

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

Date: Monday, November 3, 2008

From: Terrence Byrd

Subject: Sludge Removal Continues

Ore Knob Mine Site

Ore Knob, NC

Latitude: 36.4086670

Longitude: -81.3238890

POLREP No.:	2	Site #:	A4ND
Reporting Period:	10/27/08 - 11/01/08	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	10/20/2008	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	10/20/2008	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	NCN000409895	Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

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. This 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

Contractors began removing tailing sludge from the sediment pond at the north end of the tailings dam. To date approximately 1,500 cubic yards of sediment has been removed from the sediment pond and deposited onto the sediment dam.

Planned Removal Actions

sludge removal of the sediment pond should continue until the next week. EPA plans to ground truth the planned location of the diversion channel based on plans that will be obtained with the aid of BOR.

Next Steps

EPA will meet with US Bureau of Reclamation during the week of 11/03/08 in order to finalize plans for construction of the diversion pond. EPA will be distributing fact sheets to local residents and planning a date for a local information session.

Key Issues

none to date

