Monte Cristo Mining Area
Facility/Site ID # 2251399
Silverton, Washington

Draft Public Participation Plan

State of Washington Department of Ecology conducted Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Prepared by

Washington State Department of Ecology

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Getting Involved in the Monte Cristo Mining Area Cleanup

Ecology encourages the public to learn about and get involved in decision-making opportunities at the Monte Cristo Mining Area (Site). Opportunities are available during specific stages of the investigation and cleanup of metals in the soil, surface water, and sediments at the Site. The Site is located near the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Snohomish County, Washington, 40 miles east of Everett, Washington.

The Public Participation Plan (Plan) provides an overview of the Plan and the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA), which guides the formal cleanup process at sites in Washington State. This document also outlines the purpose of the Plan; when public notice will occur; the amount of time the public has to comment; where the potentially affected area is located; and ways the public may get involved in providing feedback. It also provides site background, a community profile, and community concerns.

Purpose of the Plan

The Public Participation Plan has three main purposes:

- To promote public understanding of the Washington Department of Ecology's (Ecology) responsibilities, planning, and cleanup activities at the site.
- To serve as a way of gathering information from the public. This information will assist Ecology to conduct the investigation and plan for cleanup in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment.
- To inform the community living near the site, as well as the general public about cleanup activities and how to contribute to the decision-making process.

Overview of the Public Participation Plan and Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)

The Plan is required under authority of the Model Toxics Control Act. MTCA is a "citizen-mandated" law that became effective in 1989 to provide guidelines for the cleanup of contaminated sites in Washington State. This law sets standards to make sure the cleanup of sites is protective of human health and the environment. A glossary of MTCA terms is included as Appendix C of this Plan.

Ecology's Toxic Cleanup Program investigates reports of contamination that may threaten human health and the environment. If contaminants are confirmed during an investigation, the site is generally ranked and placed on a Hazardous Sites List (HSL).

The Monte Cristo Mining Area ranked a one (1) on the Hazardous Sites List. A rank of one (1) represents the highest level of concern and five (5) the lowest. Current and former owners or operators, as well as any other potentially liable persons (PLPs) of a site, may be held responsible for cleanup of contamination based on MTCA. The PLP identified by Ecology for this site is the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO).

Public participation is an important part of cleanup under the MTCA process. The participation needs are assessed at each site according to the level of public interest and degree of risk posed by

contaminants. Individuals who recreate near the site, community groups, tribes, businesses, government, other organizations, and interested parties are provided an opportunity to become involved in commenting on the cleanup process.

The Plan includes requirements for public notice such as: identifying reports about the site and the repositories where reports may be read; providing public comment periods; and holding public meetings or hearings. Other forms of participation may be interviews, citizen advisory groups, questionnaires, or workshops.

Public Participation Grants and Technical Assistance

Additionally, citizen groups living near contaminated sites may apply for public participation grants (during open application periods). These grants help citizens receive technical assistance in understanding the cleanup process and create additional public participation avenues. **NOTE:** Ecology currently does not have a citizen technical advisor for providing technical assistance to citizens on issues related to the investigation and cleanup of the site.

Amendments

The Plan was developed by Ecology and complies with the Model Toxics Control Act regulations (Chapter 173-340-600 WAC). It will be reviewed as cleanup progresses and may be amended if necessary. Amendments may be submitted to Ecology's site manager, Jason Shira, for review and consideration. Ecology will determine final approval of the Plan as well as any amendments.

Review of Documents and Project Contacts

Documents relating to the cleanup may be reviewed at the repositories listed on page 5 of this Plan. If individuals are interested in knowing more about the Site or have comments regarding the Public Participation Plan, please contact one of the individuals listed below.

Department of Ecology Contacts:

Mr. Jason Shira, Site Manager
WA State Department of Ecology
Toxics Cleanup Program
15 W Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902
(509) 454-7834
Jason.Shira@ecy.wa.gov

Mr. Roger Johnson, Public Disclosure
WA State Department of Ecology
15 W Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902
(509) 454-7658
Roger.Johnson@ecy.wa.gov

Para asistencia Espanol
Sr. Greg Bohn
WA State Department of Ecology
Toxics Cleanup Program
15 W. Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902-3401
509-454-4174
greg.bohn@ecy.wa.gov

Если вам нужно помощь по русский, звоните
Tatyana Bistrevesky
(509) 477-3881

SITE BACKGROUND

Site Location

The Monte Cristo Mining Area (MCMA) is located near the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Snohomish County, Washington, 40 miles east of Everett, Washington. (The Pride of the Mtns, New Discovery, and Pride of the Woods mines are within the wilderness.) The site is adjacent to Glacier Creek, a headwater tributary to the South Fork of the Sauk River, which flows to the Sauk River, then to the Skagit River, and into Skagit Bay. U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Quadrangle Map, Monte Cristo and Blanca Lake, WASH. (1982), published in the Washington Atlas (1995), shows the Concentrator site is located in the northeast ¼ of the southeast ¼ of Section 21 (unsurveyed), Township 29 North, Range 11 East, Willamette Meridian and the Mystery Mine portal is located in the southwest ¼ of the southeast ¼ of Section 22 (unsurveyed), Township 29 North, Range 11 East, Willamette Meridian. The MCMA is situated at elevations ranging from approximately 2,880 feet (ft) above mean sea level (amsl) at the Concentrator to 4,280 ft amsl at the Mystery Mine portal. Darrington and Granite Falls are the nearest towns. Access to the site from either Darrington or Granite Falls is via Forest Service Road (FSR) 20, the Mountain Loop Scenic Highway, to Barlow Pass, then along FS road 4710 to the town site of Monte Cristo. FSR 4710 is gated at Barlow Pass and is currently undriveable due to a large slump just before crossing the South Fork Sauk River. It is approximately four miles from Barlow Pass to the Monte Cristo town site. The remaining distance to the various mine sites can be accomplished by hiking from town site. (See figure on page 9).

Site History

According to Church and others (1983) and Johnson and others (1985), the first claims in the Monte Cristo mining district were staked on sulfide-bearing quartz veins in 1889. By 1891, a road up the Sauk River valley was under construction and, in 1893, the Everett-Monte Cristo Railroad was completed, vastly improving access to the mining district. By 1894, a 300-ton-perday concentrator and aerial tramways between the mill and the Mystery and Pride of Mountains mines were in place and operating. The mines produced high-grade ore that was trammed to the mill and the mill produced concentrates for shipment to the Everett Smelter until 1897, when flooding along the Sauk River destroyed much of the railroad. The mines were basically shut down until 1899 when John D. Rockefeller gained a controlling interest in the mines and related companies. Railroad service was restored in 1900 and mining resumed in the District. In response to an unfavorable 1901 USGS report on the mineral deposits in the District indicating grade decreased with depth, Rockefeller began selling his holdings. Subsequently, the Guggenheim Smelter Trust, later known as ASARCO, acquired the Monte Cristo Mines and Everett Smelter. Their main interest was the smelter and consequently, the mines were shut down in 1903. The mines were sold in 1905 to the Wilmans brothers who in turn sold to mining speculator Samuel Silverman in 1906 (Wolff and others, 2003). Silverman intended to install a roasting plant at Monte Cristo to produce arsenic trioxide, a pesticide, but the company went into receivership in 1907 (Wolff and others, 2003). Limited production resumed in 1906 only to end again the following year (Johnson and others, 1985). Some mining occurred in 1920 but the

District has been generally idle since that time (Johnson and others, 1985). The Site is currently in mixed, public lands and private, ownership.

Site Description

The MCMA includes three large mine complexes, the Mystery Mine, Justice Mine, and Comet Mine. Aerial tramways from the Mystery and Justice Mines terminated at a common point, the Ore Collector, from which ore was hauled by rail to a common mill, the United Companies Concentrator (Concentrator). The Mystery Mine is not a single mine, but is actually a series of interconnected mines that used the Mystery Mine's tramway to transport run-of-mine ore to the Ore Collector. These mines are the Mystery, Pride of the Woods, New Discovery, Pride of the Mountains, and numerous smaller mines. The Justice Mine interconnects with the Golden Cord Mine. Ore from the Comet Mine was transported by aerial tramway to a separate terminal for rail haulage to the Concentrator. The Comet Mine ore is effectively addressed by the Concentrator sampling where it was processed. The Comet Mine itself is located high on the mountainside more than one-half mile from Seventysix Gulch and was not investigated as part of this Site Inspection. Ruins of the 300-ton per day Concentrator include concrete foundations, old flooring, and partially processed ore. According to a Forest Service report (Forest Service 2002), 14,000 cubic yards (cy) of coarse gravity (jig) tailings were discharged on-land. This volume seems small for the production and mine sizes of the MCMA. The larger portion of tailings were more than likely deposited in Glacier Creek and transported downstream during flood events. Much of this may still be mixed within active stream gravel and can be observed visually and identified by sampling.

Risks to human and ecological receptors in the MCMA are associated primarily with high metals concentrations in waste rock, unprocessed ore, mill tailings, stream sediment and some local soils, as well as elevated metals in the adit and surface water. Potential metals impacts are evident to benthic macroinvertebrate populations in portions of South Fork Sauk River which includes threatened bull trout, steelhead, and salmon.

Contaminants of Concern

Previous environmental investigations of the Site indicate the presence of hazardous substances in surface water, soil, and sediments above state cleanup standards including Antimony, Arsenic, Cadmium, Chromium, Cobalt, Copper, Lead, Manganese, Mercury, Nickel, Selenium, Silver, Thalium, Vanadium, and Zinc. As a result, the Site is subject to the investigation and cleanup requirements of the Model Toxics Control Act administered by Ecology.

HOW THE SITE WILL BE CLEANED UP

Investigation and Study

Initial work at the Site will focus on completing a Remedial Investigation and a Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The Remedial Investigation will determine the type, level, location and sources of contamination at the site. The Feasibility Study will evaluate a range of remedial alternatives that address the contamination, minimizing or eliminating the human health and environmental

threats. Implementation of this work will lead to the generation of a draft RI/FS report. Ecology will solicit public comment on the draft RI/FS prior to finalization.

Cleanup

After the RI/FS is finalized, a draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) will be completed that describes the remedial alternative preliminarily selected by Ecology. Actual cleanup will begin when the CAP is implemented. This includes design, construction, operation and monitoring of cleanup actions.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Ecology has preliminarily identified the following concerns and interests that may apply to the investigation and cleanup of the Site:

- Protection of human health and the environment
- Opportunities for public involvement
- Compliance with regulatory requirements

The USFS interviewed key contacts to gauge initial understanding, and interest, in the Monte Cristo Mining Site and its associated risks to humans and the environment. Those who indicated concerns generally listed threats to water quality, especially from arsenic. Tribal contacts and the Monte Cristo Preservation Association listed protection of artifacts as a concern.

The MCMA receives moderate human use. Tribal contacts indicate long-term historical use by tribal members. The popularity of abandoned mine sites for recreational exploration is common in the area. Many people enjoy exploring these sites. Snohomish County records show 32 landowners in the Monte Cristo vicinity. As cleanup activities occur the site may experience increased interest from curious local residents and recreational users.

Ecology will incorporate additional public concerns over the course of the Site cleanup through public comment periods; community interviews; surveys; meetings; and other contacts with individuals, community groups, or organizations.

Public Participation Activities and Timeline

The following is a list of some of the public participation efforts that will occur until the cleanup actions are completed:

- A **mailing list** is being developed for individuals who have property near the Site. These persons will receive copies of all fact sheets developed regarding the cleanup process via first class mail. Additionally, individuals, organizations, local, state, and federal governments, and any other interested parties will be added to the mailing list as requested. Other interested persons may request to be on the mailing list at any time by contacting Frosti Smith of Ecology at (509) 454-7841 or Frosti.Smith@ecy.wa.gov.

- **Public Repositories** are locations where documents may be reviewed. Three repositories have been established. The following locations will contain copies of any documents that go through the public review process related to this site:

  WA Department of Ecology
  15 W Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
  Yakima, WA 98902
  Contact: Mr. Roger Johnson
  Public Disclosure Coordinator
  (509) 454-7658

  Darrington Public Library
  1005 Cascade Street
  Darrington, WA 98241-0025
  (360) 436-1600

  Ecology's Web Site at
  https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=4550

- **Opportunity to Comment**

  - During each stage of cleanup **fact sheets** are created by Ecology, then distributed to individuals on the mailing list. These fact sheets explain the stage of cleanup, the site background, what happens next in the cleanup process and ask for comments from the public.

  - A **30-day comment period** allows interested parties time to comment on the process. The fact sheet contains contact information about where to submit comments and where and when public meetings or hearings will be held if requested.

  - The information from these fact sheets is also published in a statewide **Site Register** which is sent to those who request to be on that mailing list. Persons interested in receiving the Site Register should contact Seth Preston of Ecology at (360) 407-6848 or e-mail Seth.Preston@ecy.wa.gov. The fact sheets are also posted on Ecology's web page under the Toxics Cleanup Program at https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=4550

- **Display ads or legal notices** are published in The Everett Herald, ethnic newspapers when available, and on Ecology's Public Events Calendar http://www.ecy.wa.gov to inform the general public. These notices are published at the beginning of the 30-day comment period for the public notices. They are also used to announce public meetings and workshops or public hearings.

- **Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and public hearings** are held based on the level of community interest. If ten or more persons request a public meeting or hearing based on the subject of the public notice, Ecology will hold a meeting or hearing and gather comments. These meetings, workshops, or hearings will be held at a location that meets ADA standards and is close to the Site. They may be held away from the Site if it

is necessary to accommodate large numbers of interested persons. These events are announced using the same methods as display ads or legal notices.

- Flyers may also be made available in various locations throughout the community (e.g., postings at local businesses, schools, libraries, etc.) to announce public comment periods, meetings, workshops, etc.

Answering Questions from the Public

Individuals in the community may want to ask questions to better understand the cleanup process. Page 2 lists the contacts for Ecology. Interested persons are encouraged to contact these persons by phone or e-mail to obtain information about the Site, the process and potential decisions.

Public Notice and Comment Periods Timeline

DATE	**ACTION TAKEN**
August 2011	Scoping Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study
Month Year	
Month Year	
Month Year	

GLOSSARY

Cleanup: Actions taken to deal with a release, or threatened release of hazardous substances that could affect public health and/or the environment. The term "cleanup" is often used broadly to describe various response actions or phases of remedial responses such as the remedial investigation/feasibility study.

Cleanup Action Plan (CAP): A document that explains which cleanup alternative(s) will be used at sites for the cleanup. The Cleanup Action Plan is based on information and technical analysis generated during the remedial investigation/feasibility study and consideration of public comments and community concerns.

Comment Period: A time period during which the public can review and comment on various documents and Ecology or EPA actions. For example, a comment period is provided to allow community members to review and comment on proposed cleanup action alternatives and proposed plans. Also, a comment period is held to allow community members to review and comment on draft feasibility studies.

Consent Decree: A formal legal document, approved and issued by a court, which formalizes an agreement reached between the state (and EPA if involved) and the potentially liable person(s) on what will take place during the remedial investigation/feasibility study and/or cleanup action. A Consent Decree is similar to an Agreed Order except that a Consent Decree goes through the courts. Consent Decrees are subject to public comment. If a decree is substantially changed, an additional comment period is provided.

Feasibility Study (FS): This study uses information obtained in a remedial investigation to develop and evaluate a range of cleanup options for a site.

Information Repository: A file containing current information, technical reports, and reference documents available for public review. The information repository is usually located in a public building that is convenient for local residents such as a public school, city hall or library.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA): Legislation passed by the state of Washington in 1988. Its purpose is to identify, investigate, and clean up facilities where hazardous substances have been released. It defines the role of Ecology and encourages public involvement in the decision making process. MTCA regulations became effective March 1, 1989 and are administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Potentially Liable Person (PLP): Any individual(s) or company(s) potentially responsible for, or contributing to, the contamination problems at a site. Whenever possible, Ecology requires these PLPs, through administrative and legal actions, to clean up sites.

Public Participation Plan: A plan prepared to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement designed to the public's needs at a particular site.

Remedial Investigation (RI): This study characterizes the site and defines the type and extent

of contamination.

Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study: Two distinct but related studies. They are usually performed at the same time, and together referred to as the "RI/FS." They are intended to:

- Gather the data necessary to determine the type and extent of contamination;
- Establish criteria for cleaning up the site;
- Identify and screen cleanup alternatives for remedial action; and
- Analyze in detail the technology and costs of the alternatives.

Responsiveness Summary: A summary of oral and/or written public comments received by Ecology during a comment period on key documents, and Ecology's responses to those comments. The responsiveness summary is especially valuable during the Cleanup Action Plan phase at a site when it highlights community concerns.

Site: Any building, structure, installation, equipment, pipe or pipeline (including any pipe into a sewer or publicly owned treatment works), well, pit, pond, lagoon, impoundment, ditch, landfill, storage container, motor vehicle, rolling stock, vessel, or aircraft; or any site or area where a hazardous substance, other than a consumer product in consumer use, has been deposited stored, disposed of, or placed, or otherwise come to be located.

Site Location Map