

Asarco Superfund Settlement Largest in EPA History

On December 10, 2009, EPA announced the largest Superfund settlement in EPA history. Out of a global settlement total of \$1.7 billion between ASARCO and the United States, \$810 million will go toward cleanup of contaminated sites in EPA Region 10. Overall, the national settlement with ASARCO is the biggest Superfund case recovery in EPA history. These funds will enable EPA to continue work in residential areas, as well as addressing contamination that exists throughout the Coeur d'Alene River floodplain.

EPA will carefully manage the settlement funds and steadily increase the cleanup work throughout the Basin over time. As cleanup moves forward, more workers and equipment will be seen on the ground, hauling away contaminated soil, capping soil in place, and doing other work to carry out the cleanup. With more family wage jobs available, local economies will get a much needed boost for many years to come.

Taxpayers sometimes end up paying the bill for hazardous waste cleanups when polluting companies declare bankruptcy and avoid paying cleanup costs. This settlement demonstrates that bankruptcy does not always shelter a company from paying its share. Funding used for EPA cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene Basin will be managed through an environmental Trust, created specifically to perform required cleanup actions in the Basin. The Trust will manage its funds to maximize value and carry out cleanup actions as selected by EPA.

Among the entities receiving the settlement funds are:

- **EPA Region 10** - \$539 million - \$494 million for cleanup at the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Superfund site (single largest cash recovery in EPA history), \$31.7 million for the Tacoma (Ruston) Smelter site, and \$13 million for the Jack Waite Mine site, in the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River. As Jack Waite is partly on Forest Service land, EPA will perform cleanup work along with the Forest Service. Cleanup will include consolidation and capping of mine waste.
- **Washington** - \$188 million to address the Tacoma and Everett smelter sites, as well as four ASARCO mines located in the state.
- **Idaho** - \$13.8 million for future activities within the Bunker Hill "Box" and funds for long term maintenance of the Triumph Mine (Blaine County). The Box is the 21-square-mile area in northern Idaho's Silver Valley where EPA's cleanup began.
- **Federal Trustees*** - \$79.4 million to the Bunker Hill Federal Trustees (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service) for restoration in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. (*While the Coeur d'Alene Tribe is a member of the Natural Resource Trustees Council, they settled with ASARCO in 2003).

- **Forest Service** - \$12 million for cleanup of mines located on Federal land in Washington.