



Klau / Buena Vista Mine Superfund Site

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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Region 9

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San Francisco, CA

San Luis Obispo County, California

June 2008

Removal Action to Improve Collection of Mine Drainage

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is on site at the Klau/Buena Vista Mine to reinforce and control leaking mine tailings, improve the capacity of a sedimentation basin and repair a sinkhole. These activities are necessary due to heavy rains that have destabilized areas on the site. This fact sheet will explain what activities will take place at the mine sites this summer.

What's Been Done So Far

EPA has engaged in several activities over the past few years to protect the environment in the short term from mercury-laden drainage until a long-term remedy is chosen. Mine tailings were relocated from a drainage area to a repository. Erosion that had developed was re-graded and hydro-seeded. Mine adits and shafts were sealed to prevent rain from getting into the underground mine workings. Some seepage of sediment and acid mine drainage then occurred following heavy winter rains, and this was corrected by cleaning out the sediment basins and further addressing areas of erosion. Additional stabilization of slopes around the repositories was also done.

What the Problem is Now

Erosion from additional rain events threatens the North and South Forks of Las Tablas Creek and, ultimately, the Las Tablas watershed and Lake Nacimiento Reservoir (see



Seepage on slope of tailings repository

photo). Without the current removal activities and regular site maintenance, elevated levels of mercury will move from the sediment on site to these offsite areas. The planned activities described below will significantly protect human health and the environment until a long-term remedy is established.

What EPA Will Do This Summer

The removal action began the week of June 9, 2008, and the following events will occur over the next few months:

- Preparing the site and mobilizing for the activities; this includes grading some access roads on and to the site and bringing in equipment and personnel
- At the Buena Vista Mine, rerouting drainage channels and constructing additional sedimentation basins on the north and south sides of the repository to intercept and retain sediments and seepage
- Cleaning out existing sedimentation basins at both Buena Vista and Klau mines to improve capacity
- Re-grading and improving drainage areas on access roads to both mines to correct erosion
- Placing fill material in a sinkhole on the Klau Mine
- Grading, contouring, re-vegetating and diverting storm water from existing slopes

Most of the above activities will take approximately six weeks to complete and will stabilize both mine sites for the upcoming winter season. The hydro-seeding of the new slopes will take place in later summer.

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For More Information

If you have questions about EPA's removal action or the Klau/Buena Vista site in general, please do not hesitate to contact either of the staff below:

James Sickles

Remedial Project Manager (SFD-7-2)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne St.
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 972-3265
sickles.james@epa.gov

Vicki Rosen

Community Involvement
Coordinator (SFD-3)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne St.
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 972-3244
rosen.vicki@epa.gov

Information Repositories

Documents related to the Klau/Buena Vista Mine site can be found at the following locations:

Paso Robles Public Library

1000 Spring Street
Paso Robles, CA 93446
(805) 237-3870
Mon – Fri 10 am to 8 pm
Saturday 10 am to 5 pm



Both Jim and Vicki can be reached toll-free at (800) 231-3075. Please leave a message and your call will be returned.

Additional information on the Klau/Buena Vista Mine Superfund site can be found on our web page:
www.epa.gov/region09/klaubuenavista



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United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-3)
San Francisco, CA 94105
Attn: Vicki Rosen (K/BVM 6/08)

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