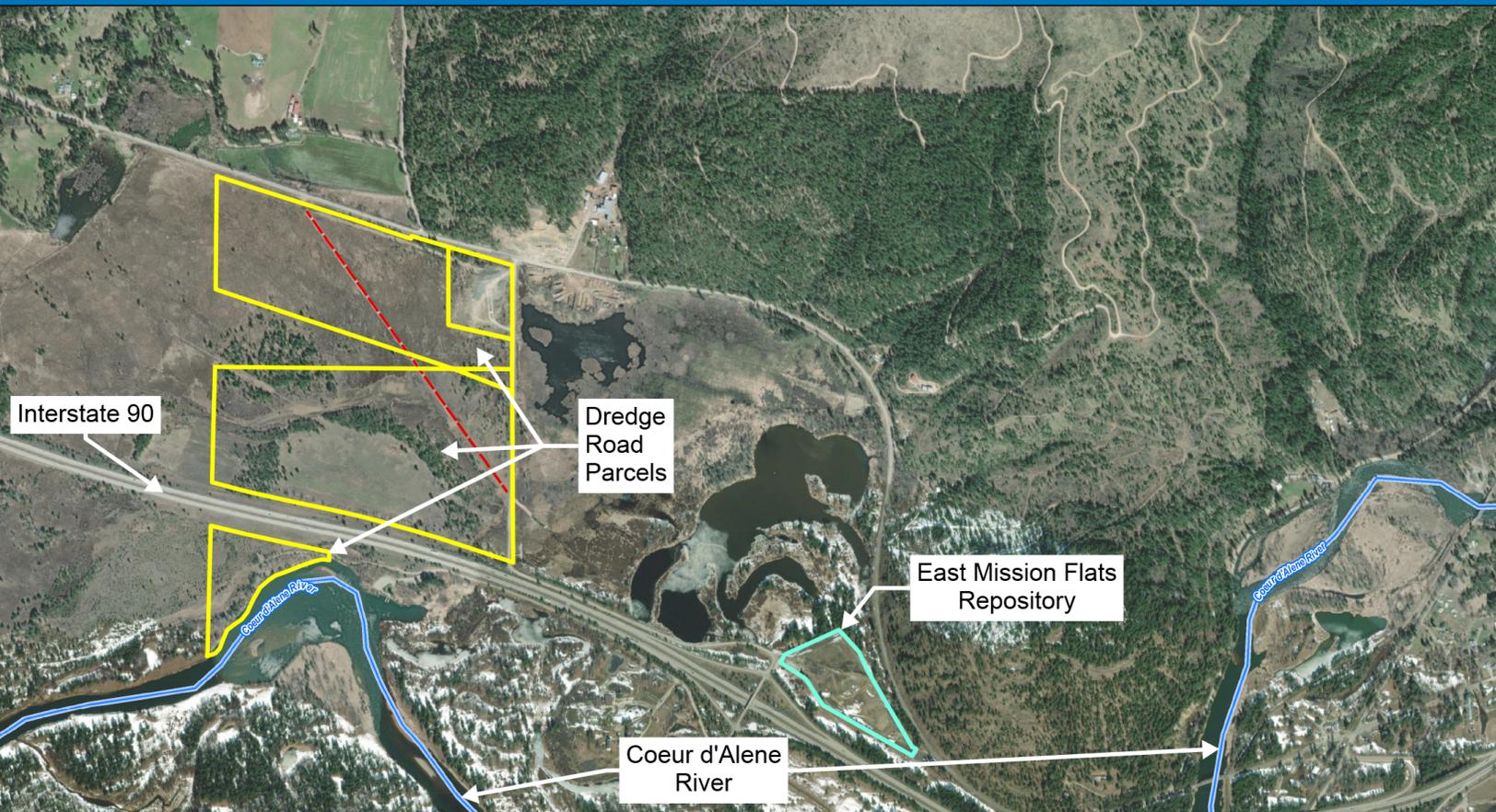


# Coeur d'Alene Basin Cleanup

EPA selects Dredge Road property for new waste consolidation area



**Figure 1**  
**Site Location**

**Dredge Road Property**  
**Kootenai County, Idaho**

-  River or Stream
-  Dredge Road Parcels
-  E. Mission Flats Repository Parcels
-  Natural Gas Line

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



Sources: USGS aerial photography and National Geographic base map and via Esri Web Mapping Service.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has selected the Dredge Road property as the location for a new waste consolidation area. The Dredge Road property is in the Lower Coeur d'Alene River Basin, along the Dudley Reach of the Coeur d'Alene River.

## ***More about the Dredge Road property***

The Dredge Road property is two miles west of Cataldo, on the north side of Interstate 90. The 186-acre property was deeded to the Trust through the ASARCO bankruptcy. From 1932-1968, a suction dredge operated in the Coeur d'Alene River near the boat launch. Over its life, the dredge removed about 34.5 million tons of sediments contaminated with mine tailings from the Coeur d'Alene River. These contaminated sediments were deposited in a tailings pond on Mission Flats, covering an area of about 2,000 acres to a depth of 25-30 feet. The property is within this area, which contains high levels of lead and other metals.

### ***Public involvement in EPA's site selection***

The site criteria were first developed in 2009 as a checklist of issues local community members told EPA were important to consider when selecting locations.

As part of the siting process, EPA convened a technical work group called a Project Focus Team with its cleanup partners, coordinating through the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission.

EPA began engaging the community on the siting of a new waste consolidation area in 2020. You can view the public input and EPA's responses in the [Lower Basin Waste Consolidation Areas Siting Criteria: EPA Responsiveness Summary](#).

In 2021, the Coeur d'Alene Work Trust, under EPA's direction, conducted soil sampling on the property. That sampling confirmed its suitability for use as a waste consolidation area. EPA held public information sessions in March 2022 and May 2025 to ensure the community was aware.

### ***How did EPA decide on the Dredge Road property?***

The Project Focus Team evaluated WCA locations EPA identified against other possible locations that were proposed during the 2020 public input period. This included publicly and privately owned lands. Additionally, the Trust verified their previous site identification evaluation of 394 properties.

EPA found the Dredge Road property to be the best WCA location from both technical and logistical standpoints. Also, a WCA would provide a cap over the footprint at the Dredge Road property. This would reduce the movement of contaminants downward through the already-contaminated soil, caused by rain and snowfall, and provide a clean habitat for potential use by wildlife.

A WCA on the Dredge Road property will impact fewer people and be more cost effective as it is near to the Dudley Scour Hole project site. The team's input helped inform EPA's decision to select the Dredge Road property.

### **WCA site selection criteria**

- Minimize potential for impact to wetlands and related wildlife
- Minimize potential for impact to surface waters and fish and wildlife
- Minimize potential for impact to groundwater
- Minimize potential for impact to base flood elevation
- Site is not near a mapped fault or likely to be affected by a landslide
- Site not likely to result in impacts to persons living or working near the WCA (residences, schools, urban areas)
- Truck route along State Highway 3 to the WCAs not likely to affect existing persons or businesses
- Minimize trucking costs by locating WCAs close to cleanup areas
- Development of WCAs generates clean soil or rock for remedial action construction and caps
- Capacity of WCAs is sufficient for the planned remedial actions in the vicinity of the WCAs

*Other possible locations the PFT evaluated:*

- South River Road property - We compared the Dredge Road property to the South River Road property to determine which was more suitable for use as a WCA. The South River Road property is one mile east of the intersection of Highway 3 and South River Road, owned by the Coeur d'Alene Work Trust. The South River Road property could supply clean soil and rock for future cleanups, while the Dredge Road property could not.
- Central Impoundment Area - The CIA was evaluated as an exercise for an existing repository/location outside of the Lower Basin. The Trust compared trucking costs within the Lower Basin to the Dredge Road property, versus to the CIA. Costs were three times higher to haul waste out of the Lower Basin to the CIA than to the Dredge Road property. Distance to the pilot project increases the cost and complexity of managing and operating a WCA. Additionally, placing a WCA on the CIA would increase stress on the existing waste and cover system, which could potentially compromise the integrity of the liner and impact existing remedies, including the groundwater collection system and Central Treatment Plant.
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game Property (Springston Property) - Although not under consideration at this time, IDFG provided a review of their Springston property as a strawman for analysis. It provided an opportunity to explore and learn about both the potential opportunities and unique complexities that accompany consideration of siting a WCA on public land.

***What is a waste consolidation area?***

WCAs are sites where contaminated material – mostly soil – is stored. These secure impoundment areas are carefully engineered to reduce the chance of exposure to people or the environment over time. The material destined for WCAs comes from the specific cleanup site. When WCAs are full, they are capped with clean material and routinely monitored to ensure they remain protective.

***What is the project schedule?***

EPA expects to design the WCA from 2026 to 2027, begin construction in 2028 and start accepting waste in 2029.

***Why are WCAs needed in the Lower Coeur d'Alene River Basin?***

More cleanup projects are coming to the Lower Basin, starting with the Dudley Reach Pilot Project. The Lower Basin refers to the downstream end of the Lower Coeur d'Alene River Basin, starting at the confluence of the North and South Fork Coeur d'Alene River. It is the area along the Coeur d'Alene River valley, stretching from Enaville to Harrison. Cleanups will take place in select areas here over the next many years. The cleanup projects will help protect people's health by removing soil and sediment contaminated with heavy metals like lead and arsenic. Several areas are needed to safely consolidate and store that waste.

***Dudley Reach pilot project***

The CDA Trust, EPA and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality are characterizing an area in the Dudley Reach section of the Coeur d'Alene River to prepare for a pilot project. The pilot project will test several sediment remediation technologies to address riverbed contamination to reduce particulate lead and other metal loading to the river.

It is the first “pilot” project within the river channel in the Lower Basin. A pilot project helps inform our cleanup approach. It will help us learn more about working in the river channel and assess ways to prevent mine waste from moving downstream and entering Coeur d'Alene Lake. We can apply those lessons to future efforts.

EPA is tentatively scheduling the pilot project for construction starting in 2029. The pilot project will likely generate waste that will need a safe storage location and require a local disposal site, or WCA, to be sited near the project location. So, this waste will be secured in the new WCA.

### ***Status of Lower Basin cleanup***

Lead and other heavy metals are common in the soils and sediments of the Coeur d'Alene River and floodplain. These contaminants pose a risk to people's health and the environment. Over the past several years, EPA has heavily focused on removing contaminated source materials from Upper Basin mine and mill sites. The Trust and EPA are investigating the proper path to implement Lower Basin cleanup. The topography, river system and methods of completing efficient and viable cleanups is different from the Upper Basin. More information is needed before a cleanup technology can be selected and designs drafted. EPA recently completed watershed remediation of mine and mill sites in Ninemile Creek, and will soon complete a second waterfowl habitat project in Gray's Meadow.

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