

## Cleanup is Nearly Complete in Libby and Troy!

EPA received access agreements to investigate or conduct cleanup at 226 of about 500 remaining properties in response to our last call announcement earlier this year. We are well into construction season and expect to complete cleanups at more than 100 properties and investigations at more than 200 properties by November. Depending on sampling results, we expect to complete all active construction work by end of this year or early in 2018. Once this work is done, cleanup activities will be complete at all portions of the Libby Asbestos Superfund site (Operable Units 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) with the exception of the former vermiculite mine (Operable Unit 3).



Cleanup at residential property

## How will the Cleanup Stay Protective into the Future?

EPA and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are working with the newly formed City-County Board of Health to develop a plan for operations and

maintenance of the site and institutional controls (ICs) for residential and commercial properties. The IC plan will ensure the remedy remains protective into the future. An operation and maintenance plan was completed in 2015 for the former export plant area (Operable Unit 1) and the former screening plant (Operable Unit 2). Per Superfund process, DEQ now has responsibility for these portions of the site. EPA can begin the process of deleting portions of the site from the National Priorities List once cleanup is considered complete and long-term management plans are in place for those portions. We anticipate beginning this process for portions of the site later this year.

### *How many properties have been cleaned up?*

Cleanup at the site has involved removing Libby Amphibole asbestos from the top layer of soil at properties throughout the communities of Libby and Troy. Indoor cleanups have been conducted at about half of these properties. Since 1999, EPA has completed an investigation or cleanup at more than 7,500 residential and commercial properties out of 8,100 properties identified within the Superfund site. EPA has conducted cleanups at approximately 2,400 properties. Based on the response to EPA's last call, it appears we will complete work at more than 96 percent of properties identified.

## EPA and Port Authority Work Together to Determine Long-term Vision for Redevelopment

In conjunction with the Lincoln County Port Authority, EPA has initiated an effort to develop a long-term vision for redevelopment of the Port Authority Property which includes 400 plus acres that was previously home to the Stimson Mill. With support from the agency's Superfund Redevelopment Initiative, EPA brought together about 20 stakeholders representing local business, community organizations, government and elected officials to tour the property and discuss site suitability, local and regional goals, and opportunities for economic development and recreational use. Next steps involve development of an implementation plan for this area.

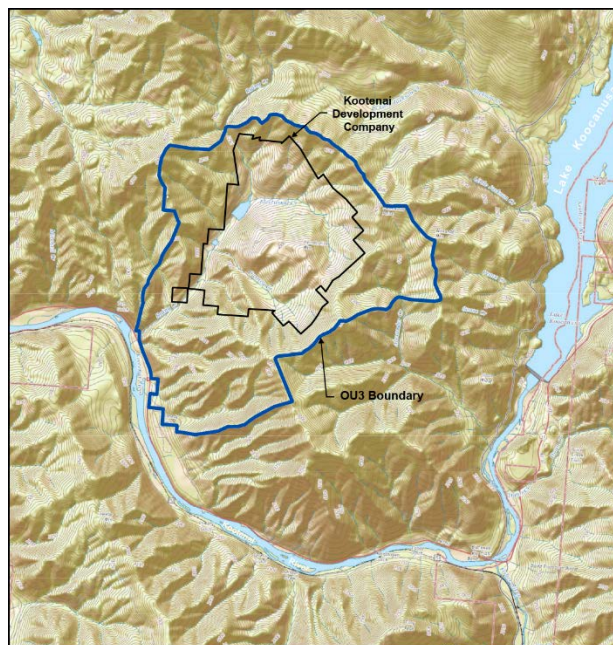


*Brainstorming redevelopment of the former Stimson Mill*

## EPA & Partners Begin Exploring Treatment Options for Former Vermiculite Mine Area

After years of studying a large 40,000-acre area including the former mine and surrounding forest, EPA, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the State of Montana have identified an area of about 10,000 acres surrounding the mine that has the highest levels of contamination. EPA is

currently in discussions with our federal and state partners and WR Grace to determine the best methods to reduce contamination and limit exposures in this area. We will be evaluating different treatment technologies that can be implemented to reduce exposures to Libby Amphibole asbestos in soil, duff, water, sediment and mine waste. Some of these technologies may include removal and covering of contamination. There may also be management techniques such as logging in the wetter months of the year rather than drier months to reduce the potential for LA-laden dust to be generated during logging activities and result in excessive exposures. The possible alternatives for cleanup in this area will be documented in a Feasibility Study that is expected to be complete in 2019. EPA will use the Feasibility Study to develop a proposed cleanup plan that will be shared with community members for public input before a decision is made.



*Operable Unit 3 of the Libby Asbestos Superfund Site*



## What about Recreation in OU3?

The Human Health Risk Assessment determined recreational activities in OU3 such as hiking, camping, ATV riding, and fishing are not considered hazardous with regard to LA exposures. The only exception to this is hiking along Rainy Creek and digging in the mine by rock hounds and trespassers. Residents and visitors should continue to refrain from trespassing on the mine property owned by WR Grace.

## EPA and USFS Continue Fire Preparedness Efforts

Since higher exposures to Libby Amphibole asbestos (LA) have been observed during fire suppression and fire mop-up activities, it is important to reduce the potential for large, persistent fires in areas with higher levels of contamination near the mine. EPA and USFS have a joint plan in place with Lincoln County and other local, state and federal agencies to ensure an expedited response in the case of a wildfire in the vicinity of OU3. Additionally, WR Grace is beginning efforts this summer to build fire-breaks to reduce the likelihood that fire would spread plus they are clearing roads so there is better access to support a quick response. EPA and the USFS appreciate these efforts as we work together to define the long-term remedy for OU3 that will ensure protection for firefighters and loggers.



*Crew conducting activity-based sampling in Operable Unit 3*

## Planning Underway for Kootenai Development Impoundment Dam

WR Grace's tailings impoundment dam has a spillway and toe drains that are slowly degrading, resulting in concerns about the dam's ability to remain stable during a large flood event. EPA and the State of Montana are working closely with WR Grace to evaluate solutions to address the spillway in the next couple of years. We are also working together to develop a long-term strategy for addressing contamination from the tailings into a final cleanup plan.



*Operable Unit 3 Tailings Dam*

## Questions?

If you have questions about the site, please call the Libby Information Center at 406-293-6194 or contact one of these team members:

### EPA

Jennifer Harrison  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
800-227-8917 ext. 312-6813,  
[harrison.jennifer@epa.gov](mailto:harrison.jennifer@epa.gov)

Mike Cirian  
On-Site Project Manager OUs 4 and 7  
406-293-6194  
[cirian.mike@epa.gov](mailto:cirian.mike@epa.gov)

Dania Zinner  
Project Manager OUs 1, 2, 5, 6, and 8  
800-227-8917 ext. 312-7122  
[zinner.dania@epa.gov](mailto:zinner.dania@epa.gov)

Christina Prograss  
Project Manager OU3  
800-227-8917 ext. 312-6009  
[prograss.christina@epa.gov](mailto:prograss.christina@epa.gov)

### DEQ

Jeni Flatow  
Public Information Officer  
406-444-6469  
[jflatow@mt.gov](mailto:jflatow@mt.gov)

Lisa DeWitt  
Project Officer  
406-444-6420  
[lidewitt@mt.gov](mailto:lidewitt@mt.gov)

## *Planning Renovations to your Home or Excavating on Your Property?*

Contact the Asbestos Resource  
Program hotline as soon as possible  
and before you dig!  
406-291-5335, [lcarp@libby.org](mailto:lcarp@libby.org).



U.S. EPA Region 8  
1595 Wynkoop Street, 8OC-PAI  
Denver, CO 80202-1129

## 2017 Site Update

PPSRT STD  
Postage and Fees  
Paid by US EPA  
Permit No. G-35  
Helena, MT