

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region I
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Monday, June 16, 2008

From: Gary Lipson

Subject: VAG Mine Site
Eden/Lowell, VT

POLREP No.:	3	Site #:	
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	10/15/2007	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	10/15/2007	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The site is located in a rural area off of Mines Road in the towns of Eden and Lowell, VT, within Orleans and Lamoille Counties. Between the early 1900's and 1993 when production operations ceased, asbestos ore was mined out of three locations on Belvidere Mountain in areas identified as Eden Quarry, C-Area, and Lowell Quarry. The entire property is greater than 2,500 acres and it is believed that the tailings piles, open pits and quarries, and waste rock make up greater than half of that amount. The approximate latitude and longitude at the main entrance to the mine site is N44°45.9', W72°31.2'.

The tailings pile associated with the Eden Quarry is being heavily eroded by the beginnings of Hutchins Brook which is carrying substantial quantities of mine tailings into the Lamoille watershed. A wetland, approximately 25-acres in size, located approximately one mile down-gradient of this waste pile has been heavily affected by the tailings. The wetland area appears to be reaching its storage capacity and is threatening to adversely affect adjacent water bodies.

The Lowell Quarry, now filled in with water, created the larger of the waste piles, which has been estimated between 30 and 60 million tons covering 80 acres. This pile has also been eroding and has impacted the southern end of Corez Pond, Burgess Brook and associated wetlands within the Mississquoi watershed.

There is a gate at the main entrance to the mine area, but access is generally unimpeded via any number of points throughout the woods. There is frequent recreational activity occurring in the vicinity, which includes hunting, fishing, rock-collecting, all-terrain vehicle riding, and hiking.

Current Activities

Please refer to POLREP's 1 & 2 for additional information.

On June 9, 2008, EPA, it's Emergency Rapid Response Services (ERRS) contractor (Shaw), and it's Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) contractor (Weston Solutions) re-mobilized to the site.

While new crew members attended a state mandated site specific asbestos awareness class on June 10, 2008 the returning members began site preparation activities, including the inspection of all of the heavy equipment delivered to the site. Activities beginning on June 11, 2008 included assessment of the work performed in 2007, which in a number of instances had been adversely affected by an unusually severe storm the previous night.

Site work began on June 12, 2008 with the cleaning out and re-grading of two large sedimentation basins and the removal of asbestos containing sediment that had sloughed onto the main site road leading up to the Eden tailings pile.

Planned Removal Actions

Site activities will continue for approximately two to three weeks in the lower portion of the site, concentrating on areas where work was performed last fall. This includes the cleaning out of inundated

sedimentation basins; building new berms and channels to funnel fine sediment into the basins; the clearing of fresh sediment from the site roads; and building up some of the washed out roads.

Work will then shift to the upper Eden tailings pile where trenches and culverts will be constructed to allow mountain run-off water to bypass the pile. An existing water pathway that currently runs adjacent to the eastern face of the pile and leads to the C-cut will be reinforced to ensure that flow continues in that direction. A second existing trench will be re-graded to channel water to the west of the pile. From that point, a new channel will be constructed which will carry the runoff to a point where it is below the pile where it will then join up with Hutchins Brook. Due to the age and significance of this Site, EPA has been working with the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and a historical preservationist in order to comply with the Historic Preservation Act (HPA). Since the work that will take place above the Eden pile will be in areas where the original mine buildings once stood, the activities in this location will be well documented in accordance with HPA requirements. Once work begins near the Eden pile, additional communications with the SHPO will occur to ensure any issues associated with historical resources addressed.

Dependant upon remaining resources, EPA will examine the feasibility of additional work on the Corez Pond Road to protect the southern end of the pond. In addition, the lower section of Hutchins Brook prior to it leaving the VAG property will also be reconnoitered to determine if additional sedimentation basins can be constructed to capture additional contaminated runoff.

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