites, land use covenants are intended to ensure that the property use is protective of human health and the environment.

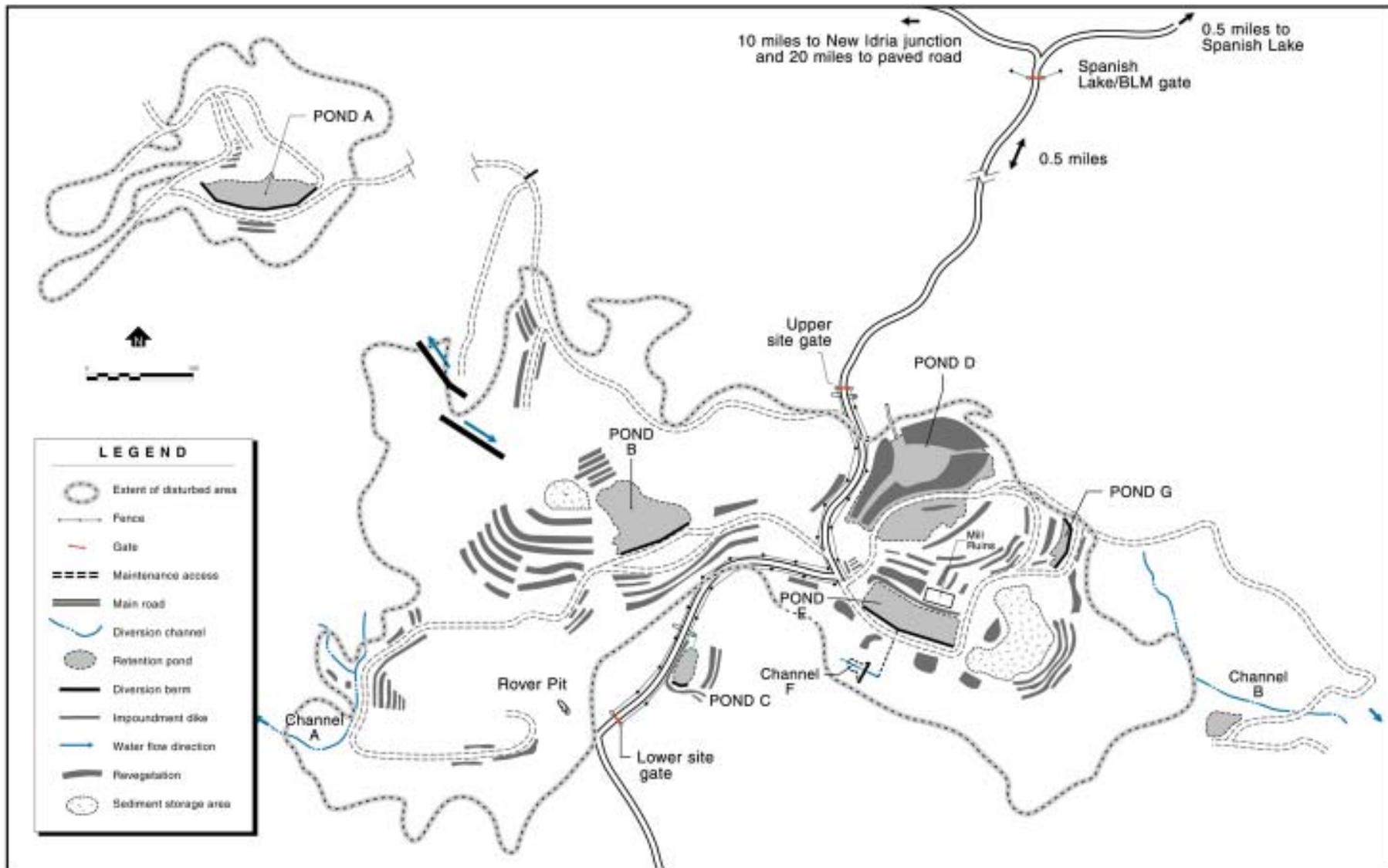


Figure 2: Cleanup Area: Atlas Mine OUI

Results of Five-Year Review

The following summarizes the protectiveness determinations for the Atlas and Coalinga Superfund Site OUs. Issues and recommendations for each OU are listed in Table 1 on page 5.

The parties responsible for carrying out the actions are: the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), which is the state oversight agency; the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Northrop Grumman, Pine Canyon Land Company (PCLC), and Union Pacific, which are responsible parties; and the City of Coalinga, which is the property owner of the City-OU2.

Atlas Mine Area OU1 and JMM OU1

The remedies at the Atlas Mine Area OU1 and the JMM OU1 are functioning as intended and are protective of human health and the environment. Although the existing land use covenant for the JMM OU1 needs updating, long-term protectiveness is already ensured through engineering controls that eliminate exposure to asbestos. Identification of

alternate access roads at the Atlas Mine Area OU1 is an issue that should be addressed, but does not affect protectiveness.

City-OU2

The protectiveness of the remedy for the City-OU2 is deferred until further site-specific information is obtained (See Table 1 for more detail). In addition, an amended land use covenant and updated signs are needed at the City-OU2, although these issues do not affect protectiveness.

Next Steps

The EPA will work with the agencies and Potential Responsible Parties (PRPs) to develop a plan of action to implement the Five-Year Review recommendations. As part of this effort, EPA will obtain more site-specific information to determine whether the cleanup of the City-OU2 is protective and issue an addendum to the Five-Year Review Report which summarizes the results of this investigation and makes a protectiveness determination. This addendum will be made available to the public.

Site Information Repository

The following locations have the site cleanup documents available for public review for the Atlas and Coalinga Mine Superfund Sites:



Coalinga District Library

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



Avenal Public Library

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



Kings County Library

Hanford Branch
401 North Douty
Hanford, CA 93230
(559) 582-0261



Martin Luther King Library

1 Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0028
(408) 808-2000

Summary Table 1: Issues, Recommendations and Follow-up Actions

Issue	Recommendations and Follow-up Actions	Party Responsible	Oversight Agency	Milestone Date	Affects Protectiveness (Y/N)	
					Current	Future
Atlas Mine Area OU1						
Erosion at roads to Rover Pit/Channel A and Pond A; Landslide along road to Rover Pit/Channel A	Identify alternate access roads to Rover Pit/Channel A area and Pond A	Northrop Grumman/ BLM	USEPA	3/2008	N	N
JMM OU1						
Recorded deed restriction does not run with land	Re-record deed restriction to be consistent with current DTSC regulations	PCLC	DTSC	6/2008	N	N
City OU2						
New exposure assumptions indicate 1 percent asbestos soil cleanup level specified in the ROD may not be protective of human health and the environment for the unrestricted area of the City OU2	Evaluate the protectiveness of the asbestos cleanup level (<1 percent) in three phases Phase 1: Review information and determine the extent of soil with residual asbestos left onsite Phase 2: Develop workplan Phase 3: Evaluate results from workplan and identify potential further actions	USEPA	USEPA	10/2008 (Phase 1) 10/2009 (Phase 2) 10/2010 (Phase 3)	D*	D*
Recorded deed restriction does not run with land and contains incorrect legal description of the restricted area	Re-record deed restriction to be consistent with current DTSC regulations and contain an accurate legal description of the restricted area	City of Coalinga (per Quiet Title Judgment)	DTSC	6/2008	N	N
DTSC phone number on signs is no longer valid	Signs should be updated with a current phone number for DTSC	Union Pacific	DTSC	3/2007	N	N
* D = Deferred. Protectiveness determination deferred until further information is obtained regarding potential human health risks of residual asbestos in soil located in the unrestricted portion of the City OU2.						

EPA Completes Five-Year Review for the Atlas and Coalinga Asbestos Mine Superfund Sites

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EPA Web Page

For more site information, go to the EPA Web Page at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r9/sfund/r9sfdocw.nsf/>
Go down the page and click "Site Overviews."

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