



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Issues Its Proposed Plan for Cleanup of the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company Superfund Site



June 2023

| The Life of a Site* | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Identify the Problem | 1 | Discovery/Site Listing Is the site contaminated enough to be a Superfund site? |
| | 2 | Remedial Investigation/Risk Assessment Where is the contamination? What are the risks? |
| Develop the Solution | 3 | Feasibility Study How can we best clean it up? |
| | 4 | Proposed Plan/Public Comment What does the public think of EPA's proposed plan for cleanup? |
| | 5 | Record of Decision After consideration of comments, what is EPA's cleanup decision? |
| Cleanup | 6 | Remedial Design What are the cleanup details? |
| | 7 | Remedial Action Cleanup construction (earthmoving, cover, etc.) |
| Confirm | 8 | Operations and Maintenance Is the cleanup doing what it should? |
| Done | 9 | Deletion Is the site clean enough to be taken off the Superfund list? |

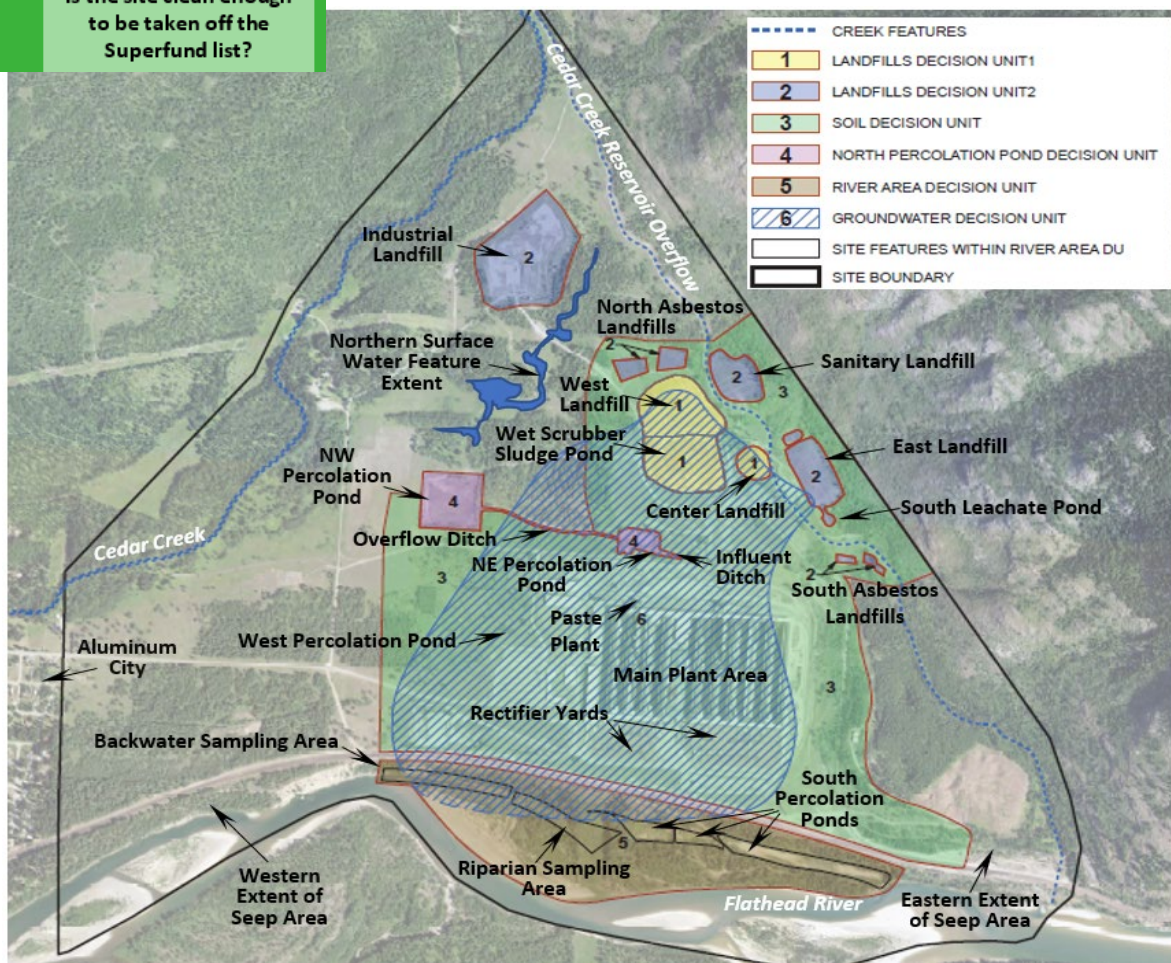
*Simplified

On June 1, 2023 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the *Proposed Plan for Cleanup of the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company Superfund Site*. As shown at left, the plan is part of developing a solution to address environmental problems identified during the remedial investigation and risk assessment. It is Step 4 in the Superfund process and is where EPA solicits public comment on the proposed cleanup. **Release of the proposed plan marks the start of the 60-day public comment period (Thursday, June 1 to Monday, July 31, 2023)** which can be extended based on community request.

The plan details EPA's preferred clean up alternative and provides an overview of work done to date, site history, site background, human and ecological risk, cleanup alternatives evaluated, evaluation criteria used, results of the evaluation, and the rationale for how the preferred alternative was chosen.

The Columbia Falls Aluminum Company (CFAC) site has been divided into six decision units (see map below) based on physical characteristics and waste types. The proposed plan addresses each unit separately or as a combination, as follows:

- Landfills Decision Unit 1/ Groundwater Decision Unit 6/ River Area Decision Unit 5
- Landfills Decision Unit 2
- Soil Decision Unit 3
- North Percolation Pond Decision Unit 4



Preferred Alternative

The proposed plan describes the step-by-step process for identifying and evaluating options for cleaning up the site and for selecting a Preferred Alternative for public comment. The Preferred Alternative includes a combination of capping in place, protective covers, excavation, consolidation in a central repository, slurry walls, long-term monitoring, and access controls such as fencing. We invite you to read the plan and/or come to the public meeting to learn more.

Public Meeting

EPA will give a short presentation about details of the proposed plan at a public meeting on **June 28, 2023, from 6:30 to 8:30pm at the Columbia Falls Town Hall (Council Chamber room), 130 6th Street West**. Please join us. It's a great opportunity to learn more about the plan.



Verbal Comments

Immediately after the presentation, EPA will hold a formal comment session where meeting attendees can provide comments on the plan.



Written Comments

You can submit comments in writing (by mail, email, or at the public meeting). The mailing address for written comments is **Missy Haniewicz, U.S. EPA, Region 8, 1595 Wynkoop Street, Denver, CO 80202-1129**, or you may send them by email to haniewicz.melissa.m@epa.gov.



Next Steps

EPA will read and evaluate all comments received to determine if changes to the preferred alternative are needed. A record of decision (**Step 5 on the front page**) will document the final decision on site cleanup (the selected alternative) and will include a responsiveness summary that addresses the comments received. The record of decision will guide the construction design and cleanup to follow. This will mark the transition into site cleanup (**Steps 6 and 7**).



The proposed plan is available electronically on the EPA website (see green box below).

Hard copies of documents are available at the local information repository:

**ImagineIF Library – Columbia Falls, 130 6th Street West, 406-892-5919
(Monday-Friday, 10am-6pm, and Saturday, 10am-2pm)**

For more information...

Contact:

- Missy Haniewicz, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, 303-312-6899, haniewicz.melissa.m@epa.gov
- Amanda Bartley, EPA Remedial Project Manager, 406-465-8830, bartley.amanda@epa.gov
- Matt Dorrington, EPA Remedial Project Manager, 406-457-5023, dorrington.matthew@epa.gov
- Kevin Stone, Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Public Information Officer, 406-444-6469, kevin.stone@mt.gov
- Dick Sloan, Montana DEQ, Project Officer, 406-444-6442, rsloan@mt.gov

Visit:

- www.epa.gov/superfund/columbia-falls (EPA's website)

Watch for:

- Notices will run in the *Daily Inter Lake*, *Hungry Horse News*, and *Flathead Beacon* newspapers.

**Don't Miss Your Chance to Comment on the Proposed Plan for Cleanup
Get Your Comments in by July 31, 2023**