



# New Idria Mercury Mine

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 9 • San Francisco, CA • March 2011

## New Idria Mercury Mine Proposed for Superfund List

On March 10<sup>th</sup> 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed adding the New Idria Mercury Mine site to EPA's National Priorities List (NPL), commonly called the Superfund List (see map below). The mine is located approximately 64 miles southeast of Hollister, in San Benito County, California.

EPA identifies sites that may pose threats to nearby populations and the environment through actual or potential contamination of soils, groundwater, surface water, or air. Placing the site on the NPL allows EPA to use federal resources to conduct cleanup activities at the site, including investigating the sources of contamination and determining what measures may be necessary to protect human health and the environment.

The 60-day public comment period for the proposed listing began on March 10, 2011 and ends on May 9, 2011. Documents related to the proposed listing are located at the San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Division, 3220 Southside Road, Hollister, CA. Information on how to comment is located on Page 2.

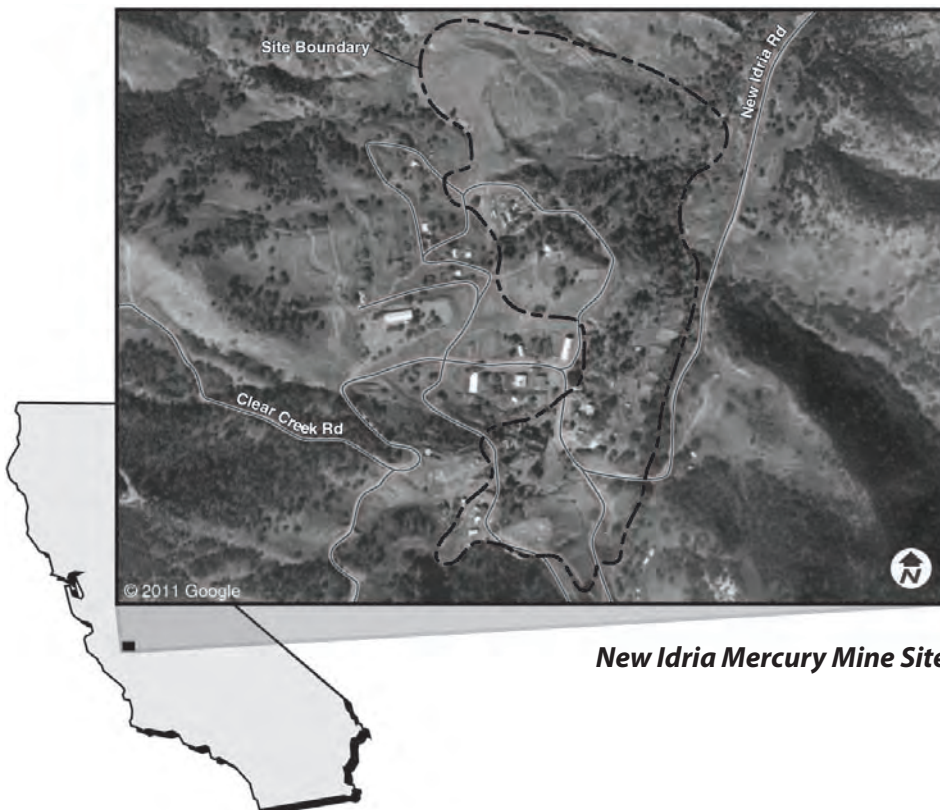
### Public Comment Period for Proposed NIMM Listing

**March 10, 2011 – May 9, 2011**

### Come to EPA's Informational Meeting on Proposed NIMM Listing

**April 5, 2011  
6:30pm – 8:30pm**

San Benito County  
Board of Supervisors Chambers,  
481 Fourth Street, Hollister



**New Idria Mercury Mine Site**

EPA will hold an informational meeting from 6:30pm – 8:30pm, on April 5, 2011, at the San Benito County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 481 Fourth Street, Hollister, to answer questions.

### What is the problem?

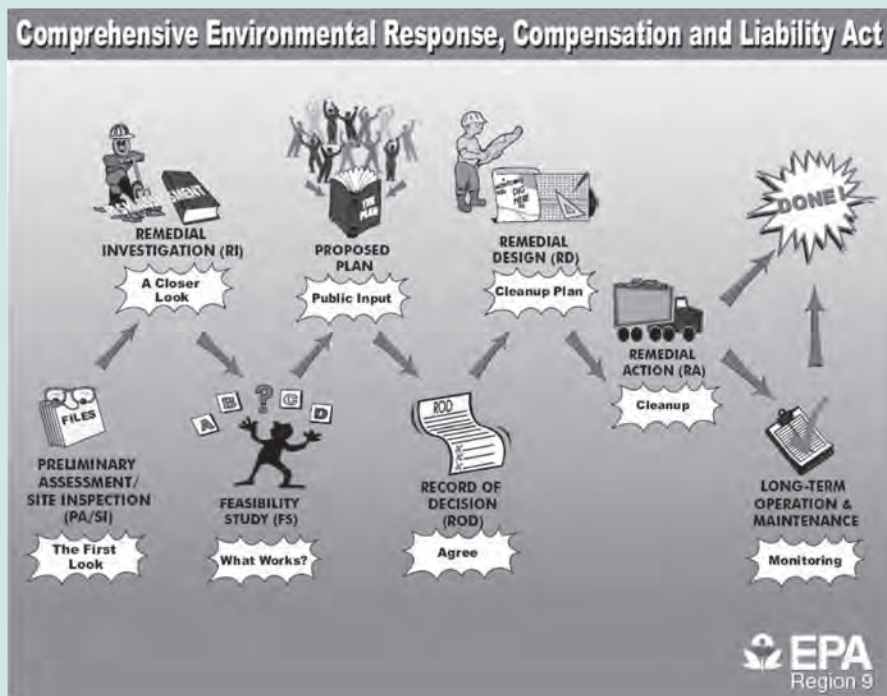
Historical mercury mining operations at the New Idria Mercury Mine site have resulted in mercury contamination and acid mine drainage in San Carlos Creek, Silver Creek and a portion of Panoche Creek, at levels toxic to aquatic organisms. Environmental impacts extend more than fifteen miles to creeks and wetland areas, endangered species habitat, and ultimately the San Joaquin River and the San Francisco Bay. The state of California supports this proposed listing.

## What is Superfund?

Superfund is the commonly-used name for the federal government program, authorized by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), to respond to uncontrolled hazardous waste sites that threaten public health and the environment.

EPA responds to a hazardous waste site by identifying those that are responsible for contaminating it, then requiring them to perform cleanup activities under EPA oversight. If EPA is unsuccessful in identifying responsible parties to perform cleanup activities, EPA may use Superfund monies to perform the cleanup itself.

If a responsible party is not identified, a site cannot undergo a federal cleanup unless it is listed on the NPL.



## Community Involvement

A 60-day public comment period is currently underway to receive community input on EPA's proposal to add the New Idria Mercury Mine site to the National Priorities List (NPL). The documents that form the basis for EPA's proposed listing of the New Idria Mercury Mine site are contained in public Dockets located at EPA Headquarters in Washington, DC, in the Regional offices, and by electronic access at <http://www.regulations.gov> (type "new idria" into the Keyword box and then click the Search button).

A CD containing all of the documents that support the evaluation of the New Idria Mercury Mine site is also available at the San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Division, 3220 Southside Road, Hollister, CA.

EPA considers all comments received during the 60-day public comment period following the publication date of March 10, 2011 in the *Federal Register*.

During the comment period, comments are placed in the Headquarters docket and are available to the public on an "as received" basis. A complete set of comments will be available for viewing in the Regional docket approximately one week after the formal comment period closes.

EPA will make a final listing decision after considering the relevant comments received during the comment period.

**Public Comments Must Be Postmarked By May 9, 2011.**

Please send comments, identified by FDMS Docket Number EPA-HQ-SFUND-2011-0058 by one of the following methods:

- Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>
- E-mail comments to [superfund.docket@epa.gov](mailto:superfund.docket@epa.gov)
- Mail comments (no faxes or tapes) to:  
 Docket Coordinator, Headquarters  
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
 CERCLA Docket Office  
 (Mail Code 5305T)  
 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW.  
 Washington, DC 20460

For more information on submitting comments please visit:  
<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/pubcom.htm>

## What if the New Idria Mercury Mine is Placed on the Superfund List?

If NIMM is finalized on the Superfund List, an in-depth investigation is performed, followed by an analysis of ways to address the contamination. EPA then identifies the preferred cleanup remedy and shares this in a public meeting, which is accompanied by a formal public comment period. After all public comments are considered, EPA documents the selected remedy in a legal document called a Record of Decision (ROD).

Following the ROD, EPA designs, constructs, tests, operates and/or performs the necessary cleanup activities. The public is encouraged to share its issues and concerns throughout the Superfund process. As the process proceeds, EPA updates the official New Idria website, which can be found at:  
[www.epa.gov/region09/NewIdria](http://www.epa.gov/region09/NewIdria)



### Mailing List Coupon

If you are not already on EPA's mailing list for the New Idria Mercury Mine Site, please send an e-mail or return the coupon below to David Cooper, Community Involvement Coordinator, U.S. EPA, Region 9, 75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-6-3), San Francisco, CA 94105, (415) 972-3245, [cooper.david@epa.gov](mailto:cooper.david@epa.gov)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

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## New Idria Mercury Mine Proposed for Superfund List

— *Public Comment Period March 10, 2011 – May 9, 2011* —

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San Francisco, CA 94105  
Attn: David Cooper (NIMM 3/11)

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