



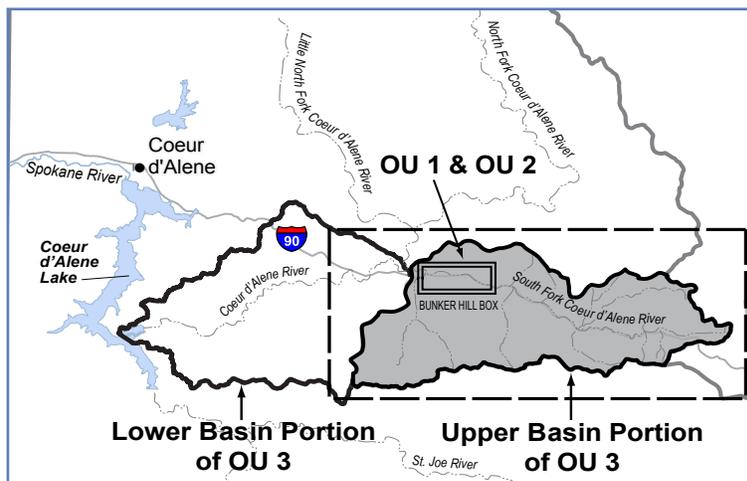
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MAKING A *DIFFERENCE* IN THE COMMUNITY: Cycle II of the Superfund Job Training Initiative in Idaho's Silver Valley



INTRODUCTION

The Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund Job Training Initiative (SuperJTI) Cycle II is an environmental remediation job readiness program that provided career development opportunities for 17 trainees living near the Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund site. Through a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and North Idaho College, McGillivray Environmental, North Wind Construction Services and TerraGraphics Environmental Engineering, Coeur d'Alene Basin SuperJTI Cycle II provided local job seekers with new skills and work experience linked to the cleanup of the Coeur d'Alene Basin site. EPA's goal is to help the community create job opportunities and partnerships that remain in place for the long term.



Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund Site

CANDIDATE OUTREACH, RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING: MARCH-APRIL 2013

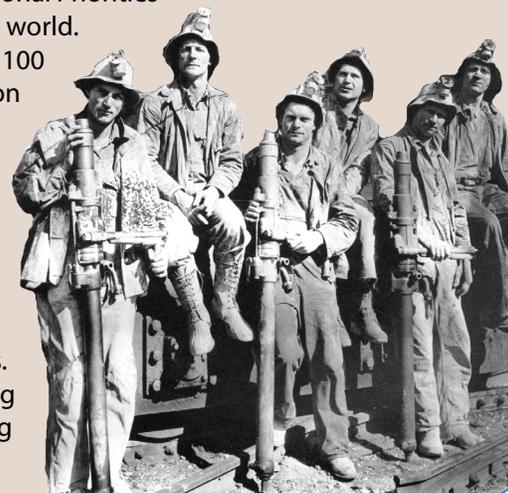
Coeur d'Alene Basin Cycle II SuperJTI staff and the project's community liaison Maureen "Rene" Gilbert reached out to the community, sending out flyers and hosting orientation sessions to publicize the program and attract interested candidates. Area organizations and two local newspapers, The Spokesman Review and The Shoshone News Press, also advertised the program. In April 2013, over 80 people came to the program's five orientation sessions. Following these sessions, 76 people successfully completed a preliminary testing stage. Thirty-five people participated in program tryouts.

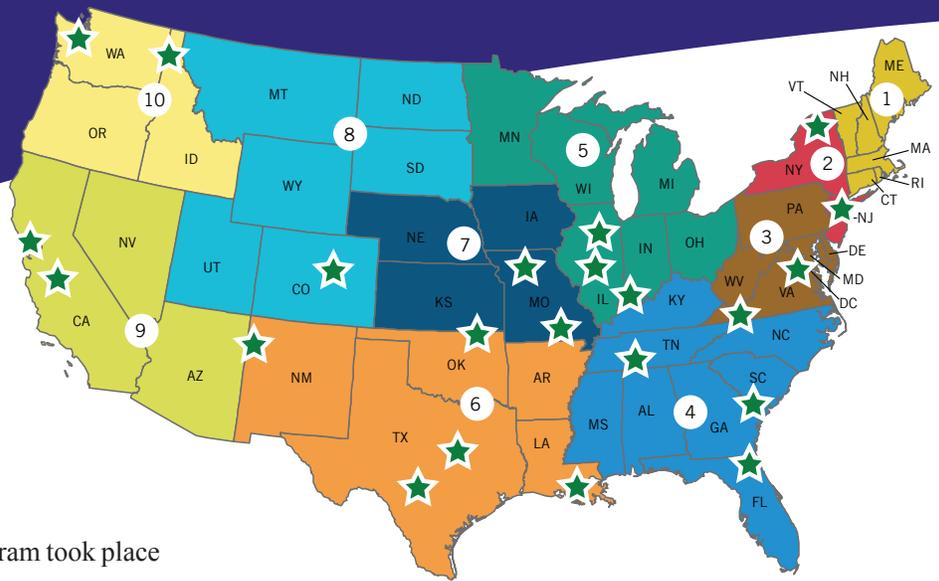
Program tryouts included leadership, team building and role-playing activities, a physical fitness evaluation, and observation by a team of evaluators from the project's partners. Fourteen of the 15 trainees selected during tryouts went on to complete the program.

SITE HISTORY

The Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund site (also known as the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex) is located in Northern Idaho's Coeur d'Alene River Basin. EPA placed the site on the Superfund program's National Priorities List in 1983. The Coeur d'Alene Basin is one of the largest former mining areas in the world. Beginning in the late 1880s, mining activities in the basin contributed an estimated 100 million tons of mine waste to the river system. Many area communities were built on mine wastes. Until as late as 1968, tailings were deposited directly into the river. Over time, these wastes have spread throughout more than 160 miles of the Coeur d'Alene and Spokane rivers as well as area lakes and floodplains.

Contaminants from mining operations in the Silver Valley spread harmful heavy metals down the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River and across its floodplains. Working with community members, local, state, tribal and federal agencies, and local organizations, EPA developed a plan to clean up residential and recreational areas. Cleanup is now underway. Project goals include reducing heavy metals, improving fisheries, reducing downstream migration of contaminated sediments and providing safe feeding habitat for waterfowl.





TRAINING: APRIL - MAY 2013

The Coeur d'Alene Basin SuperJTI training program took place over two-and-a-half weeks. It included:

Pre-Employment Training: Trainees completed courses in environmental justice, interpersonal communication, cultural competence and effective work habits. EPA contractor Skeo Solutions provided the training.

Technical Training: Trainees completed the 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER), CPR and first aid, work zone flagging, and field reporting courses provided by North Idaho College. Trainees also completed a sampling course created for and provided to the program at no cost by site contractor CH2M Hill.

Upon completion of the program, trainees possess the marketable skills needed to begin a successful career in environmental remediation and become valuable members of the workforce in their communities.

Coeur d'Alene Basin SuperJTI is one of many SuperJTI projects nationwide that are making a difference for unemployed and underemployed citizens living in communities affected by Superfund sites.

COEUR D'ALENE BASIN CYCLE II SUPERJTI TRAINEES:

Live in areas affected by the Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund site. Twelve of the fourteen trainees (86 percent) live in communities affected by the Superfund site.

Include younger and older populations. Eight trainees are in their 20s and 30s, while six trainees are in their 40s and 50s.



JOB PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW UP: JUNE 2013 — NOVEMBER 2013

After graduation, trainees interviewed with site subcontractors, including McGillivray Environmental, North Wind Construction Services and Terragraphics Environmental Engineering, for available site cleanup positions. During the summer and fall of 2013, six graduates accepted site-related cleanup positions. Another four graduates took other jobs in the area. Remaining graduates are interviewing with site subcontractors, pending the award of new remediation contracts.



Graduation for the program's 14 trainees took place at Memorial Hall in Kellogg, Idaho, in May 2013. EPA Region 10 Environmental Cleanup Program Director Rick Albright handed out certificates to the graduates during the ceremony. The program also included remarks from project partners as well as the graduates.

Coeur d'Alene Basin SuperJTI Cycle II's community liaison Rene Gilbert followed up with the graduates and their supervisors for six months after the graduates started work. During this time, graduates could change positions but were encouraged to remain employed, either with one of the site subcontractors or another employer.

SUPERJTI COMMUNITY PROFILES: Making a Difference

Rene Gilbert



Rene was hired by SuperJTI as the community partner for the 2012 and 2013 SuperJTI programs in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. As a local resident active in the community, and with a background in human relations, Rene was a perfect fit for the program. After beginning work with SuperJTI, Rene focused on promoting the program in the community. She found the best outreach strategy was working closely with other community members, organizations and local media to support the recruitment of potential trainees. "Asking people to support the project and aligning myself with progressive people in the community helped us be successful," she noted.

Now that the program has finished, Rene continues to keep in touch with the graduates. Many continue to work in the area in environmental cleanup as well as related fields. "The training changes people's lives," she said. "You see them come in to the program and leave a better person." Rene also reflected on the satisfaction she felt working with SuperJTI and providing a service to her community. "I felt very proud of the graduates of both training classes," she said. "I felt that we really did something as a community that was meaningful, that had substance."

After years of long-haul trucking, construction and mining work, Dave Medrano was looking to work closer to home in the Silver Valley. He found the training gave him a new perspective on the value of EPA's work and the cleanup of the Coeur d'Alene Basin. "And we worked hard," he noted. "By the time we reached graduation, I felt like we had really accomplished something."

Right after graduation, cleanup contractor McGillivray Environmental offered Dave a permanent position as a truck driver; project work to date has included highway and infrastructure projects as well as site cleanup. "SuperJTI opened doors," he said. "Without the training, there is no way I would have had such opportunities. Going through the training, making connections, meeting with senior management at the companies doing the cleanup – it has been vitally important for me."



Dean A. Gilson



A miner for 39 years, Dean A. Gilson was unemployed and looking for new career opportunities. "Being 60 years old is a liability in the mining industry," he noted. "And mining has been dwindling in the Silver Valley for a long time." When he first heard about the SuperJTI program, he knew he wanted to be part of it. "Taking on the training and completing it was a big deal," he said. "I had been thinking I should go back to school for a long time. The training was a real morale booster."

Following graduation, Dean completed a short-term project with the Idaho Panhandle Health District before signing on as a driver at a local car dealership. While his current position is not in the environmental remediation field, Dean credits the SuperJTI program with opening doors for him. "The training gave me a new outlook on interviews, building a résumé and how to market myself," he said. "The program helped me get out there and get noticed."

What is the SuperJTI Program?

The Superfund Job Training Initiative, or SuperJTI, supports job readiness programs in communities affected by nearby Superfund sites and encourages the employment of trainees at local site cleanups. The SuperJTI program combines extensive classroom instruction with hands-on exercises for each participant. Upon completion of the program, each participant possesses the marketable skills required to become a valuable member of the community's workforce. EPA offers SuperJTI training at no cost to training participants.

For more information, please visit: www.epa.gov/superfund/community/sfjti

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