

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region X
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Friday, June 8, 2007

From: Earl Liverman

Subject: Initiation of Action

Conjecture Mine

Lakeview, ID

Latitude: 47.9122000

Longitude: -116.4267000

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	10DY
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	6/5/2007	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	6/4/2007	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	IDN001002661	Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Conjecture Mine is a historic silver and lead mine located on Gold Creek, about 6 miles south of Lakeview, Bonner County, Idaho. Gold Creek is a perennial stream that flows into Lake Pend Oreille. Mining wastes at the Conjecture Mine site are located partially on private and partially on National Forest System (NFS) lands. This action is a continuation of a comprehensive EPA/US Forest Service (USFS) approach to address mine waste contamination found in the Gold Creek watershed.

Mine operations occurred sometime after 1894 and continued periodically until 1963. Mining was conducted underground on a patented claim and adjacent NFS land, and mining wastes in the form of waste rock and mill tailings were disposed on both private and public lands. Much of the mine waste found on private land was produced intermittently from 1894 through 1951. The Conjecture Mine site is situated near the headwaters of Gold Creek and occupies more than one-third mile of Gold Creek. The upper portion of the site contains four large waste rock dumps, scattered deposits of disturbed and eroded materials, and stream sediments.

The site is mixed ownership. USFS, exercising its CERCLA authority as to the public portion of the site, entered into an Interagency Agreement with EPA to authorize work and to reimburse EPA for costs associated with cleanup of mine waste contaminated materials found on public land. EPA is addressing mine waste contaminants found on private property. Potential human health and environmental impacts from historic mine wastes present at the Conjecture Mine site include public health and safety risks, increased metal concentrations in surface water, and increased sediment load to surface water.

Current Activities

Mobilization of personnel and response equipment, development of site and cleanup infrastructure, and establishment of operations and base camps.

Planned Removal Actions

During the first 30 days, response actions will address coordination with USFS, USFWS, and other state and local entities, establishing physical cleanup infrastructure, field verification of conceptual cleanup design, preparing the repository, developing borrow sites, and beginning the excavation of mine waste contaminated soils and sediments.

Next Steps

Continued excavation of mine waste contaminated soil and sediment and consolidation beneath a protective barrier at a nearby USFS repository.

