

BASIN BULLETIN

A Quarterly Review of Cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin

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(see back page for website)

EPA's Michael Bogert to Serve as Federal Rep on Basin Commission

EPA announced in January that **Michael Bogert**, the Agency's Regional Administrator for the Pacific Northwest, will serve as the federal representative on the Coeur d'Alene Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission.



Michael Bogert

Before joining EPA last August, Mr. Bogert provided legal counsel to the Idaho Governor's office, including work on Basin-related issues. After assuming the EPA post, Bogert recused himself from all matters involving EPA's activities in the Basin

in order to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. However, consistent with federal ethics rules, EPA recently determined that Mr. Bogert could serve as the federal representative on the Basin Commission. EPA found that due to his knowledge and experience, Mr. Bogert's presence on the Commission would be beneficial to the federal government and to advancing cleanup work in the Basin. In this capacity, Mr. Bogert will represent the interests of both EPA and Federal Trustees involved in Basin work.

Next Basin Commission Meeting: February 22nd
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Idaho Dept. of Health & Welfare, 35 Wildcat Way, Kellogg, Idaho

"I am looking forward to working closely with other Commission members on the critically important issues affecting the health and welfare of so many people in the Basin," Mr.

Bogert said. "I am proud of what we and our state, tribal, county,

(continued on page 2)

Michael Bogert to Serve on Basin Commission *continued*

federal and public partners have already accomplished, but work remains to be done. Continued collaboration is essential to producing our shared goals of human health and environmental improvement in the Basin.”

Mr. Bogert succeeds **Ron Kreizenbeck**, the Region’s Deputy Regional Administrator, who has served on the Commission since August 2004. Ron Kreizenbeck will remain as Mr. Bogert’s alternate on the Commission. As alternate, he will attend meetings or make decisions whenever Mr. Bogert is unavailable to do so.

The Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission was created by the Idaho Legislature in 2001. The Commission is a coordinating body that includes representatives from the federal government, the states of Idaho and Washington, the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, and three north Idaho counties. The Commission is charged with approving one- and five-year cleanup work plans, prioritizing work, and sharing information about the cleanup.

Jay Manning Now Serving as Washington Rep on Basin Commission

In November, Washington Department of Ecology Director **Jay Manning** joined the Basin Commission to represent the interests of Washington State.

“It’s imperative that Washington has a meaningful say in decisions that directly affect the health of the Spokane River and the health of Washington residents,” said Washington Governor Chris Gregoire. “Washington will significantly increase

its investment in this process to make sure the Commission is able to meet that mark.”



Jay Manning

Manning replaces **Jim McCurdy**, a law professor at Gonzaga University, who was appointed to the seat by Governor Gary Locke in 2002.

20 Years of Work: Notable Progress

With the new year at hand, it seems an appropriate time to take stock of the progress made over the last 20 years in site cleanup. The Bunker Hill Superfund Site is one of the nation’s largest and most contaminated Superfund sites. There is still much to do, and cleanup work will continue for many years. Even so, there have been major, tangible improvements to public health and the environment. Here are some examples of the many projects already completed:

- Annual blood-lead screening results show that the percentage of community children with

elevated blood-lead levels in the Bunker Hill Box has dropped from 55% to 2%.

- More than 3,800 residential properties have been cleaned up. Local workers are being hired to do the work.
- More than two million cubic yards of contaminated soil and sediment have been removed from the Coeur d’Alene River system and side gulches.
- More than 1,000 acres of denuded hillsides have been revegetated. Trees, grasses, and shrubs are flourishing, and wildlife has returned to some areas.

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20 Years of Work: Notable Progress *continued*

- 72 miles of a contaminated railroad right-of-way have been cleaned up and now provide a safe recreational trail for local residents and tourists.
- More than 1,800 acres of property have been transferred from EPA to the State of Idaho for local economic development projects.

EPA will continue its cleanup work in coordination with community residents and leaders, environmental groups, the States of Idaho and Washington, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Trustees, the Basin Commission, and other stakeholders.

Basin Commission Annual Report Out in February

The **Annual Accomplishments Report** for the Basin Commission will soon be available. The accomplishments report will cover activities in the Basin which are funded by EPA, the State of Idaho, and Clean Water Act grants. The report will be posted on the Basin Commission home page by the end of February at www.basincommission.com

Lake Management Plan Facilitation Under Way

A third-party neutral facilitator has been hired to help assess and facilitate revision of the Coeur d'Alene Lake Management Plan. The facilitator was hired by the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution in Tucson, Arizona. The State of Idaho, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, EPA Region 10, and EPA's National Headquarters office have contributed funds to support this effort.

The third-party neutral facilitator began the assessment phase of the work in January, to gain understanding of the issues and needs. Once the assessment phase is complete, the facilitator will begin the facilitated negotiation phase of the

process with the key parties. To learn more, contact **Don Martin**, EPA, at 208-665-0458.



Lake Coeur d'Alene

Starr Road Cleanup On Track for 2006 in Spokane

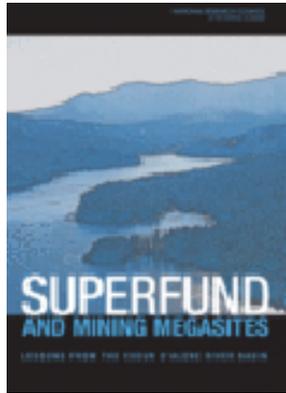
Cleanup of lead and arsenic contamination at the Starr Road recreation area will begin this summer, most likely August 2006, while the water levels are low. The recreation area runs along the Spokane River near the intersection of Starr and River Roads. EPA and the Washington Department of Ecology are working together to plan the cleanup.

Design of the cleanup is now complete and ready for construction bids. Cleanup will include excavation, capping, and access controls to protect users from lead concentrations above EPA action levels. If you have questions, contact **Ravi Sanga**, EPA, at 206-553-4092, or **Zach Hedgpeth**, Ecology, at 509-329-3484.

NAS Final Report Issued

On December 29, 2005, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) released its final report entitled **Superfund and Mining Megsites — Lessons from the Coeur d'Alene River Basin.**

The NAS is an independent, non-governmental institution that advises the nation on scientific, technical, and medical issues. NAS committee members are distinguished scientists and technical experts who serve without pay.



The Idaho Congressional delegation requested the study be performed. Congress mandated that EPA fund the study at a cost of \$850,000. The study focused on EPA's scientific and technical practices related to the Coeur d'Alene Basin (Operable Unit 3 of the Bunker Hill Superfund site). Study areas included site characterization, human and ecological risk assessment, remedial planning, and decision-making. The study began in June 2003. The NAS released a pre-publication report in July 2005.

EPA is carefully reviewing the final report. We anticipate the report's recommendations will aid

our long-standing commitment to use the best available science to protect the environment, human health, and the communities of the Coeur d'Alene Basin. EPA will consider the NAS report's recommendations and, where appropriate, translate those findings into action. We remain committed to working closely with the Coeur d'Alene Basin Commission, as well as the Commission's Technical Leadership Group and Citizens' Coordinating Council.

How to View the Final NAS Report:

NAS webpage: The final report is available for purchase in both paperback and PDF book format from the NAS webpage at <http://www.nas.edu> (search on "coeur").

EPA webpage: The report is available at the EPA Headquarter's Superfund webpage at: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/reports/coeur.htm>

Local Libraries: Copies of the final report have been placed in repositories (see page 9 for locations).

Hundreds of Properties Cleaned Up in 2005

Basin: The final 2005 results are in for the Basin Property Remediation Program. A total of 339 properties were cleaned up during the 2005 season. Of those, 137 properties were considered high-risk, those with young children and/or pregnant women. Besides high-risk properties, the Basin Remediation Program focused on the target areas of Mullan and other Upper Basin areas. The cleanup work removed about 68,287 cubic yards of contaminated material. The Basin Program expects to remediate 400 to 500 properties in 2006.

Box: During the 2005 season, the Upstream Mining Group's Box Remediation Program, in the residential areas of the Bunker Hill Box, cleaned up 192 properties. In addition to completing large outlying properties, the program goal is to begin the certification process in 2006.

For more information about DEQ-managed remediation programs, contact **Robbin Simmons**, 208-783-5781 or robbin.simmons@deq.idaho.gov

OU2 Water Quality Phase II Project Focus Team Forming

EPA and IDEQ are inviting interested Technical Leadership Group members to volunteer on a future project focus team. The new team would focus on Phase II of cleanup actions in Bunker Hill Operable Unit 2. Operable Unit 2 (OU2) is the non-populated areas of the Box. If you are interested, please contact either **Anne Dailey**, dailey.anne@epa.gov or **Nick Zilka**, nicholas.zilka@deq.state.id

Project focus teams are sub-groups of the Technical Leadership Group. Each team focuses

on a particular technical issue. There are now project focus teams for the following topics:

- Recreation Areas
- Water Treatment
- Funding
- Environmental Monitoring
- Mine and Mill Sites
- Lower Basin Forum
- Human Health – Yards – Recreation
- Repository
- Institutional Control Plan

Technical Geochemistry Publications on Web

Two technical documents published by the U.S. Geological Survey in 2005 are now available on the Web. The documents are:

Box, Stephen E., Bookstrom, Arthur A., and Ikramuddin, Mohammed, 2005, **Stream-sediment geochemistry in mining-impacted streams: Sediment mobilized by floods in the Coeur d'Alene-Spokane River system**, Idaho and Washington: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2005-5011, 51 p. Available on the Web at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2005/5011/>

Box, Stephen E., Wallis, John C., Briggs, Paul H., and Brown, Zoe Ann, 2005, **Stream-sediment geochemistry in mining-impacted streams: Prichard, Eagle, and Beaver Creeks, northern Coeur d'Alene Mining District,**

northern Idaho: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2004-5248. Available on the Web at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2004/5248/>



New Brochure on Lead Disclosure Rule Available

A new brochure discussing the Lead Disclosure Rule requirements is now available. The brochure is called **Lead-Contaminated Soil — Residential Real Estate Transaction Disclosure Requirements: Information for Owners, Landlords & Sellers, Buyers and Renters, Real Estate Agents**. It explains the terms “lead-based paint hazard” and “soil-lead hazard.” The brochure also lists the obligations of the seller, landlord, and real estate agent to disclose before the purchase and lease of residential housing built before 1978.

The brochure can be downloaded from the EPA Region 10 Lead Program website: <http://epa.gov/region10/leadsoil.pdf> For a hard copy, call EPA’s Public Environmental Resource Center at 206-553-1200 or 800-424-4372.



Mine and Mill Sites, Water Treatment Updates



Constitution Site: Cleanup work at this site will begin this spring. The Army Corps of Engineers awarded the construction contract to TPA-CKY. This firm has hired local subcontractors. The cleanup plan is to consolidate and cap tailings at the Upper Constitution site.

Golconda and Rex: Cleanup work for these two sites is now under design. The designs, prepared by EPA’s contractor Parametrix/CDM, will be finished by March 2006. Construction would begin this summer. Actions at the Rex site include installing a surface water/groundwater collection pond, removing debris and highly contaminated concentrates, constructing a toe buttress at the tailings dam, consolidating all tailings at one location, and grading and capping the site to promote surface runoff and reduce infiltration. Actions at the Golconda site include removing contaminated soils in the mill area to an upslope on-site location, stabilizing the toe of the waste rock pile, routing adit flows away from the waste rock pile, and capping and revegetating the mill area.

New Mine and Mill Sites: A draft document to help guide the identification and prioritization of future mine and mill cleanup sites is now under review. The document was prepared by EPA’s contractor Parametrix/CDM. This document was sent out to a Project Focus Team for review on January 17th. EPA would like to begin the design work on at least one more mine and mill site this year.

Canyon Creek Water Treatment: Pilot studies on Canyon Creek groundwater are now complete. The Project Focus Team met January 30th to discuss the study results, proposed hydro investigation work, and the path forward for future work and treatment system design in Canyon Creek. EPA’s contractor CH2M Hill conducted the studies. Before designing a treatment system, EPA will seek public input on the preferred technology or approach.

For details, call **Bill Adams** at 800-424-4372 ext. 2806.

Local Organization Spreads the Word on Spokane River Pollutants

For the past two years, The Lands Council (TLC) has worked with two Washington State agencies to try to find people who are most at risk from water-borne PCBs and heavy metals. The goal is to alert them to the potential health hazards and teach them ways to limit their exposures.

The outreach effort includes educators fluent in Spanish, Hmong, and Slavic languages. The effort focuses on recent immigrants and others who are more likely to use the Spokane River for subsistence needs. While surveys conducted by The Lands Council still show a strong need for public education on the river's toxic hazards, the most recent survey also shows a big rise in awareness due to these outreach efforts.

For instance, only 1% of Hispanics surveyed in 2004 knew about Spokane River toxics. In 2005, 19% of Hispanics surveyed knew about river contamination and almost all had been reached through The Lands Council. In 2004, 27% of recent Slavic immigrants to the Spokane area knew about contamination in the river. That number rose to almost 50% in 2005 due to the efforts of **Tatyana Bistrevsky**, a contractor with TLC.

Knowledge of heavy metals and PCBs in the Spokane River is growing within these immigrant communities. Many families say they no longer fish

in the river. However, 8% to 10% of those surveyed continue to eat fish from the river. Of concern is the health of low-income and homeless people in Spokane who use the river more than any other population surveyed by The Lands Council to date. Fifteen percent of low-income people surveyed at area shelters and service centers eat fish from the river. Only half of those surveyed had received information about health risks from exposure to toxics.

Slowly but surely, progress is being made to reach the populations who do not have access to mainstream media sources. Moreover, adds **Amber Waldref**, The Lands Council's Water Watch Coordinator, "We are building relationships with people whom we hope will become advocates with us for cleaning up the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene Watershed."

To learn more, contact **Amber Waldref** at 509-838-4912 or awaldref@landscouncil.org

Submissions: To make a submission to *Basin Bulletin*, please contact **Andrea Lindsay**: 800-424-4372 ext. 1896 or lindsay.andrea@epa.gov

Subscriptions: The *Basin Bulletin* is published quarterly. The *Bulletin* can be e-mailed to you as a pdf. For additions or corrections to the mailing list, contact **Andrea Lindsay** at:

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Updated February 2006

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Water Treatment/Mullan I/I – Mark Stromberg	Phone: 208-783-5781		mark.stromberg@deq.idaho.gov

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Lake Monitoring – Kristy Reed Johnson	Phone: 208-777-1588	FAX: 208-777-1615	kristyr@earthlink.net

Calendar of Events

Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission

Executive Director: **Terry Harwood**, 208-783-2528

www.basincommission.com

Next Meeting: **February 22, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Idaho Dept. of Health & Welfare, 35 Wildcat Way, Kellogg, Idaho

Citizens' Coordinating Council (CCC)

Co-Chair: **Kathy Zanetti**, 208-752-7612

Visit the website for meeting information:

www.basincommission.com/CCC.asp



Coeur d'Alene Basin Citizens Advisory Committee (CBCAC)

Contact: **John Snider**, 208-664-9773

Shoshone Natural Resources Coalition (SNRC)

Contact: **Robin Stanley**, 208-744-1118

Groups meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month

11:30 am to 1:30 pm at Brooks Hotel, 500 Cedar Street, Wallace, ID

Silver Valley Community Resource Center

For information on meetings or how to contribute funds,

Contact: **Barbara Miller**, 208-784-8891

PO Box 362, Kellogg, ID 83837

Washington Citizens Advisory Committee (WCAC)

Contact: **Lloyd Brewer**, 509-625-6968

Regular Board meetings scheduled for 5:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month, at City of Spokane Water Dept. Conference Room; 914 E. North Foothills Drive. The next general meeting will be **February 15** at the Gonzaga Law School Library.

Information Repositories

These locations offer collections of documents:

North Idaho College Molstead Library

1000 W. Garden Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-769-3355

Wallace Public Library

415 River Street
Wallace, ID 83873
208-752-4571

Harrison City Hall

100 Frederick Street
P.O. Box 73
Harrison, ID 83833
208-689-3212

Spokane Public Library

906 West Main Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201
509-444-5336

EPA Field Office

1910 Northwest Blvd., Suite 208
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-664-4588

EPA Seattle Office

Superfund Record Center
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101-1128
206-553-4494 or 800-424-4372



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Community Involvement and Outreach
1200 Sixth Avenue, ETPA-081
Seattle, WA 98101-1128

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Seattle, WA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Basin Bulletin
Quarterly Newsletter
Coeur d'Alene Basin, Idaho
Winter 2006

Inside:

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- **More**

Websites:



EPA Coeur d'Alene Basin
[http://Yosemite.epa.gov/R10/
CLEANUP.NSF/sites/cda](http://Yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/cda)

**Basin Environmental Improvement
Project Commission**
<http://www.basincommission.com>

Technical Leadership Group (TLG)
www.basincommission.com/TLG.asp

Citizens' Coordinating Council (CCC)
[http://www.basincommission.com/
CCC.asp](http://www.basincommission.com/CCC.asp)



*Alternative formats are available. For reasonable accommodation, please call
Andrea Lindsay at 800-424-4372. TTY users, please call 800-877-8339.*