

Cleanup Proposed at Tailings Disposal Facilities 1 and 2

Ecology Wants your Feedback

You have an opportunity to tell Ecology what you think about three documents that will guide cleanup at the Pend Oreille Mine site. Cleanup focuses on two areas known as Tailings Disposal Facilities 1 and 2 which are historic areas associated with the Pend Oreille Mine and Mill. The site is located two miles north of Metaline Falls on the east side of the Pend Oreille River in Pend Oreille County, Washington.

The following is a list of the documents available for comment:

- Draft Cleanup Action Plan
- Consent Decree
- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

All documents are considered draft until after the public comment period. Ecology will review all comments submitted during the comment period and make modifications as appropriate. Then the documents become final and the work begins.

You are invited to

- **Review** the documents listed above.
- **Send** your comments to Ecology. Comments will be accepted from **February 14, 2011 to March 16, 2011**. The box on the right provides information about where to review documents, and send your comments.
- **Attend a public meeting** to learn more about how these documents will affect the cleanup and ask questions about the project.
Wednesday, February 23, 2011 7:00 p.m.
Selkirk High School (lunch room)
10372 Highway 31 (7 miles north of Ione, WA)

Tailings Disposal Facilities

The mill and mine are currently operated by Teck Washington Incorporated. Zinc and lead are the primary metals recovered in the mining process.

Prior to Teck's ownership, tailings were discharged directly

Fact Sheet February 2011

Comments Accepted

February 14, 2011 through
March 16, 2011

Para asistencia en Español

Richelle Perez 360/407-7528

Если вам нужно помощь по руский, звоните Tatyana Bistrevsky 509/928-7617

Comments and Technical Questions

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Public Meetings, Public Involvement, and Mailing List Questions

Carol Bergin
Public Involvement Coordinator
WA Department of Ecology
See address above
509/329-3546 or Carol.bergin@ecy.wa.gov

Document Review Locations

WA Department of Ecology
Kari Johnson, Public Disclosure
WA Department of Ecology
4601 N. Monroe St.
Spokane, WA 99205-1295
Call for an appointment 509/329-3415

Metaline Falls Public Library

Cutter Theatre Building
302 Park Street
Metaline Falls, WA 99153
509/446-3232

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Website

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/Pend_Or_Mine/POM_hp.htm

Facility Site ID No. 15428546

into the Pend Oreille River until 1967. Tailings are a fine-grained material produced during ore processing and metal extraction. Between 1967 and 1977 mine tailings were disposed of in three areas at the site. These disposal areas are called Tailings Disposal Facilities (TDF) 1, 2 and 3 (see Figures 1 & 2). TDF-1 and 2 cover approximately 18 and 9 acres respectively. They are located northwest of the Pend Oreille Mine Golf Course and east of the Pend Oreille River. Both TDF-1 and 2 are located on Pend Oreille Mine property now owned by Teck Washington Incorporated and are no longer active. TDF-1 and 2 are the focus of this cleanup.

TDF-3 is about 20 acres in size and lies under the newly permitted tailings collection facility used by Teck Washington Incorporated. The facility is managed as part of the current mine and mill operations. Teck will address closure of TDF-3 under a separate approved plan that is not part of this cleanup.

Recent Studies

Teck Cominco American Incorporated (Teck) entered into a legal agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology in 2005. The agreement required Teck to conduct a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) of certain areas near the Pend Oreille Mine site.

Remedial Investigation

The Remedial Investigation examined the extent of metals contamination at TDF 1 and 2. Arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, manganese, mercury, selenium, and zinc as well as other metals in soils, groundwater and surface water were evaluated. The following are some of the investigation results.

Groundwater

- There are elevated levels of iron in groundwater in TDF-2 and elevated manganese in groundwater downgradient of TDF-1. Groundwater in these areas flows toward the Pend Oreille River.
- One of the primary purposes of the work at the site is to protect the river and local streams.
- Drinking water has not been impacted by site-related contaminants.

Soil

- There are elevated levels of arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, and zinc in soils from the tailing piles.
- The elevated levels of these metals are based on ecological risk factors.
- Lead and arsenic in soil exceeds standards for human health.

Reduce Your Exposure Risks to Tailings Contaminants

The tailings piles are on private property and should be accessed only by authorized personnel. You may reduce possible exposure risks by staying outside of the tailings area.

Feasibility Study Report

The original Feasibility Study Report evaluated six cleanup alternatives for the site. Protection to human health and the environment were key components of the evaluation. Other factors considered were effectiveness, potential for implementation, cost, compliance with all applicable laws, and long-term monitoring.

Three alternatives from the original Feasibility Study Report were evaluated in more depth. Teck chose Alternative 4 as their preferred cleanup option. Alternative 4 was presented to Ecology for approval, and Ecology selected a modified version of that alternative for the Draft Cleanup Action Plan.

Selected Cleanup Actions

A Draft Cleanup Action Plan (DCAP) and Consent Decree have been developed for the site. The DCAP identifies the cleanup actions Ecology has selected from the Feasibility Study. Some of the cleanup actions include:

- Re-grade and shape the tailings facilities' slopes.
- Compact the surface of tailings in TDF-1 and TDF-2 to protect groundwater.
- Place a cover system over TDF-1 and TDF-2.
- Control stormwater.

The Consent Decree is the legal document used to implement the DCAP. The Decree describes the responsibilities of all parties in implementing the cleanup action approved by Ecology and assures that work is conducted in a timely manner, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

The State Environmental Policy Act, known as SEPA, requires government agencies to consider potential environmental impacts of a project before beginning the cleanup.

- After review of a completed environmental checklist and other site-specific information, Ecology has determined the cleanup of metals contamination will not have a probable adverse impact on the environment.

- This action will benefit the environment by reducing the release of toxic chemicals from the site.
- Therefore, Ecology has issued a Determination of Non-Significance.

What Happens Next?

Ecology will review and respond to all comments received by **March 16, 2011**. Modifications may be made to the reports if appropriate. If no modifications are made, the reports will become final.

Ecology will hold a **public meeting on February 23, 2011** to discuss the DCAP, Consent Decree and SEPA documents. Information about the meeting is found on page one of this fact sheet.

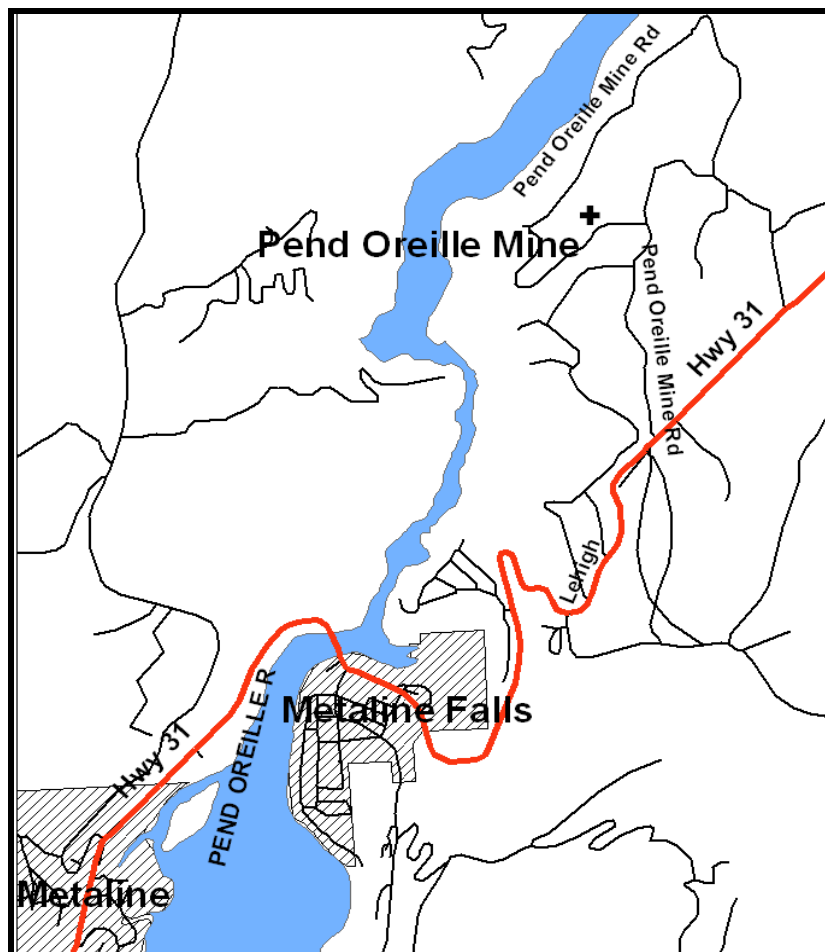
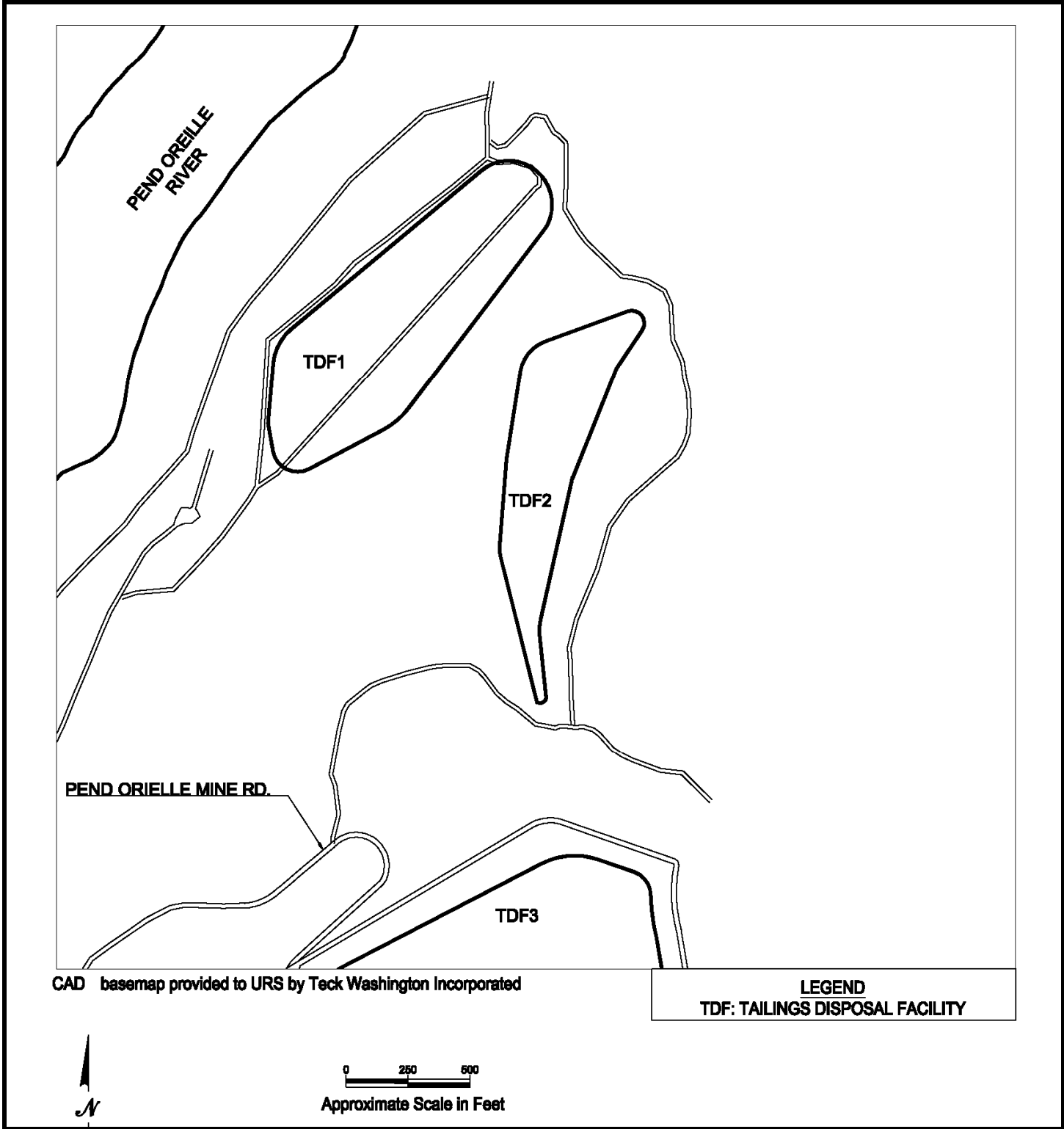


Figure 1



Map courtesy of URS

Figure 2
Tailings TDF-1, TDF-2, TDF-3

If you need this publication in an alternative format, call Carol Bergin at 509/329-3546. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with speech disability call 877/833-6341



**4601 N. Monroe
Spokane, WA 99205-1295**

Pend Oreille Mine Site
[Ecology Wants Your Feedback](#) on the
DCAP, Consent Decree, and SEPA Documents