



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Central Region Office

1250 West Alder St., Union Gap, WA 98903-0009 • 509-575-2490

February 25, 2025

Brandon Perkins
Superfund & Emergency Management Division
US EPA Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

Re: OCA Removal and Expanded Site Inspection Request for the following Site:

- **Site Name:** Alder Mill
- **Site Address:** Twisp
- **Facility Site ID:** 412
- **Cleanup Site ID:** 4720
- **EPA/State ID:** WAD980722847

Dear Brandon Perkins:

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) would like to refer the Alder Mill Site back to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and request an Integrated Assessment/Expanded Site Inspection (IA/ESI) to more fully characterize contamination at the site. The Alder Mill Site is currently designated as "Other Cleanup Activity (OCA), State Lead Cleanup." The site is the location of a former ore concentrating mill for gold and copper.

The Alder Mill operated from 1949 to 1952. Historically, two unlined ponds (upper and lower) were used to store tailings from the mill's operation. Runoff events caused by heavy rainfall have sporadically resulted in the release of contaminants from the tailings storage ponds. A 1952 failure of the upper pond resulted in the transportation of tailings to a nearby residence.

The site has been the subject of several environmental investigations including a time-critical removal action conducted by the EPA in 2003. The removal action was completed to address hazardous substances, including arsenic, cadmium, and lead, at the former mill building and the lower tailings pond. However, the removal action did not address contaminants in the upper tailings pond. Since the completion of the removal action, the site was referred to EPA's OCA State-Lead Cleanup status.

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Ecology is requesting the EPA update the Alder Mill Site status from the current OCA status, to allow for the performance of an IA/ESI action at the site for the following reasons:

- Limited samples collected from the upper tailings pond soil indicate elevated concentrations of toxic metals, including arsenic, cadmium, and lead. Site contaminants are an ongoing threat to human health and the environment both on and off-site.
- Additional assessment is required to evaluate the extent of contamination at the site including any potential for additional releases of contaminants.
- The site remains on Ecology's Contaminated Sites List and is currently awaiting cleanup. Ecology does not have the current funding or resources to adequately characterize the extent of contamination at the site.

Sincerely,



Valerie Bound
Section Manager
Toxics Cleanup Program
Central Regional Office

By certified mail: 9414 8098 9864 3568 9650 84

cc Jeff Fetters, US EPA Region 10
Justin Rice, Ecology