



Argonaut Mine

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 9 – San Francisco, CA – July 22, 2014

EPA in Your Neighborhood: Sampling in the Coming Weeks

Argonaut Mine Site

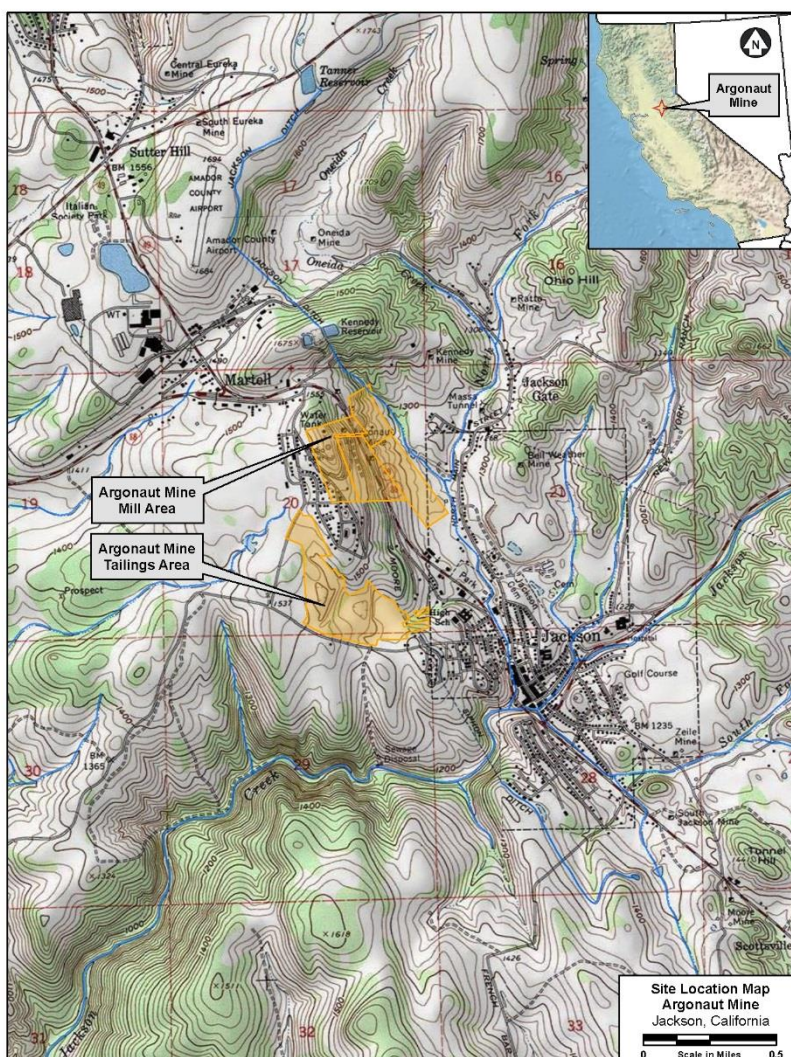
The Argonaut Mine site is a former gold mine tailings disposal area and mill located along Argonaut Lane in Jackson, CA. The Argonaut Mine operated as a gold mine from the 1850s until 1942 and consists of two main areas: the Mill Area and the Tailings Area (collectively, the “site”). EPA’s primary goal is to eliminate significant threats to public health and the environment caused by hazardous substances.

As many residents are aware, EPA conducted an assessment of areas near the Argonaut Mine in Fall 2013. EPA is continuing work at the Argonaut site to further understand if there is a release of hazardous substances to the environment and what should be done to address this release. As a part of this work, EPA will be in the area collecting samples of soil, sediment and surface water over the next few weeks. This fact sheet is a guide to let residents to know where, when and what EPA is doing in their neighborhood.

Collecting Samples

Beginning the week of July 28, 2014, EPA will collect soil, sediment, and surface water samples on properties around Jackson. All land owners whose properties EPA would like to sample were notified by mail several weeks ago. They received informational letters and a request to grant limited access to EPA specifically for this sampling activity.

During the week of August 4, 2014, EPA will collect soil samples in the drainage channel below the concrete tailings dam near Sutter Street and Argonaut Drive. Previous sampling in this area revealed high levels of arsenic, and the goal of EPA’s new sampling effort is to define the extent of the contaminated area. By doing this, EPA will be able to more accurately understand the nature of the contamination.



Dam Safety Assessment

EPA will also conduct a tour of the dam for state and local regulatory agencies. The purpose of this tour is for agency regulators to learn about the dam stability assessment currently being performed by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) under an interagency agreement.

From August 18-22, EPA's team and the USACE will drill four boreholes near the earthen and concrete tailings dams as a part of the dam stability assessment.

Sampling in Your Neighborhood

Timeframe	Activity
Week of July 28	EPA to collect soil, sediment and surface water samples at both Mill Area and Tailings Area
Week of August 4	EPA to collect soil samples to characterize contaminated area at concrete tailings dam
August 4	EPA to conduct tour of dam for state and local regulatory agencies
Week of August 18-22	EPA and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to drill boreholes as part of assessment of dam stability

As work moves forward, EPA will continue to provide the public with more information and will hold a community-wide meeting. EPA will also share sampling results as they become available.

For More Information:

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