 SWISF 1.4 11/9/07

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region X
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Friday, November 09, 2007
From: Jeffry Rodin, OSC

Subject: Initiation of Action
Swift Creek
Everson, WA
Latitude: 48.919035
Longitude: -122.303865

POLREP No.:	1	**Site #:**	10EG
Reporting Period:	11/7/2007 - 11/9/2007	**D.O. #:**	
Start Date:	11/8/2007	**Response Authority:**	CERCLA
Mob Date:	11/7/2007	**Response Type:**	Time-Critical
Completion Date:		**NPL Status:**	
CERCLIS ID #:	WAN001002688	**Incident Category:**	Removal Action
RCRIS ID #:		**Contract #**	

USEPA SF
1390643

Site Description

A large landslide in the upper watershed of Sumas Mountain is a significant source of sediment in Swift Creek. The landslide material contains naturally occurring asbestos and elevated levels of metals.

Dredging has been used to maintain the Swift Creek channel to prevent flooding. In the past, dredged material was stockpiled on either side of the creek and removed by the public and contractors for a variety of uses. Removing dredged material from the banks of Swift Creek for public uses is no longer allowed due to renewed human health concerns about asbestos in the sediments.

The Whatcom County Health Department asked EPA to evaluate potential risks to human health from the stockpiled material. EPA coordinated this evaluation with the Washington Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Health, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and Whatcom County. EPA's sampling demonstrated that asbestos fibers in the dredge piles can get into a person's breathing zone during routine activities, such as raking and shoveling.

Because of potential health risks from exposure to asbestos, EPA recommended that people should no longer remove dredged materials from the site without protective gear, and that dredged materials should not be taken to other locations where people may be exposed to it. The County has taken measures to restrict public access to the stockpiled material.

EPA has encouraged a multi-agency approach to assist the County with how to manage dredged sediments from Swift Creek. There is no single agency with the authority and resources needed to address this complex situation.

In October 2007 Whatcom County Public Works Department asked the EPA to help contain the asbestos contaminated dredged material on site. EPA plans to reconfigure the existing stockpiles

of asbestos contaminated materials and apply a soil tackifier (dust suppressant) on the material to reduce inhalation exposure to asbestos. The use of a tackifier will help stabilize the dredging piles to minimize the amount of wind blown asbestos from potentially affecting the surrounding area.

Current Activities

Prior to removal activities, on Wednesday 11/7/2007, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Jeff Rodin and Site Assessment Manager (SAM) Monica Tonel went door-to-door visiting all land owners around the site (10 homes) gathering signatures agreeing to access and explaining planned removal activities.

On Thursday 11/8/2007, OSC Rodin and SAM Tonel led a site walk with interested land owners. They listened to concerns from the residents, regarding this complex situation, and further explained the planned removal action activities.

One (1) START and five (5) ERRS mobilized to the site on Thursday 11/8. START and ERRS participated in a site walk and prepared for removal activities scheduled to start on Friday 11/9/2007. At the end of the day SAM Tonel demobilized from the site.

Current activities on Friday 11/9/2007 and Saturday 11/10/2007 include:

- Reconfiguration of stockpiles of asbestos-contaminated dredged materials along Swift Creek to facilitate the application of a dust suppressant.

- On Friday 11/9 a site walk was conducted with representatives of Whatcom County Public works (Paul Pittman, flood control office). Clarified eroded locations to be rebuilt in hopes of preventing the creek from breaking through the banks. Discussed options of rebuilding the banks using existing, and material to be brought to the site. In 2005 the County rebuilt the banks with a 2:1 slope ration using native material. The majority of this material has eroded away resulting in a vertical creek bank. The creek bed is approximately 8' higher than at the conclusion of the 2005 dredging event. In some areas the creek is higher than the adjoining pasture land. It was also explained how the creek when it floods does not flow over the tops of the banks, but breached and seeps through the built up banks.

- Particulate monitoring for worker health and safety.

Planned Removal Actions

Planned Activities include:

- Continue reconfiguring stockpiled material.

- Armoring eroded creek banks using stockpiled material and rock.

- Application of soil tackifier to the stockpiled material to reduce the risk of exposure to wind-blown asbestos.

Next Steps

Continue current operations.

Key Issues

- Containment of asbestos contaminated material.
- Exploring different options for the application of the soil tackifier. The maneuverability of wheeled vehicles is limited on the wet dredge material. Options being planned for include the use of water wagon pulled with a dozer and use of auxiliary pumps and hoses, if the wheeled water tender is not able to be maneuvered along the piles.
- Community relations and public involvement.
- Initial ERRS cost are higher due to purchase of soil tackifier.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
ERRS - Cleanup Contractor	$215,000.00	$70,000.00	$145,000.00	67.44%
RST/START	$28,000.00	$6,000.00	$22,000.00	78.57%
Intramural Costs				
USEPA - Direct (Region, HQ)	$23,000.00	$3,000.00	$20,000.00	86.96%
Total Site Costs	$266,000.00	$79,000.00	$187,000.00	70.30%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

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