

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region X
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Thursday, July 29, 2004

From: Andrew Smith

Subject: Initiation of Action

Le Roi Smelter/Northport
117 Park Road, Northport, WA
Latitude: 48.9231000
Longitude: -117.7672000

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	WAD988507323
Reporting Period:	7/19 - 7/28	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	7/19/2004	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	7/18/2004	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:	10/10/2004	NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Le Roi Smelter site covers approximately 30 acres at the northeast end of Northport, Washington. Northport covers approximately 372 acres, and is located along the east bank of Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake (Lake Roosevelt) on the upper Columbia River. Northport is approximately 7 miles south of the Canadian border and 35 miles north of Colville, Washington. The site is divided into two areas: the 30-acre abandoned smelter/lumber mill complex and the residential yard removal in the Northport community.

According to the results of a preliminary assessment/site inspection conducted in the area, the facility began smelting copper and gold tellurium ores from the Le Roi Mine in Rossland, British Columbia, and copper, lead, and silver ores from northeastern Washington in 1896. Heap roasting of tellurium ore involved open roasting on brick platforms. Burned ore was placed in a furnace that produced iron and slag waste. Some of the waste was formed into bricks that were then used as construction materials for on-site as well as off-site buildings. The gold and copper concentrate was shipped off the site by rail for further refining. At the peak of operation, the Le Roi Smelter processed 500 tons of ore per day; operations were suspended in 1909. In 1914, the Le Roi Smelter reopened to process lead ore from Leadpoint, Washington, to meet government demand during World War I. Lead smelting operations during this period produced up to 30 tons per day of airborne sulfur emissions. Operations ceased permanently in 1921, and the smelter site remained inactive until 1953. The furnace, roaster, crusher, and ore buildings were removed from the site during this period of inactivity. From 1953 to 2001, the entire smelter site was used as a lumber mill; the main lumber operations were located in the western portion of the property, and the eastern portion of the site was used to store lumber products and old metal parts. The lumber mill processed mostly cedar wood from rough-dimension lumber into exterior siding and exterior paneling. Mill processes included cutting, drying, and shipping the wood products. Mill operations were run on propane; no wood treatment or chemical use was reported during the mill's operating history.

Current Activities

The EPA began site operations on July 19, 2004. EPA has consolidated all the metal on-site for the current landowner to recycle when site operations are concluded. Site operations have included setting up of equipment, getting access to a water supply utilizing the Columbia River with access from the Bureau of Reclamation, conducting site clean-up and beginning phases of the consolidation of materials on-site. EPA has also conducted a hazardous materials investigation discovering one 30-gallon drum on site with an unknown liquid (likely oil waste); one 850 gallon UST that was installed 35 years ago; and one AST that is 1/3 full of an unknown liquid (likely oil waste).

A site investigation was conducted with the Washington State Historic Preservation to investigate any structures or features that might be of historic importance. Historic society concluded that structures at the abandoned smelter site are eligible under criterion A for listing under the National Register of Historic Places. Also a biological assessment was conducted with the Washington State Fish and Wildlife services

to determine if site operations would impact any endangered or threatened species. The Biological Assessment concluded that site operations are not likely to adversely affect the endangered or threatened species within the area.

EPA has met with local Northport residents with levels above the Removal/Containment standard of >1,000 ppm lead and/or >230 arsenic or when children are present >700 ppm lead and/or >100 ppm arsenic to discuss voluntary removal operations and collect access agreements for removal actions. EPA is also conducting a phase III sampling mission for residents to sign up voluntarily for sampling until July 29, 2004.

EPA and USCG Pacific Strike Team are conducting air monitoring with particulate monitors and conducting sampling activities with low volume samplers to be analyzed for lead, arsenic, cadmium and copper metals.

Planned Removal Actions

EPA will excavate smelter-waste-contaminated materials that are currently distributed across the Le Roi Smelter site, consolidate the materials on the site, and cover the materials with a containment barrier. In addition, the EPA will remove smelter-waste-contaminated materials from residential properties in the Northport community and transport the materials to the consolidation area on the smelter property. The additional hazardous materials on-site will be identified and taken off-site for proper disposal. The residential excavation is scheduled to start the week of the August 2, 2004.

Next Steps

EPA will continue consolidation of materials on-site and begin operations on excavation of approximately five acres of surface contamination to consolidate in the protective barrier area. EPA will also identify hazardous materials on-site and dispose of. EPA will also begin work on residential removals. USCG Pacific Strike Team will continue supporting EPA with air monitoring/sampling and Health and Safety activities.

Key Issues

No endangered or threatened species will be impacted during removal operations.

Hazardous materials on site will be identified and properly disposed off-site.

Air monitoring and sampling is being conducted by the USCG Pacific Strike Team.

response.epa.gov/northport