



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Central Region Office

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

April 15, 2025

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

Re: Preliminary Assessment Request:

- **Site Name:** Deer Trail Mine
- **Property Address:** Fruitland Valley Road, Fruitland
- **Ecology Facility Site ID:** 7018698
- **Ecology Cleanup Site ID:** 1544
- **EPA/State ID:** WASFN1002142

Dear Brandon Perkins:

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) would like to request that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) perform additional site assessments to more fully characterize contamination at the site. The site is the location of a former lead, silver, and zinc mine and mill.

The Deer Trail Mine and Mill operated sporadically from 1906 to 1947 and from 1981 to 1984. The mine has been inactive since 1984. From 1906 to 1947, the mine produced around 1,855 tons of ore. Production from 1981 to 1984 is reported to be 25,000 tons per year of silver, and 100 tons per day of milled ore. Milling processes included a 125-ton flotation mill constructed in 1964 and a ball mill constructed in 1983. Various types of chemical reagents were used in the flotation process.

The site has been the subject of previous environmental investigations including a Site Inspection (SI) completed by the EPA in 2005.

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The SI was completed to characterize potential sources of contaminants and to document any threat or potential threat to public health or the environment. Results of the SI concluded that the Deer Trail Mine and Mill site is a source of hazardous substances, primarily toxic metals, that appear to be migrating to downgradient targets via Alder Creek. Since the completion of the SI, the site was designated No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP).

However, the SI did not intend to fully characterize or establish the extent of contamination at the site. In addition, SI results show that toxic metals, including arsenic, cadmium, copper, and lead, were detected in soil, sediment, and surface water at concentrations that exceed Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) cleanup levels.

Ecology is requesting that the EPA conduct additional assessment actions at the site for the following reasons:

- Samples collected during the SI indicate elevated concentrations of toxic metals, including arsenic, cadmium, copper, and lead, in media at the site. Site contaminants are an ongoing threat to human health and the environment both on and off-site via the nearby Alder Creek surface water migration pathway.
- The current condition of the tailing impoundments and potential future releases to Alder Creek is a threat to public health and the environment.
- Additional assessment is required to evaluate the extent of contamination at the site including potential impacts to off-site targets.
- 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
Toxics Cleanup Program
Central Regional Office

By certified mail: 9414 8098 9864 3069 3016 19

cc Justin Rice, Ecology
Jeff Feters, EPA