



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Six Rivers
National Forest

Orleans Ranger District
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File Code: 2160

Date: January 23, 2003

Dear Interested Party,

This letter is to implement the public notification part of the Community Involvement Plan for the Siskon Mine CERCLA Removal Action and Reclamation Project (see enclosed maps, Figures 1 and 2). I encourage your participation in this process.

The Siskon Mine Site is an abandoned gold and silver mine located on the Klamath National Forest, but administered by the Six Rivers National Forest, Orleans Ranger District, Siskiyou County, California. The effects of mining operations between 1953-1960 have resulted in the continued erosion of the mill tailings into Copper Creek, an anadromous fish stream. Contaminants from the tailing piles include copper, arsenic, and other metals.

The USDA Forest Service is exercising its lead agency authority under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) to conduct a Removal Action at the Site. The proposed project would begin in the summer of 2003 and would be implemented in phases over the following two to five years during the summer (June 1-October 15). The objectives are:

- Capping (covering with clean fill) the mill tailings on site.
- Re-vegetation of the mill tailings pond and mill site area (approximately 2 acres).
- Storm-proofing and stabilization of the mine road that is a sediment source (approximately 1.5 miles).

These objectives would achieve the goals of:

- Restoration of the riparian area and protection of water quality, aquatic, fish, and wildlife habitats.
- Reducing chronic surface erosion of mine tailings into Copper Creek and reducing the risk of delivery of large volumes of tailings during future large precipitation events.
- Containment and capping of the tailings contamination source, which contains heavy metals and other substances that are toxic to vegetation, soil organisms, wildlife, and aquatic life.
- Reducing chronic sedimentation from mine roads into the mill, tailings pond area, and Copper Creek.



- Eliminating or reducing road drainage problems that are accelerating active landsliding of the mine road system and contributing to sediment delivery into Copper Creek.

The Siskon Mine Site is located in Copper Creek Watershed, which is a tributary to Dillon Creek and the Klamath River. The project area is approximately 25 miles northwest of Somes Bar, California. The project area is located in T. 14 N., R. 5 E., Sections 20 and 29, Chimney Rock California, 7.5' Quadrangle, Humboldt Meridian.

The Six Rivers and Klamath National Forests are in the process of preparing an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) as required by CERCLA and the NCP for a non-time-critical Removal Action. An Environmental Analysis is not required as the National Environmental Policy Act regulations are not applicable under CERCLA and the NCP. Alternatives considered in the EE/CA to clean up the contaminant source and rehabilitate the Site must be evaluated on how they meet the following criteria:

- Overall Protection of Human Health and the Environment
- Short- and Long-Term Effectiveness and Permanence
- Reduction of Toxicity, Mobility and Volume
- Implementability
- Cost

If you have any concerns relating to this proposal, please notify the project On-Scene Coordinator (OSC), Polly Haessig, Klamath National Forest, 1312 Fairland Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or call her at 530-841-4415. Please provide any input by February 24, 2003. If you are interested in a public meeting to learn more about the project, please contact Polly before February 24, 2003.

If you would like to discuss this matter with me, I may be reached at (530) 627-3291. I appreciate your interest in the Orleans Ranger District.

Sincerely,

/S/ WILLIAM M. HEITLER

WILLIAM M. HEITLER
District Ranger