ST. MARIES CREOSOTE

IDAHO

EPA ID# IDSFN1002095

EPA Region 10

Benewah

St. Maries

01 Congressional District

Other Names:

Last Update: October, 2009

Site Description

The St. Maries Creosote Site lies along the south bank of the St. Joe River, on the edge of the City of St. Maries, Idaho. The City of St. Maries and Carney Products Company, Ltd. own the site, which is located within the boundaries of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation.

From approximately 1938 until 1964, the site was used for peeling and treating logs. The logs were treated by soaking one end in large heated creosote-filled vats, to prevent the ends from rotting once put into the ground as poles. As the treated poles were loaded onto rail cars, creosote dripped onto the soil around the vats and rail cars, and in combination with spills and other releases, contaminated the soils. Over the years the creosote seeped deeper into the soils, contaminating not only the soils, but also the associated ground water. The ground water carried contamination into the adjacent St. Joe River sediments. Dumping of wastes in the river may have also occurred at the site.

In December 1998, the City reported an oily sheen on the riverbank and in the water of the St. Joe River to the Federal National Response Center. Following discovery of the sheen, the City and Carney Products performed a removal action at the site pursuant to a CERCLA Unilateral Administrative Order with EPA oversight. The action, completed in early 1999, included excavating and removing about 195 tons of debris and creosote-impacted soil along the bank of the St. Joe River in the area of the observed sheen. Since the removal, small areas of sheen have been noted occasionally on the river surface near the removal area. A containment boom and adsorbent pads have been installed to contain the sheens.

The St. Joe River is part of the Coeur d'Alene Lake Basin, which supports spawning of the federally-listed threatened bull trout (Salvenlinus confluentus). The bull trout migrate up the St. Joe River, past the St. Maries Creosote site, and finally into the St. Maries River. Within 15 miles downstream of the site, the St. Joe River is a migratory pathway and feeding area critical to anadromous fish species. The river is also used as a source of drinking water, commercial food crop irrigation, and livestock watering.

The site is no longer used for commerce. Untreated wooden poles were peeled, sorted, and stored on site until early 2003. The site is relatively flat and lies on the river side of a levee that protectcts the City of St. Maries for flooding. The edge of the upland portion of the site forms the bank of the St. Joe River and is made up of various fill materials, including concrete, treated poles, scrap metal, and other debris.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through potentially responsible parties' actions.

NPL Listing History	Dates
Proposed Date: Removed Date: Withdrawal Date: Final Date: Deleted Date:	12/01/2000

Threats and Contaminants

Media Affected: **soil, groundwater, and river sediment are contaminated with creosote based compounds: DNAPL, LNAPL, and PAHs**

The risk assessment identifies risk to humans through direct contact with contaminated soil, as well as consumption of PAH-contaminated groundwater. The ecological risk assessment documents risk to benthic organisms.

Cleanup Progress

In January 1999, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order under CERCLA authority to Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs). This ordered removal of creosote-contaminated soil and debris on the bank of the St. Joe River, as it was causing a discharge to the river. EPA also required the PRPs to characterize soil and groundwater contamination in and around the area of the former wood treating facility. In February 1999, the City of St. Maries and Carney Products Company, Ltd., two of the site's PRPs, removed about 195 tons of debris and contaminated soil along the St. Joe River bank in the area of the seeping creosote. Since this removal, however, small areas of sheening have been observed intermittently on the river surface near the removal area.

On December 1, 2000, the site was proposed to the National Priorities List. A 30-day public comment period ended January 30, 2001. In August 2001, the City of St. Maries and Carney Products Company, Ltd., signed an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with EPA to perform a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) and the associated baseline risk assessment (BLRA) to assess risks to human health and the environment. The RI and BLRA were begun in August 2001 and focused on soils in the upland area (the ground above and next to the river) where the pole treating took place. The RI and BLRA also focused on site groundwater, surface water, riverbank soils, and nearshore and offshore sediments. Samples collected during the RI showed concentrations of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), the dominant constituents of creosote, of up to 33,503 mg/kg in the upland soils, 11,449 mg/l in the ground water, and 51,709 mg/kg in the St. Joe River sediments. PAH concentrations in surface water samples did not exceed screening levels. Contamination was detectected in the upland soils as deep as 54 feet and in river sediments up to 150 feet from the shoreline and up to 900 feet downstream. The FS was begun in January 2003 and was submitted to EPA in

February, 2005.

EPA screened the twelve cleanup alternatives developed in the FS and, in July 2005, released a Proposed Plan for site cleanup. EPA advertised and held a public comment period from July 22, 2005 to October 12, 2005 and a public meeting in St. Maries on August 11, 2005 to gather comments on the July 2005 Proposed Plan. In addition to the comments submitted, the PRP's consultant submitted a new technical proposal for consideration. The proposal led to a new remedial alternative being added to the previous list of alternatives considered. The new alternative was further developed in a supplemental feasibility study submitted to EPA in July 2006. EPA developed a revised Proposed Plan adopting much of the proposed alternative and released it in December 2006 for public comment. A second public meeting was held in St. Maries on December 13, 2006 along with a 30 day public comment period. EPA evaluated all comments received during the public hearings and associated public comment periods. A Record of Decision describing EPA's chosen remedy was issued in July 2007. It included EPA's responses to all comments.

After an extended negotiation period, a consent decree was signed by the PRPs: the City of St. Maries, B.J. Carney & Company, Carney Products, ltd, and their contractor ARCADIS, as well as, the Department of Justice, EPA Region 10, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. After approval and entry by the Idaho Federal District Court, the consent decree will implement the final design and cleanup of contaminated soils, ground water, and river sediments in the adjacent St. Joe River. The consent decree and attached statement of work will be subject to a 30-day public comment period after which the comments, the comment responses and the consent decree will be lodged with the court. Upon the court's review and approval, the court will enter the final judgement implementing the consent decree and the cleanup can begin. It is expected to begin in March 2010, and estimated to take about four years.

Regional Contacts

SITE MANAGER(S):	Joe Wallace
E-MAIL ADDRESS:	wallace.joe@epa.gov
PHONE NUMBER:	206-553-4470

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR:	Debra Sherbina
E-MAIL ADDRESS	sherbina.debra@epa.gov
PHONE NUMBER:	206-553-0247

Information pertaining to this site is housed at the following location(s):
EPA Region 10 Superfund Records Center (Administrative Record)
1200 Sixth Avenue, ECL-076
Seattle, WA 98101
206-553-4494 or 1-800-424-4EPA