

**United States Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Region IV**  
**POLLUTION REPORT**

**Date:** Saturday, March 14, 2009

**From:** Terrence Byrd

**To:** Terrence Byrd, EPA

**Subject:** Excavation of diversion channel.

Ore Knob Mine Site

Ore Knob, NC

Latitude: 36.4086670

Longitude: -81.3238890

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	10	<b>Site #:</b>	A4ND
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	2/28/2009-3/13/2009	<b>D.O. #:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	10/20/2008	<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	10/20/2008	<b>Response Type:</b>	Time-Critical
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>NPL Status:</b>	NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>		<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>	NCN000409895	<b>Contract #</b>	
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

#### **Site Description**

The Site contains areas affected by mining, including three principal areas that were directly affected by mining along with other areas, primarily downstream, where hazardous substances have come to be located. The three principal areas include the 1950s Mine and Mill Area, the 19th Century Operations Area and a Main Tailings Impoundment. The Action memo recommends response actions to address threats from the main tailings impoundment.

The 1950's Mine and Mill Area comprises 15 acres and is located northwest of the intersection of Ore Knob Road and Little Peak Creek Road, just north of Highway 88. This area contains derelict ore bins, concrete mill foundations, a transformer building, other ruins, a small sawmill currently in operation, two acres with about 10,000 cubic yards of tailings - now mostly covered with stumps, and a two acre former pond where process water was stored. Little Peak Creek starts just upstream of the former pond, flows through the former pond, and discharges into Peak Creek 2.5 miles downstream.

The 19th Century Operations Area and the Main Tailings Impoundment are located across Little Peak Creek Road, at the end of Ore Knob Mine Road. The 19th Century Operations Area includes a series of barren and nearly barren stretches of land (totaling about 5 acres) near the top of Ore Knob that contain waste rock dumps from at least 11 mine shafts as well as locations where ore was roasted to drive off sulfur and smelted to recover copper.

#### **Current Activities**

During this reporting period, activities conducted at the Site included: monitoring of ground water quality at the designated monitoring locations, surface water sampling, excavation of subsoil, excavation of loose rock, rock breaking with a hoe ram equipped excavator, excavation of the sediment pond, removal and stockpiling of materials from the location of the proposed diversion channel, screening stockpiled materials with a power screener and segregating, and initiating the treatability study of soil amendments for use at the Site.

On 3/03/09 the treatability study was initiated with with the liquid cells. Tailings were excavated from a test pit on 3/04/2009 and the treatability study was initiated on cells containing solid materials on 3/05/2009.

#### **Planned Removal Actions**

Planned removal actions during the next reporting period include: rock breaking with a hoe ram equipped excavator, water quality monitoring at designated locations, conducting a treatability study, de-watering and backfilling small ponds on the east side of the site, initiate drilling and blasting activities at the site to obtain required elevation for bottom of diversion channel, removal of blasted rock from area of diversion

channel, continue using a power screener to separate soil and rock into three particle size stockpiles for later use at the site.

**Estimated Costs \***

	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Total To Date</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>% Remaining</b>
<b>Extramural Costs</b>				
<b>Intramural Costs</b>				
<b>Total Site Costs</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%

\* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

[response.epa.gov/OreKnob](http://response.epa.gov/OreKnob)

POLREP #10 Last Updated 4/28/2009