

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Proposed Site

September 2016

**ANACONDA COPPER MINE | Yerington, Nevada
| Lyon County**** Site Location:**

The Anaconda Copper Mine site is an abandoned 3,500 acre mine and mineral extraction facility located approximately one mile west of the city of Yerington, Nevada.

 Site History:

The mine began operation in 1918 and in 1951, Anaconda Copper Company purchased it, and mined and milled copper ore there until 1978. Atlantic Richfield Company (ARC) purchased Anaconda and its assets, including the Yerington mine. In 1988, Arimetco bought the private mine property and operated a heap leach facility to extract copper. Arimetco filed for bankruptcy in 1998 and abandoned its heap-leach operation in January 2000.

 Site Contamination/Contaminants:

The site includes: a 6,400 foot long, 2,800 foot wide and 800 foot deep open-pit mine; 400 acres of waste rock; five leach pads covering 250 acres; 3,000 acres of contaminated tailings; and 1,377 acres of disposal ponds. The waste contains heavy metals and radionuclides above background levels. Drinking water from wells near the site contains arsenic and uranium concentrations above the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs).

 Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

There are more than 200 active wells near the site that serve as the sole source of drinking water for approximately 5,000 people. Since 2004, ARC has provided bottled water to tribal members and more than 80 other residences affected by uranium in the drinking water. Dust from on-site tailings and evaporation ponds blows off-site during periods of moderate to high wind conditions. The evaporation ponds and heap leach ponds pose a physical threat to wildlife, including migratory birds and land animals, who are known to frequent the site.

 Response Activities (to date):

In 2000, the state of Nevada removed at least 250 drums of waste and more than 70 tanker trucks of acidic extraction fluid. In 2006, the EPA removed polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contaminated equipment and capped 167 acres of contaminated dust sources. In 2007, the EPA repaired two and closed one of the evaporation ponds, and constructed a new, four-acre evaporation pond to allow more diversion of fluids out of leaking ponds. The state constructed additional containment ponds (funded by the EPA and ARC) in 2013 that were designed to contain a 25 year rainfall event.

 Need for NPL Listing:

The state of Nevada referred the site to the EPA. Other cleanup options were evaluated, but are not viable at this time. NPL listing is necessary because the site needs comprehensive cleanup to close the former Arimetco heap leach pads and ponds, address contaminated ground water which has traveled off-site and close the former Anaconda process areas. The EPA received letters in support of proposing to add this site to the NPL from the state, the Bureau of Land Management, Yerington Paiute Tribe, Walker River Paiute Tribe and the Yerington Community Action Group.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See 56 FR 5600, February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. [ATSDR ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) can be found on the Internet at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp> or by telephone at 1-800-CDC-INFO or 1-800-232-4636.