L-BAR SITE
DRAFT MATERIAL REMOVAL AND COMPLIANCE MONITORING WORK PLAN

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

The Washington State Department of Ecology has received the Draft Material Removal and Compliance Monitoring Work Plan for cleanup at the L-Bar Site. The Site is located about two miles south of Chewelah on the west side of U.S. Highway 395 (Figure 1) and lies on the south bank of the Colville River in Stevens County, Washington.

The Draft Material Removal and Compliance Monitoring Work Plan describes the methods and approaches to accomplish Site cleanup including materials removal and off-site disposal. It also specifies sampling and monitoring to be performed during the cleanup. This document promotes Site cleanup under the authority of the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA), Chapter 70.105D RCW and is required by the June 2000 Agreed Order between Ecology and Northwest Alloys, Inc. (NWA).

Ecology invites the public to review and comment on the L-Bar Draft Material Removal and Compliance Monitoring Work Plan January 26 through February 27, 2001. The box at the right provides information on where to review reports and submit written comments.

SITE BACKGROUND

The Site includes an industrial area covering about 80 acres and an adjoining 17-acre agricultural field (the North Field) located between the industrial area and the Colville River. An above-grade magnesite residue pile, about 30 feet deep and 17 acres in area, is found west of the Site. Two ditches, the Main Ditch and the West Ditch, run through the Site. Both ditches previously discharged into the Colville River.

Since 1995, discharge from the Main Ditch has stopped as a result of actions taken by NWA. In response to an Emergency Enforcement Order issued by Ecology in 1994, NWA constructed a water retention structure that eliminated direct discharge of Main Ditch surface water to the river.

L-Bar Products, Inc., a subsidiary of Reserve Industries Corporation, operated the facility from 1978 to 1991 when it filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11. The major operation at the plant was to recover magnesium from flux bars (FB) generated from magnesium production, which were supplied mostly by NWA. The remaining material, after recovery by crushing, grinding, and screening, was called flux bar residue (FBR). The FBs and FBRs consisted

FACT SHEET:
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mainly of spent flux of metal chlorides and some nitride compounds that produced ammonia when reacting with water. More than 100,000 tons of materials (under a covered pile, in buildings, and on top of the magnesite pile) remained on Site after the plant's closure.

Past operating practices and inadequate storage of FBs and FBRs have resulted in elevated levels of mostly chloride and ammonia in shallow ground water and surface water. Most of the materials remaining on Site have continued to leach salts and ammonia into shallow ground water and surface water in two ditches at the Site.

In 1995 Ecology and NWA entered into an Agreed Order to conduct interim actions, a Remedial Investigation (RI) and Feasibility Study (FS). Interim actions conducted at the Site included: management of stored site waters in the Evaporation Pond (through land application in the North Field during the summer months) and the removal and disposal of about 65,000 tons of FB and FBRs from atop and around the magnesite residue pile.

Findings of the RI completed in 1998 show that FB and FBR materials are the primary source of ammonia, chloride, and Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in the shallow ground water, soils, and in surface water in two on-site ditches. The shallow ground water is not a drinking water aquifer; however, it discharges to the Colville River which is a Class A surface body of water of the State. The West Ditch also discharges to the Colville River. River sampling shows a slight increase in ammonia and chloride concentrations when comparing upstream to downstream results. However, surface water criteria have not been exceeded in the river.

The Cleanup Levels Development and Feasibility Study Report presents the cleanup levels for the Site, the points of compliance for the cleanup levels, the remedial action objectives, and the evaluation of alternatives that will address the substances that exceed the cleanup levels. These alternatives are evaluated and compared with MTCA criteria. Source removal with natural attenuation and monitoring is recommended as the preferred alternative.

Ecology prepared a draft Cleanup Action Plan (DCAP) that became final in June 2000, after a thirty-day public comment period. The cleanup actions selected by Ecology are source removal, monitoring, and institutional controls. With source removal, contaminants in ground water, surface water, and soils are expected to be reduced over time due to natural attenuation.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Public comment on the Draft Materials Removal and Compliance Monitoring Work Plan will be considered and modifications made, if necessary. After the Plan is finalized, cleanup will begin according to the proposed schedule.

HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?

- **REVIEW the Draft Material Removal and Compliance Monitoring Work Plan.**
- The Site documents at the Chewelah Public Library are available any time during regular library hours. To review documents at Ecology in Spokane, contact Johnnie Harris at (509) 456-2751 to schedule an appointment. Reviews may be scheduled for Monday through Thursday, 8-5 p.m. by appointment.
- **Send in your written comments January 26 through February 27, 2001 to:**

  Dr. Teresita Bala at Ecology (see box on page one for details).

SHARE THIS INFORMATION with any individuals or groups you think are interested in the Site.