

# Ballard Mine Remedial Design Remedial Action Consent Decree

March 2021

*The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reached agreement with P4 Production, LLC (P4), for the cleanup of the Ballard Mine site in Caribou County, Idaho. The cleanup will address the continued release of contamination to protect the soil, surface water, groundwater, sediment, and plants at the site.*

The proposed settlement, in the form of a consent decree, outlines the schedule for each phase of the cleanup and includes requirements for the design and implementation of the remedial action in the form of work plans and specifications. Under the terms of the proposed settlement, P4 will fully fund and perform the remedial design and remedial action work selected in EPA's 2019 Record of Decision and provides for payment of oversight costs to EPA, the State of Idaho, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. The cost for cleanup in the Record of Decision is estimated at about \$41 million.

The consent decree settles both the claim brought by the U.S. Department of Justice, on behalf of EPA and the State of Idaho, and a separate claim brought by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.

The proposed settlement is subject to a 30-day public comment period and final court approval. The Federal Register notice was published on March 5, 2021, the comment period ends on April 5, 2021. You can find a copy of the proposed consent decree and comment at: <https://go.usa.gov/xsUtJ>

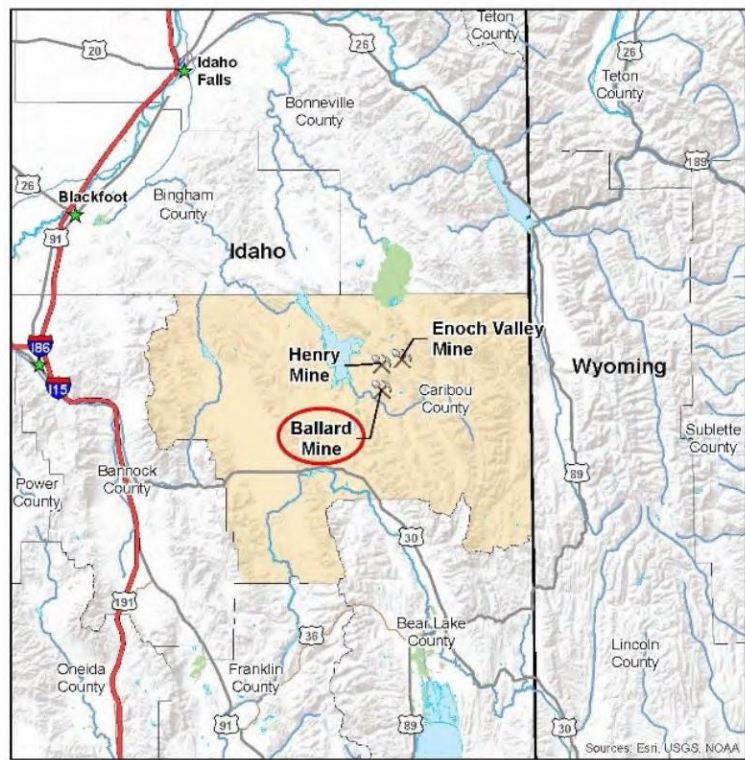
For more information on the Ballard Mine site, please visit: [www.epa.gov/superfund/ballard-mine](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/ballard-mine)

## About Ballard Mine

The site is a former open-pit phosphate mine located in the Phosphate Mining District in southeast Idaho; an area where phosphate-rich sedimentary rock layers are present at or near the surface and have been mined for the past 100 years. The site is located about 13 miles north-northeast of Soda Springs, Idaho, in Caribou County. The mine was operated from 1951 to 1969 and includes approximately 534 acres of mining-disturbed land consisting of six external waste rock dumps, six open pits, an abandoned haul road, and the Ballard Shop Area (the location for maintaining/garaging heavy trucks and mining equipment).

There are about 19 million cubic yards of waste rock at the site. The waste rock contains elements that may be harmful to people and animals when released to the environment. Leaching from waste rock contaminates soil and water at the site with selenium, arsenic, uranium, and uranium-daughter products (for example, radium-226 and radon-222).

EPA selected the cleanup plan, documented in the Record of Decision, in September 2019.



## What is in the Record of Decision?

The cleanup described in the Record of Decision includes constructing a soil cover over the waste rock and contaminated soil; then establishing plants on the cover when construction is complete. The soil cover and plants will reduce water from leaching contamination from the tailings area. Some of the waste rock includes recoverable phosphate ore, and the cleanup has been designed to be compatible with P4's preference to recover that ore under a separate Bureau of Land Management process. P4 has obtained the BLM lease and all mining and reclamation plans will be coordinated with this EPA remedy.

Contaminated shallow groundwater will be treated by permeable reactive barriers (barriers that remove contaminants as water flows through them) before it discharges to surface water. Seepage from waste rock dumps will be treated in constructed wetlands to remove contaminants before they discharge to surface water. Sediment will be trapped in retention basins downgradient of the waste rock dumps.

Nearby intermittent streams and groundwater will be sampled and monitored to confirm cleanup is working. Land use restrictions will be developed to ensure that people are not exposed to the contamination while the cleanup is underway and that the remedy performs as designed.

Finally, the Ballard Shop Area will be used for equipment maintenance during the cleanup work at the site. The Ballard Shop Area will be addressed after all other cleanup work has been completed. The cleanup is expected to take eight years to complete and work at the site is expected to begin in 2022.

## For more information

Visit EPA's website to see documents about our work at the site, including the Record of Decision:

[www.epa.gov/superfund/ballard-mine](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/ballard-mine)

Visit Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's website for additional information, including about the other mines in the area:

<https://www.deq.idaho.gov/waste-management-and-remediation/mining-in-idaho/southern-idaho-phosphate-mining/>

For questions about the Ballard Mine consent decree contact Andy Greazel, EPA Project Manager, at 208-378-5760 or [greazel.andrew@epa.gov](mailto:greazel.andrew@epa.gov)

