

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IX
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Saturday, August 8, 2009

From: Michelle Rogow

Subject: Channel and creek construction continues
Altoona Mine Site
Shasta -Trinity National Forest, Castella, CA
Latitude: 41.1367000
Longitude: -122.5475000

POLREP No.:	20	Site #:	09PC
Reporting Period:	8/3/09-8/9/09	D.O. #:	9015
Start Date:	7/7/2008	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	7/6/2008	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	EP-W-07-022
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Altoona Mine is an abandoned mercury mine located approximately 11 miles (as the crow flies) west of the town of Castella in Trinity County, California. The approximate geographic coordinates of the mine are 41 E 8'12.7" north latitude, 122 E 32'51" west longitude. The mine is located on private land within the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The Shasta-Trinity National Forest is administered by the United States Forest Service (USFS).

The Altoona Mine site is comprised of an abandoned and backfilled vertical mine, with an adjacent ore processing area, former retort areas, and waste rock and tailings piles. There are collapsed remains of wooden structures at the ore processing area, and other collapsed wooden structures are scattered about the periphery of the mine site.

The mine was comprised of six levels of horizontal shafts which branch out from the main vertical shaft, and two levels of horizontal shafts which branch out from the second vertical shaft. The eight horizontal shafts comprise a total of over 10,000 linear feet.

The mine is located on an escarpment which faces southeast. The ore processing area is located immediately southwest of the surmised location of the main adit, and tailings piles are located southeast (downhill) of the processing area. The base of the tailings piles is approximately 80 feet below the elevation of the processing area.

Water from the mine flows from under the tailings piles, down Soda Creek to the east fork of the Trinity River, which is approximately one mile to the southeast of the mine. As no flowing water was found immediately upgradient of the mine, the water source of Soda Creek is assumed to be an underground source, which likely flows through mine passageways.

Current Activities

8/3/09 - EPA: 2; ERRS: 12

ERRS continued installation of the main drainage below the repository, steadily progressing. ERT Johnson continued to work on drainage construction. Work also continued on slope of the repository berm to obtain a 1:8 to 1 slope, with more material being hauled in from the old screen plant. Equipment continued to work on the rock stockpiles at the new screen plant and on unscreened material at the old screen plant. Dust control operations continued. ERRS continued to place coir mat on mine waste area slopes as time allowed. OSC coordinated with Roseburg Resources regarding restoration and visiting the site.

8/4/09 - EPA: 2; ERRS: 11; SHN: 2

ERRS continued installation of the main drainage below the repository, steadily progressing. ERT Johnson continued to work on drainage construction. Work also continued on slope of the repository berm to obtain a 1:8 to 1 slope. The surveyors were on site, to locate the leachate collection pipe, gather points on the revised berm slope and stake the remaining berm slope. Equipment continued to work on the rock

stockpiles at the new screen plant and on unscreened material at the old screen plant. Dust control operations continued. A screen plant was mobilized today to begin work needed in order to get appropriate rock for drainages. The screen had to be walked up to the new screen plant which took most of the day. One excavator bucket was switched out, in order to install drainages at the toe of slope more effectively. Another bucket was demobed, with its replacement still to come. 4 of the coir rolls which were stored downgradient near the creek were moved to the mine waste area.

8/5/09 - EPA: 2; ERRS: 12

ERRS continued installation of the main drainage below the repository, working with ERT Johnson. Work also continued on slope of the repository berm to obtain a 1:8 to 1 slope. The screen plant was set up at the new screen plant and operations began to screen rock for the channels. Some larger rock was plucked from the side banks along the 133, where it had been deposited last year. Dust control operations continued. The remaining coir rolls which were not used last year were moved up into the mine waste area to be used.

8/6/09 - EPA: 2; ERRS: 12

ERRS continued installation of smaller drainage channels below the repository berm, working with ERT Johnson. Work also continued on slope of the repository berm to obtain a 1:8 to 1 slope. The screen plant continued to screen rock for the channels. Work was conducted to repair roads around the site. Thunder and lightning preceded rainfall in the afternoon, and operations were ceased early when haul roads became difficult to operate safely on. Action memo for increase of ceiling to \$6 million was signed by Region 9 Superfund Assistant Director.

8/7/09 - EPA: 1; ERRS: 12

ERRS continued installation of the main drainage below the repository, working towards the confluence of the channels. Some final cleanup on the southeast slope of the repository berm was done and additional material was brought in to raise berm to facilitate effective water flow off of the repository. A trench was excavated on the south east berm to anchor coir mat on the slope face. Approximately 15 strips of 900 coir were placed and stapled onto the southeast repository berm. The screen plant continued operations and began to screen material from the camp area. Grading and repair of roads was conducted after yesterday's rain event.

8/8/09 - EPA: 1; ERRS: 12

ERRS continued installation of the main drainage below the repository, successfully completing installation of the confluence of the channels below the eastern side of the repository. Most of the crew worked on placement of coir mat on the repository berm slope face, until the southeast side of the repository berm was completed. Work was also conducted on re-installation of the coir on the face of the repository, now that final grading has been completed. The screen plant continued operations and continued to screen material from the camp area.

8/9/09 – Day off!

Planned Removal Actions

1. Complete restoration of the creek.
2. Install drainage channels on repository berm and around the west side repository berm toe.
3. Complete repository berm.
4. Complete restoration of the mine waste area.
5. Repair damage from winter season.
6. Install erosion control measures.
7. Install leachate collection tank.
8. Restore operating areas and private lands.
9. Winterize site and roads.

Next Steps

Complete creek restoration.

Continue construction of the repository berm and top of berm channel.

Installation of drainages at the toe of the repository berm.

Key Issues

Action memo ceiling increase for additional funding is awaiting for approval by AA for OSWER.