

# Plan to address pollution at former FMC phosphorus processing plant

## Interim Record of Decision Amendment will protect people, animals, and the environment from contamination

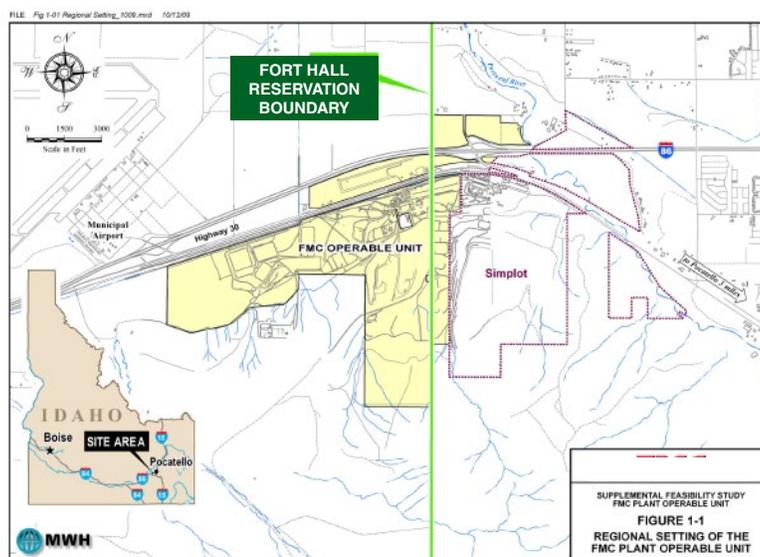
Power County, Idaho

October 2012

EPA's cleanup plan for the former FMC plant at the Eastern Michaud Flats Superfund site focuses on elemental phosphorus, metals, and radiation in soils, fill, and groundwater.

It calls for placing a barrier over contaminated soils to protect people and the environment. The barrier will prevent rain and melting snow from filtering through the contaminated areas and polluting the groundwater below.

The plan also requires treatment to clean the groundwater before it reaches local springs or the Portneuf River. This cleanup plan was developed after careful consideration of extensive comments we received during the public comment period on the September 2011 Proposed Plan.



*This cleanup plan will prevent people and animals from coming into contact with contamination at the former FMC plant, and will improve both groundwater and surface water quality.*

## How does the cleanup plan address this contamination?

The plan, called the Interim Record of Decision Amendment for the EMF Superfund Site FMC Operable Unit, includes the following remedies:

- Installing a protective cap to provide a barrier to underlying contamination and prevent water from moving through the contamination and polluting the groundwater.
- Adding about 12 inches of soil over some areas to prevent exposure to radiation from the polluted areas.
- Cleaning elemental phosphorus from underground concrete pipes.
- Installing a groundwater extraction and treatment system to keep pollution from local springs and the Portneuf River.
- Installing barriers, such as additional fencing, after the caps are constructed to further limit site access.
- Placing restrictions on future site use and prohibiting some activities such as digging in capped areas and the use of contaminated groundwater.
- Developing and implementing a long-term monitoring and maintenance program for the groundwater treatment system, caps, and other barriers.

## What are the next steps?

- EPA will negotiate with FMC to have them *design, implement and pay* for the cleanup under strict oversight by EPA and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.
- The design to determine the detailed technical specifications for the cleanup will begin in 6-12 months.
- Cap construction and groundwater treatment can begin after design completion. Some activities may occur before the technical designs are completed.
- On-the-ground work under this cleanup plan is expected to begin in 1-2 years.
- The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes firmly believe a different cleanup approach would be better for the FMC property. To address the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' concerns, EPA has committed to working with the Tribes to facilitate an independent review of technologies and approaches that can be safely and effectively implemented to excavate and/or treat elemental phosphorus at the FMC property. However, the review will not delay implementation of this Record of Decision Amendment.
- EPA supports redevelopment at the former FMC property, as long as it is consistent with the actions outlined in the amended Record of Decision.

## How do I get more information?

### EPA Website:

Download the Interim Record of Decision Amendment, copies of EPA's response to comments on the 2011 Proposed Plan, and other documents related to the Eastern Michaud Flats Superfund site.

📄 <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/cleanup.nsf/sites/emichaud>

### Contact:

**Kevin Rochlin**, Remedial Project Manager

☎ Toll free 800-424-4372 Ext. 2106  
or 206-553-2106

📧 [rochlin.kevin@epa.gov](mailto:rochlin.kevin@epa.gov)

**Kay Morrison**,

EPA Community Involvement Coordinator

☎ Toll free 800-424-4372 ext. 8321  
or 206-553-8321

📧 [morrison.kay@epa.gov](mailto:morrison.kay@epa.gov)

### Documents

The full *Interim Record of Decision Amendment for the EMF Superfund Site FMC Operable Unit*, is available at:

#### Idaho State University Library

Government Documents  
850 South 9th Avenue  
Pocatello, Idaho 83209  
208-282-3152

#### American Falls Library

308 Roosevelt Street  
American Falls, Idaho 83211  
208-226-2335

#### Shoshone-Bannock Library

Tribal Business Center  
Pima Drive and Bannock Avenue  
Fort Hall, Idaho 83203  
208-478-3882

#### EPA Records Center

1200 6th Avenue Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-553-4494  
800-424-4372 for appointment

You can request an electronic copy of the document on CD by contacting Kay Morrison, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, 206-553-8321 or 800-424-4372, or by email to [morrison.kay@epa.gov](mailto:morrison.kay@epa.gov)

## Background

The former FMC phosphorus processing plant is located mostly on the Fort Hall Reservation near Pocatello, Idaho, and is within the Eastern Michaud Flats Superfund Site. FMC manufactured elemental phosphorus at their plant from 1940 until December 2001.

While FMC was in operation, elemental phosphorus from spills and leaks during production, storage, and handling contaminated the property and polluted the water below which, in turn, has also polluted the Portneuf River.

Elemental phosphorus now can be found down to 85 feet below the surface on FMC property. Elemental phosphorus can explode and burn uncontrollably when it is exposed to air.

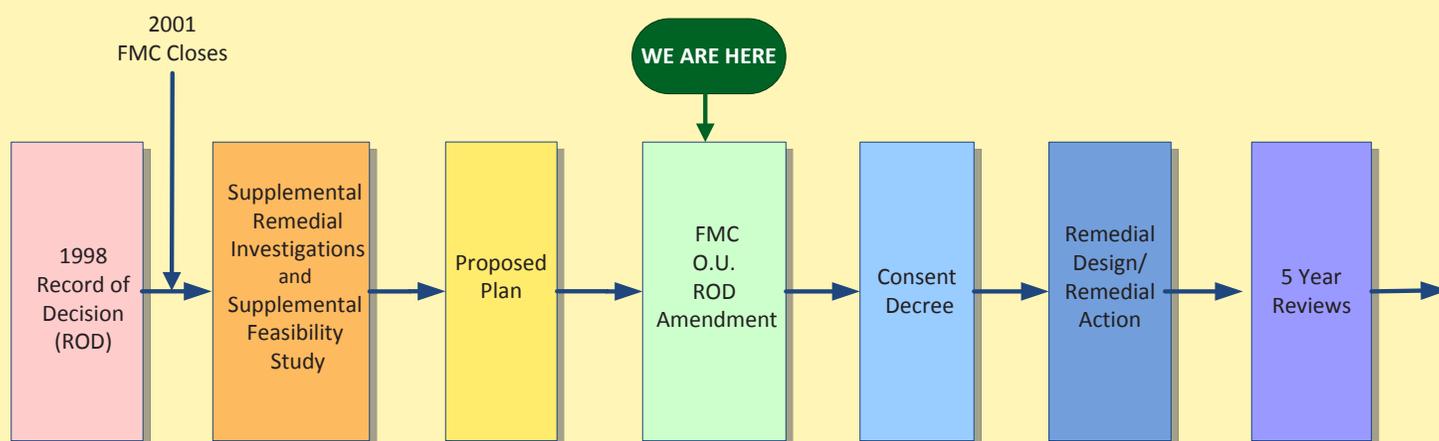
Slag (a byproduct of processing phosphate ore), used as fill and stored in mountain-sized piles on site, emits dangerous gamma radiation.

**Exposure to elemental phosphorus and other contaminants at the levels found at the former FMC plant is dangerous to people, animals, and the environment.**

This cleanup plan, called an *Interim Record of Decision Amendment*, details work for the former FMC plant that was not included in the original 1998 Record of Decision. EPA will be monitoring the soil, air, and groundwater to ensure that the remedies outlined in the new plan are meeting our goals, and adjustments will be made if needed.

Once the groundwater treatment system is in operation, predictions on how long it will take to meet our goals and whether changes are required to ensure cleanup goals are met can be more accurately determined. In addition, EPA has not yet determined if the recently adopted Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Soil Cleanup Standards apply to the cleanup. For these reasons, this plan is considered "interim" and a "final" cleanup plan will be developed in the future.

### Superfund Process Flow Chart For the FMC Property



For more information about the Superfund Process, please go to [www.epa.gov/superfund/community/process.htm](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/community/process.htm)

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***Look Inside for details***

*If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact  
Kay Morrison at 800-424-4372 ext. 8321*

 *TDD Users please call the Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339  
and ask for Kay Morrison at the number listed above*