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Callahan Mine
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This Week

Retired Skippers Race preview
Compass section, pages 8-9

THE WEEKLY PACKET



Vol. 48, No. 33

August 13, 2009

Blue Hill, Maine 04614

80¢

Unique, contaminated site

Scientists answer questions on mine clean-up proposal in Brooksville

By DAVID WALSH

BROOKSVILLE—An August 6 meeting held at Brooksville was supposed to be an exchange of information between two different groups of experts over the issue of cleaning up former mines.

During a recent series of public hearings and informational meetings, Blue Hill selectman and state representative James Schatz has frequently cited the experts he worked with as a selectman when Blue Hill was cleaning up the Kerramerican mine.

Ed Hathaway, who is coordinating the Department of Environmental Protection clean-up of the Callahan mine in Harborside, and Schatz agreed during a recent meeting to each bring their experts together for an exchange of ideas.

Schatz was only able to recruit David Critchfield of Emsource, a Portland-based

environmental consulting group, who later informed him that he would be unable to make it to the meeting.

However, Hathaway was able to recruit his panel of experts. Among those making up the DEP list of experts were Steve Mierzykowski, senior biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ken Finkelstein, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Bob Seal, U.S. Geological Survey, Paul Schroeder, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Brian Beal,

More clean-up stories on pages 4 & 5

professor of marine ecology, University of Maine-Machias, Craig Gendron, Stantec (formerly Jacques Whitford), Malcolm Stephenson, Stantec, Stanley Reed, Mactec Engineering and Consulting, and Scott Calkin, senior geophysicist, Mactec Engineering and Consulting.

There was a brief review of the proposed plan, which has been presented to the Brooksville community many times.

Hathaway held up a large illustration showing where PCBs and petroleum contamination were to be removed from the site, the area where lead, zinc and cadmium would be removed and dumped into the old mine pit, and the area where sludge from Goose Cove and Goose Pond would be dredged and piped to the pit. Rock from various sites would be moved by conveyor belts.

Selectman Darrell Fowler wanted to know what would go into the pit first, sludge or rock. Schroeder and Hathaway said no decision has been made yet.

Finkelstein was asked what would happen if the mine pit was not capped. He said that, unlike freshwater that turns over several times a year as the temperatures change, the pit is filled with saltwater, which is colder and denser.

Seal explained that due to the stratification and density of the water there would be no



Violet Tompkins stands beside her cake as her friends at Friendship Cottage sing happy birthday. Photo by Faith DeAmbrose

Surry woman celebrates her 100th birthday

By FAITH DEAMBROSE

BLUE HILL—Born in 1909, Violet Tompkins has seen and done a great many things. Celebrating her 100th year of life on August 10, she smiles widely and eats ice cream cake with her friends.

Tompkins' daughter, Lois Stevens of Surry, says it's her mother's sense of humor that has been the secret to her longevity. Tompkins lives with her daughter in Surry. Still very active in her care, Tompkins also helps around the house by doing chores such as folding laundry and drying dishes. The walker she has is largely for show, said Stevens, noting that it helps more with maintaining balance than actually walking.

Those who know Tompkins are probably not at all surprised at her remarkable condi-

tion. After all, at the age of 43, this centenarian bagged herself the second largest bull moose to ever come out of Newfoundland, Canada. According to a report from the Arlington Press in 1953, the moose weighed more than 1,800 pounds, and had a horn spread of 20 points measuring 52-2/3 inches.

Surrounded by friends and family, Tompkins began the day's celebration at Friendship Cottage, an adult day service center in Blue Hill. Tompkins attends the center daily and on this day she and 13 others sat down for lunch, followed by singing and cake.

The family will hold a larger celebration for Tompkins on Sunday, August 16, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Surry Elementary School's Civic Center.

unclear when the decision will be made or announced.

Farr is making use of a retirement incentive program also put in place by Baldacci, which grants retirees a cash bonus of \$10,000. It is intended to help offset the hiring freeze.

"I don't think we've been hit as hard as other departments, but when you get less than 1 percent of the budget..." Farr shrugs his shoulders. The parks receive about 0.7 percent of the state budget.

Farr says he worries about the prospect of a seasonal ranger taking over daily operations at Holbrook. He says he sees "no

See Holbrook on page 2

Progress made, problems remain

Reports from Blue Hill Memorial Hospital's annual meeting August 10, contain good and not so good news. Turn to page 1 of the Compass section for the story. At the meeting, Zoe Tenney, pictured left, a nurse practitioner at Blue Hill Family Medicine, was given the Employee of the Year award. She said a few words while hospital foundation board chairman Peter Hoyt, middle, and hospital board chairman Charlie Hatfield looked on.

Photo by Faith DeAmbrose

This Week

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Holbrook Continued from page 1

possible way they could keep up on half the "maintenance" of the park. Maintaining the park's 14 miles of walking trails is just one of the areas that Farr thinks needs more than seasonal attention. Coordinating volunteers to help with track work, lead walks and lectures, organize craft workshops and help with day-to-day operations has been the domain of a pair of interns who live in the park and receive a stipend every summer. "I'm really concerned about the internship program," says Farr—so much so that he has volunteered to continue going to college career days around New England campuses in the winter to recruit new interns every year.

The actual time a 20- or 26-week seasonal ranger could devote to the park is further impacted by a wide range of other factors, says Farr. This year, all park seasonal

employees started work two weeks late as a further cost-cutting measure for the state budget. Between sick leave, annual leave, relocation time and a host of training courses (first aid, law enforcement, boat handling, etc.), a seasonal employee won't have the same ability to deal with the demands of the park. "At this stage in the park's life, one person can't do it," says Farr.

"I just hope I live long enough to see the parks funded as they should be," he said.

But Holbrook isn't on its own. The Friends of Holbrook will continue their fundraising efforts, sponsoring walks and helping in all aspects of park life. The park headquarters is getting retrofitted with a full photovoltaic solar array that can provide all its electrical needs, paid for by the Friends. Tools, art supplies, printing costs are all met by the Friends as well.

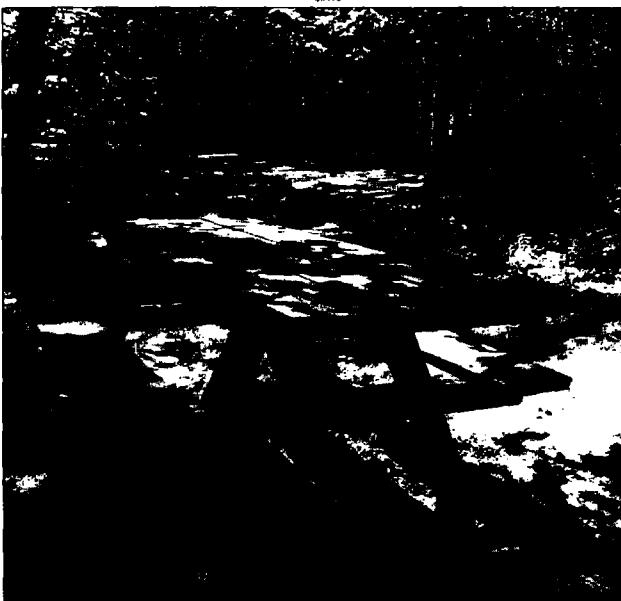
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CORRECTION

We goofed last week and did not print the full results from the Eggemoggin Reach Regatta, held August 1. The full results and awards are now available at www.weeklypacket.com and at the ERR Web site at www.erregratata.com.



Picnic tables at Holbrook Island Sanctuary. Whether the park will continue to have a full-time, year-round ranger remains unclear. Photo by Ben Jackson

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Clean-up *Continued from page 1*

oxygen near the bottom and oxygen is needed to break down the metals in the waste rock.

When dredging Goose Pond they will be bringing up contaminated sludge and warmer fresh water which might be able to bring up metals, but that could be controlled by slowing down the speed of the piped-in sludge.

Schatz said they had been told they might not have a design plan for the clean-up for two years, but he felt that there are some things that need to be done soon.

Seal told the townspeople that the mine waste is close to the coast and fine-grained, and is affecting the aquatic habitat in the area.

Jody Spear of Harborside wanted to know what would be left after they dispose of the waste rock in the pit. She also wanted to know how they would remediate the soil under the rock pile and questioned the impact on the surrounding groundwater.

Hathaway said the proposal to use the pit was cost-effective. The ore pad was highly contaminated. He said they will review whether they have done enough and if not,

there may be more work done. Gendron said it was way too early to tell right now.

Selectman Richard Bakeman reminded the scientists that before Callahan there was tunnel mining at the site. The tunnels are still there.

Other residents discussed that some families lost their wells when blasting occurred because the miners were pumping water out of the mine and into the surrounding water.

Schatz said there were eight elements to clean up, with primary emphasis on the PCBs, arsenic and lead. He wanted to know what the risk assessments were on the other elements and what would be the benefits and what would be the risks if all the remediation went as planned.

Finkelstein said his agency, NOAA, is assigned to look after natural resources. He said he saw a lot of green in the mine site, but a lot of this was highly contaminated and it was less obvious. He said they found clams, fish, birds and plants contaminated. He said there was an ecological risk in the area.

Schatz asked what were the impact and risk factors now and Finkelstein said he did not know of any other place this contaminated. He said even the bugs have metals in

their systems that continue on in the food chain. The site has the highest contamination on the east coast.

Hathaway said there was not another site like this in the U.S. where you had wetlands and an estuary contaminated. It creates a complicated remediation. The plan to place the contaminated materials on site in a pit has not been done a lot in the U.S. He said they were trying to keep the nuisance on-site.

The panel was asked if there would be restrictions on the site such as no use of groundwater, no residential homes and no disturbance of the ground. The audience also wanted to know if there would be reviews of the land by DEP.

Hathaway said they were in the process of coming to such agreements with the land owner.

When there were no more questions, the informational meeting was turned into a public hearing to take public and written comments, even though the public still has until September 10 to submit comments.

Among those handing over written or public comments were Albert Sandecki, Sally Boring, Spear and Fowler, who wanted to know if there was going to be some mechanism in place for town road damage mitigation due to trucks in the clean-up.

A frustrated Rep. Schatz

Commenting on the meeting after it recessed, Schatz said he felt that the EPA had brought their resource people to challenge questions or to clarify their own point of view. Schatz said he had intended the meeting to be an informal exchange of ideas between the experts and the selectmen, but that wasn't what happened.

He said, "It left me with a feeling of a dog-and-pony show without a dog or a pony. Schatz said he goes all the way to the early days when selectman Kip Leach began to deal with the mine clean-up issue and he felt the meeting amounted to killing rabbits with machine guns.

He questioned the need for the \$5 million spent so far on the study.

He added if the site is so dangerous now, why don't they immediately take care of the removal of the PCB-contaminated soil and clean up the lead contamination on the roadway.

He said he found it frustrating that whenever you ask a question, you get the same answer: that they won't know until they do their design, which won't be ready for several years.

He said it could be anywhere from two to three, or five or even 10 years before the clean-up will start, depending on the priority and funding of the project.

Schatz said a Superfund project in Vermont was first projected to cost \$22 to \$25 million and it ended up costing \$40 million.

He maintains that the PCBs and the road to the mine, which was built with lead rock waste, should be cleaned up now.

Schatz said he intends to get the Maine delegation in Washington to look into spending \$22 million on this site. He said there may be projects like Love Canal that are more needful of cleaning up.

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Consulting firm makes final report on Callahan site

Stantec Consulting Services, working with the Marine Environmental Research Institute in Blue Hill, has produced its final report on the Callahan mine site. File 191710010.200 dated August 7, 2009, is as follows:

RE: Final Comments, Final Operable Unit 1 Feasibility Study Report, Callahan Mine Superfund Site, Brooksville, Maine

Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec) has previously provided comments on the Draft Feasibility Study (the Draft FS) as prepared by Mactec, dated June 2009.

Due to substantial changes between the Draft FS and the FS documents, some of the comments we provided regarding the Draft FS in our Memorandum dated June 8, 2009, are no longer warranted. The present Memorandum should be regarded as fully supplanting the Memorandum of June 8, 2009.

The Callahan Mine Superfund Site has been divided into two Operable Units (OU 1 and OU 2) for the purposes of evaluating and implementing actions to reduce, eliminate, or control actual or potential human health and ecological risks.

Stantec has completed a review of the Final Operable Unit 1 Feasibility Study Report (the FS) for the Callahan Mine Superfund Site, as prepared by Mactec, dated July 2009. Our comments are listed below.

General

- The FS:
 - provides a synopsis of the history and background related to the site;
 - identifies and screens potential remedial technologies and alternatives for OU 1;
 - develops two alternative approaches to

remediation, in addition to the "do nothing" alternative that is also required to be evaluated;

- compares the various alternatives on the basis of Threshold Criteria, Primary Balancing Criteria, and Modifying Criteria;
- provides cost estimates for the various alternatives; and

makes recommendations regarding Early Action in relation to OU 2 of the Callahan Mine Superfund Site (i.e., land use restrictions or "institutional controls"), in order to ensure that potential risks to human health and the environment are adequately managed until the OU 2 Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Studies are complete.

We have been involved as technical peer reviewers during the process of environmental investigations and risk assessments leading up to the FS. The FS provides a summary of these investigations, and establishes the scientific basis and need for remedial actions at the Callahan Mine Superfund Site.

On balance, Stantec could support either of the two remedial options (CMS2 and CMS3) that are presented as alternatives to CMS1, the "do nothing" alternative.

Further, the selection of CMS2 in the Proposed Plan seems appropriate for the reasons cited therein.

Specific comments

- Stantec agrees with the concept of subaqueous disposal as being a viable option for the permanent storage or disposal of mine wastes. We did not see any discussion of settlement analyses that have been conducted, or are planned, that may be

necessary to design a delivery system that eliminates the possibility of mine wastes escaping the subaqueous cell. The text should be revised to include a discussion of any settlement analyses that have been performed or are planned to ensure that all waste materials are permanently placed below the mixing zone of the pit.

• Doing Rules (or other ARARs) require the establishment of a Self-Sustaining Ecosystem (or equivalent) on reclaimed mining units (i.e., waste rock piles, tailing impoundments, etc.) as they do in some other states (i.e., New Mexico, etc.)? The current alternatives would leave the capped areas with crushed stone surfaces in perpetuity.

• How would areas of impacted soil or waste material excavation be restored (i.e., backfilling for positive drainage, loaming, seeding, crushed stone, etc.)?

• The text in Section 4.2.1 suggests that "the removal of waste material at the Ore Pad will address the most significant source of groundwater contamination and contribute to the overall protection of future users of the groundwater" and that "[t]he excavation of Ore Pad, Mine Operations Area, and WRP-3 source material followed by its disposal in the CAD cell in the former mine pit below the mixing depth, would eliminate the contribution of those materials to exceedances of NRWQC in Goose Pond surface water and to salt marsh and sediment contamination that exceeds ecologically protective concentrations." While these statements may be technically true, one might conclude that they mean that there will be no source material left behind that could impact groundwater or ecological receptors.

The text should include a discussion as to whether source material will remain capable of creating groundwater impacts above MCLs due to leaching, or ecological impacts, if soils are remediated to recreational PRGs as proposed.

• Institutional controls as part of an OU 2 Early Action are discussed in Section 6.0. The institutional controls as presented are intended to prevent residential development or groundwater use within the former Callahan Mine portion of the Site. Figure 6.0-1 shows the northern boundary of the area of institutional controls to end where the residential use area begins. Figure 2.4-6, however, shows that areas of soil above residential PRGs will remain in the area labeled as the residential use area (see Figure 2.4-1) following the planned removal action in the residential use area. The text should be modified to resolve this apparent conflict. For instance, will institutional controls be extended to incorporate the portion of the residential use area where soil above residential PRGs may remain following the removal action? Additionally, a statement should be added that affirms the implicit determination of the MEDOT that residential groundwater use beyond the boundary of the institutional controls would not lead to unacceptable risks.

Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.
Craig R. Gendron, P.G., P.E.,
Principal

All of the EPA material referred to in this final Stantec report is available at MERI headquarters in Blue Hill, at the EPA Internet web site, or at the Brooksville town office and public library.



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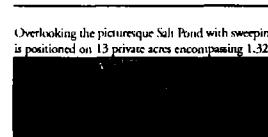
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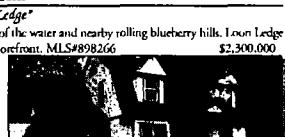
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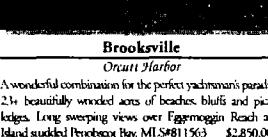
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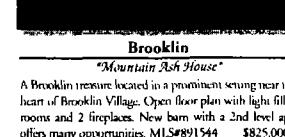
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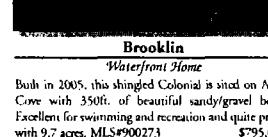
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MERI steps back from TAG role in Callahan cleanup

By DAVID WALSH

BROOKSVILLE—Approximately six years ago, according to Sally Chadbourne, associate director of the Marine Environmental Research Institute in Blue Hill, MERI was invited by the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection to apply for a Technical Assistance Grant to form a local steering committee for the purpose of assisting in the Super Fund clean-up at the Callahan mine.

They joined with the Bagaduce Watershed Association, other groups such as the Conservation Trust of Castine, Brooksville and Penobscot, people from the aquaculture community, representatives of the Eastern Penobscot Bay Environmental Alliance and a handful of community members, to serve as the representatives of the community under the Technical Assistance Grant program, known more commonly as TAG.

There was also another group contending to serve as the TAG team, a group of local people,

consisting mainly of Harborside residents. After looking at both proposals, the EPA selected MERI to serve as the TAG team, partly, Chadbourne believes, because MERI had technical expertise and nonprofit status.

Chadbourne said they reached out to the other group, which was not interested in joining with MERI, although the group did want to be kept informed.

MERI then searched for a consultant to assist in the work and selected Jacques Whisford, a consulting firm now called Stantec, and gave them guidance on what information they needed to review the technical material on the Callahan mine site produced by the EPA.

Chadbourne said over the years technical advisors have participated in most all of the public meetings concerning the Callahan mine.

As the years went on, she said, some members of the steering committee from the community at large dropped off, there were changes in leadership

and there was not total continuity in those involved. "Most have dropped off our committee and it has been difficult for us to keep a handle on what is going on in the community."

Contrary to what some in the community may think, she said, "We didn't make any money off the grant. None of the funds supported any MERI staff member. All of the money has gone to contracts with Stantec, except for advertising and the costs for mailing letters to inform people of the consultant's finding."

Over the ensuing years, during the ebb and flow of activities, and during times when there were substantive matters under discussion, there would be more activity among the MERI staff and Stantec consultants.

The grant, which had a \$50,000 cap for six years, has enabled the consultants to review all of the studies by the EPA and other agencies, federal, state and local. MERI's involvement with the Callahan project has actually cost them money,

according to Chadbourne.

As to appointing a new person to represent MERI at the various hearings, Chadbourne said there never was a full-time person working on the Callahan project. Simone Cromwell, who worked on the project, was really the watershed coordinator for MERI. When she left, it was clear to the staff that a new person would not be able to take over the Callahan role because there was too much other work to be done.

The TAG grant has reached its ceiling. There is an opportunity to reapply for another grant or ask for an extension, said Chadbourne, but MERI feels that, in the next phase of the cleanup, they would prefer to see active community involvement and therefore wishes to turn those duties over to a group in the community.

An increasing number of Brooksville residents at recent EPA hearings and informational meetings have expressed the desire to have more local participation.

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