

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES IN ABANDONED MINE LAND COMMUNITIES

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U.S. EPA Superfund Community Involvement and Outreach Branch**

**September 11, 2007
FINAL**

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Contract No. 68 W 01 058**

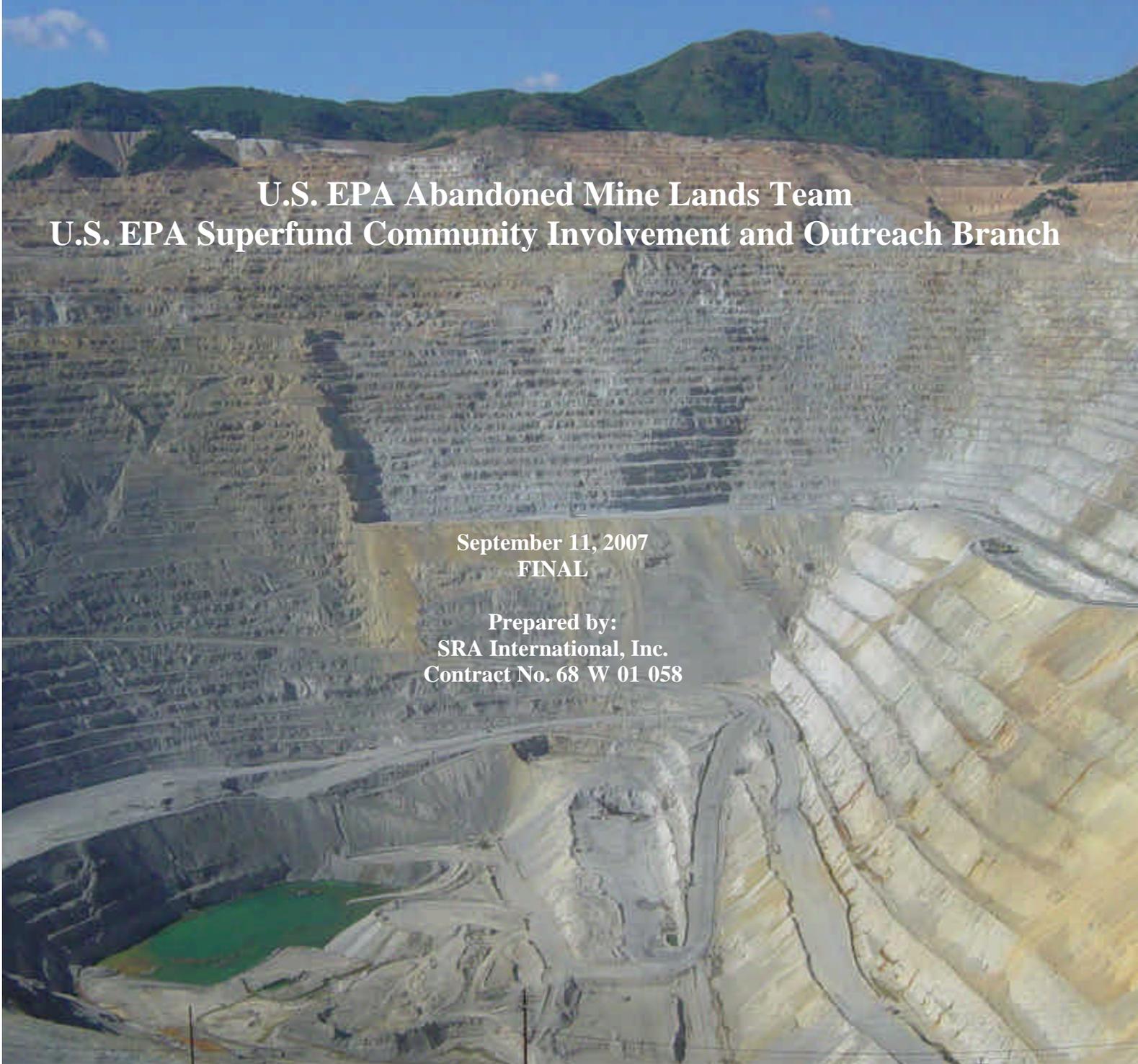


Table of Contents

1. Introduction to Community Involvement and Abandoned Mine Lands (AML)	1
2. Site Selection and Interview Process	2
3. Community Involvement Activities at Selected AML Sites	2
3.1 Overview of Identified AML Community Involvement Challenges	2
3.1.1 Challenge: Due to the large geographic scale of many AML sites, several communities may be impacted by cleanup activities	2
3.1.2 Challenge: Local economic pressures influence how communities view cleanup and respond to EPA	3
<i>Communities may be cautious about cleanup because mining is the main economic engine for the community</i>	3
<i>Communities have a strong allegiance to the potentially responsible party (PRP) because it is the main employer in town</i>	4
3.1.3 Challenge: There is an increased focus on maintaining historical aspects of mines	4
3.2 Successful Solutions Used at AML Sites	5
3.2.1 Reaching Out to Every Stakeholder	5
<i>Utilize Local Information Centers</i>	5
<i>Maintain Toll-Free Hotlines</i>	5
<i>Develop Relationships with Local Officials and Politicians</i>	6
<i>Broaden the Distribution of Materials</i>	6
<i>Develop a Rapport with the Media</i>	6
<i>Seek Alternatives to Public Meetings</i>	6
<i>Showcase Projects through Public Exhibits</i>	7
<i>Utilize Resources outside the Superfund Program</i>	7
<i>Recognize the Role of Demographics</i>	7
3.2.2 Managing Conflict	7
<i>Listen First</i>	7
<i>Set Site-Specific Goals to Focus Attention</i>	7
<i>Utilize Facilitation and Mediation Resources</i>	8
<i>Collaborate with Partnering Agencies and Clarify Agency Roles</i>	8
3.2.3 Encouraging Community Advisory Groups (CAGs) and Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs)	8
3.2.4 Maintaining Interest in the Process	9
<i>Work Toward a Goal</i>	9
<i>Maintain a Consistent Staff, if Possible</i>	9
<i>Publicize Accomplishments</i>	9
3.2.5 Developing Innovative Partnerships	10
4. Conclusion: Using Lessons Learned from the Selected AML Sites	10

Appendix A: Inventory of Selected AML Sites with Community Involvement Activities 11
Appendix B: Community Involvement Resources 15
Appendix C: Interview Materials 18

1. INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND ABANDONED MINE LANDS

Small company towns developed as mining operations attracted people, industry, and businesses to rural areas of the United States. However, as mining companies closed or abandoned operations, communities were left with large, vacant parcels of scarred lands and dilapidated buildings. The environmental and public safety hazards of abandoned mining sites are an unfortunate legacy of mining operations. These abandoned sites are scattered across the country and pose daunting cleanup and reuse challenges.

Through a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory approaches, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Team identifies ways to protect the public and the environment by setting priorities for the evaluation, cleanup, and redevelopment of abandoned mine sites. The AML Team works with several EPA offices, including the Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation (OSRTI), Office of Solid Waste, Office of Air and Radiation, Office of Research and Development, Office of Water, EPA Regions, and other government agencies and programs to address challenges and opportunities associated with AML sites.

The EPA AML Team defines abandoned mine lands as, "those lands, waters, and surrounding watersheds contaminated or scarred by extraction, beneficiation or processing of ores and minerals, including phosphate but not coal. Abandoned mine lands include areas where mining or processing activity is temporarily inactive." AML sites involve complex environmental, technical, political, and economic issues, including the often remote location, magnitude and scale of contamination, economic transition, and mixed public and private land ownership. Meaningful community participation is critical in addressing these challenges. Community involvement activities ensure that all stakeholders are informed of site cleanup activities and have the opportunity to influence mine cleanup and reuse decisions.

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), the federal statute that governs all Superfund sites, requires specific community involvement activities, such as public meetings, comment periods, and notification of site activities. EPA's Community Involvement and Outreach Branch developed the Community Involvement Handbook to serve as an

extensive resource on community involvement in the Superfund process, including the legal and policy requirements for Superfund community involvement. EPA's community involvement activities are not limited to those required by CERCLA. Rather, EPA has the flexibility to promote public participation throughout the entire site cleanup process.

The purposes of this report are to identify community involvement challenges that are typical to AML sites and to provide examples of how these challenges have been successfully addressed. The community involvement challenges and solutions identified in this report are based on interviews with individuals who have either led or participated in community involvement activities at a sample of AML sites across the country. It is expected that the information in this report will assist EPA staff at AML sites to anticipate and address common community involvement challenges. Because each AML site has its own unique challenges, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to community involvement. The community involvement activities at each site should respond to the specifics of the site and its communities and stakeholders.

Appendix A lists the AML sites researched for this report. These sites serve as a non-statistically valid sample of AML sites with community involvement activities focused on cleanup and reuse. While most of the sites used for this report are listed on the National Priorities List (NPL), some sites are outside the scope of Superfund and were included as a supplement to the Superfund process.

In addition, Appendix B provides a compilation of available community involvement tools and resources from groups and agencies. The appendix provides links to the materials on the Web and a brief description of the best use of these materials. Finally, Appendix C furnishes a list of sample questions prepared for EPA representatives.

2. SITE SELECTION AND INTERVIEW PROCESS

Of the many AML hardrock mining sites, this report compiles information on a select few that conduct community involvement activities. Sites were identified by EPA staff, existing communication materials associated with community involvement, contractor knowledge of sites, and a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) query for sites currently in use, with Acres Ready for Reuse, or currently not being used. This information was compiled into an initial list and scaled down based on the level of known community involvement activities at the site and regional distribution of sites. The initial list contained 88 AML Superfund NPL sites, plus additional sites outside of the Superfund program that were known to have a history of community involvement activities. In an effort to have a manageable number of sites to research, a final list of 29 sites was selected. Based on resources, time, and responses, 20 sites were researched and form the basis of this report.

Initial research on the selected 20 sites was conducted through CERCLIS, public Web sites, EPA Web pages, and other documents for site background, best management practices, and examples of community involvement. This information was used to understand site background information, gather any publicized community involvement activities, and compile a history of the site prior to interviews. This process included interviewing 36 EPA representatives (some representatives were interviewed for more than one site) and three public stakeholders. Once initial site information was compiled, selected community members (three community members) and EPA staff—including 17 Remedial Project Managers (RPMs), one On-Scene Coordinator (OSC), 19 Community Involvement Coordinators (CICs), and others (two other EPA staff representatives)—were contacted to discuss the site, project work, and community involvement activities. At least one EPA representative was interviewed for each site included in this report and some EPA representatives were interviewed for more than one site. For six of the sites, only one person was interviewed for the site due to time constraints, resources, and availability. All EPA representatives were asked a core group of questions (Appendix C) in order to help develop baseline information for analysis. Information sought included details on community involvement activities, length of involvement at the site, milestones, challenges, and project partners.

3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES AT SELECTED AML SITES

3.1 Overview of Identified AML Community Involvement Challenges

Upon review and analysis of interview responses, general themes began to emerge that set AML sites apart from other Superfund and cleanup sites. Many EPA staff from the sites described the large geographic scale of mining sites as an obstacle to effective community involvement. Likewise, numerous EPA interviewees described challenges in working with a community that is cautious about cleanup because mining is the backbone of the local economy. Another theme identified from the interviews is the impact that the Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) has on community involvement. This impact includes fueling community frustrations toward EPA or causing hostility between community groups with different interests. Finally, many individuals described the importance of working with each community to preserve the mining town's heritage and identity. Each of these themes is described in greater detail below and examples are provided to demonstrate the hurdles EPA and mining communities have overcome.

While the following challenges may occur at other Superfund sites, many AML sites will likely face most, if not all, of the general challenges described in this report. In recognizing some of the general challenges that they may face, EPA RPMs and CICs can have the edge in formulating a successful community involvement approach. The interviews revealed that some of the most successful community involvement activities arise when RPMs and CICs become familiar with the community and appreciate the distinct needs of that community.

3.1.1 Challenge: Due to the large geographic scale of many AML sites, several communities may be impacted by cleanup activities

As with many large Superfund sites, EPA staff at AML sites face many challenges due to the large geographic scale. The large area affected by most AML sites usually equates to a significant number of stakeholders spread over great distances. Due to the complex nature of contamination and the extensive size of many mining sites and mine-affected watersheds, it can take up to a dozen or more years before a remedy is finalized. In turn, communities often grow frustrated with EPA and the cleanup process long before cleanup ever begins.

The large geographic scale of many AML sites poses a challenge for EPA to engage all of the stakeholders in effective community involvement activities. A large AML site can encompass numerous rural areas, towns, and cities. As an example, the Tar Creek Superfund site in Oklahoma includes five mining cities. Over 19,000 people, including nine tribal nations, call the Tar Creek Superfund site home. Community involvement is a challenge when multiple communities are affected at sites.

Similarly, the Bunker Hill site includes land in both Washington and Idaho, and spans 60 miles by highway, making it very difficult to get to know the affected communities. Recognizing a need to reach all the communities involved, EPA tried a new public meeting format for the latest Five-Year Review. In place of the traditional large public meeting EPA held five smaller open houses in different locations in Washington and Idaho. Attendance was lower at these open houses than at previous public meetings. EPA speculated that attendance was low because the open houses were held in June when the community members' attention was focused on other summer activities. Regardless of attendance, the new format gave some local residents a chance to ask questions they would not normally have asked during a public meeting. This community involvement activity demonstrates the need to try a new approach to reach stakeholders across large sites.

Additionally, due to the large scale and complexity of contamination at AML sites, it may appear to the community that EPA is making minimal cleanup progress. Of the 20 sites interviewed for this report, 11 are "megsites," meaning that cleanup costs will exceed \$50 million. Some sites have up to 13 operable units (OU). Even though EPA is making progress on cleaning up each OU, it may appear to the community that EPA is making little headway toward completing the entire site. The Cherokee County site in Kansas is part of a larger area called the Tri-State Mining District, which encompasses four Superfund sites within the district. EPA has divided this megasite into seven subsites with general mining locations. A total of five Records of Decision (ROD) have been released for various OUs in Cherokee County. Multiple remediation activities are occurring at the same time. While remedial actions are underway across the site, local stakeholders often want their particular concern addressed immediately. Community involvement activities must address progress across the site to help demonstrate to the community that regardless of the perception associated with their specific site concern, issues are being addressed site wide.

3.1.2 Challenge: Local economic pressures influence how communities view cleanup and respond to EPA

Communities may be cautious about cleanup because mining is the main economic engine for the community

At AML sites, mining activities are often the backbone of a community's economy. Mining communities tend to be cautious when EPA commences cleanup activities as they fear losing current jobs and future mining opportunities. Many of the communities included in this report were still economically tied to the mining industry and continued to show loyalty toward these companies.



Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area, Montana

The Palmerton Zinc Pile Superfund site overcame fierce resistance from the smelting company and the local community before the site could be cleaned up. Established in 1898 by the New Jersey Zinc Corporation, Palmerton, Pennsylvania grew around the zinc smelters and became a company town, with thousands of local citizens employed by the zinc industry. In addition to serving as the main employer in town, the company also provided valuable money and resources for local schools and other critical infrastructure. EPA became involved at the site in the early 1980s, prompting concerns from local residents that their pensions were going to be threatened by the cleanup. Despite the vast amount of contamination across the site, EPA had to overcome community loyalty to the zinc company before effective community involvement could proceed.

In the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area, Montana, some community members indicated that they would prefer to have contaminated property and continue mining copper rather than clean up the site. Considering the Butte area will likely not run out of copper until long into the future, mining makes economic sense for the community.

It is often difficult to establish a new economic engine in these communities after mining ceases. In an effort to redevelop the area and ease economic concerns, the Old Works golf course was developed in Montana. The community was optimistic about the tourism possibilities and began to focus on updating the downtown. However, when a hotel development project failed, it became apparent that the golf course would not answer all of the town's economic concerns. Despite this, the community continues to actively seek ways to diversify their economy to attract new businesses and tourism opportunities

Communities have a strong allegiance to the PRP because it is the main employer in town

When asked about the role PRPs play in community involvement activities, EPA representatives indicated that community involvement activities were significantly impacted when the PRP was the main employer in town. EPA staff also noted that local residents depend on mining companies for leadership and are heavily influenced by their opinions.

In Anaconda, Montana, the PRP, the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) historically had a strong leadership role in the community and made most planning decisions that were usually made by local governments. In recent years, however, as ARCO's presence decreased, the county government became more active, and in many cases has had differing opinions on Superfund issues. Some residents continue to support ARCO's cleanup plans, while others oppose them and feel that they should be contributing more to the cleanup. EPA played mediator in this community to ensure that all of the opinions, though often disparate, are heard.

In general, regulatory actions in company towns can result in hostile relations between community groups holding opposing views about environmental cleanup. At the Palmerton Zinc site, in Palmerton, Pennsylvania, the community was divided over Superfund cleanup. One community group, backed with funding from the mining company, was opposed to EPA's work at the site. Another group, which received the Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) through EPA, was a strong proponent of the cleanup. These groups were fiercely opposed to one another, with isolated incidents resulting in court battles and police involvement. Hostile relations ensued between the two groups, coming to a close when the PRP was bought by a new company. In addition to meeting with each community group individually in private homes, EPA held large public meetings during the public comment periods, which allowed the groups to

come together and voice their opinions. EPA staff did not limit their activities to normal business hours; they were available at all hours to provide a forum for both groups to voice concerns. The Palmerton site exhibits the importance of listening to opinions from all sides of an issue, even when community members disagree with EPA and each other.

3.1.3 Challenge: There is an increased focus on maintaining historical aspects of mines

Often at AML sites, EPA's mission is to clean up or remove the very pieces of the landscape that give mining towns their character and define their mining heritage. Life-long residents of these communities become attached to the symbols of mining left in the town, such as mine waste piles and other mining artifacts. When a town is defined by a mine, EPA must recognize this connection and work to maintain the integrity of the town's mining history. Community involvement activities may need to focus on ways to involve the community in decisions potentially impacting symbols of the town's history and identity.



Anaconda Co. Smelter, Montana

In some communities, cleanup of mine waste is perceived as a threat to the historical preservation of the town. At the Central City, Clear Creek Superfund site in Colorado, the community voiced concern that EPA and site cleanup would have a negative impact on the historic character of the town. The community felt that the mine wastes contributed to the rich mining heritage. To accommodate the request of the community and ensure that human health remained protected, EPA left the waste in place and used institutional controls to shield the public from any negative impacts from the remaining tailings piles. When waste is left in place, EPA must work closely with local officials to maintain the institutional controls and ensure that the remedy is not compromised.

Furthermore, mine waste and mining artifacts have also been successfully integrated into redevelopment projects at many mining sites around the country. For example, a bike trail weaves through historic mining structures at the California Gulch site. As part of the remedy, EPA and the local community were able to turn an abandoned mine district into a popular tourist attraction. EPA and the community undertook a similar effort to preserve the mining heritage at Elizabeth Mine in Strafford, Vermont. By listening to community concerns during public meetings and general discussions, EPA understood the importance of preserving the historical features of this mine area. EPA chose an alternative remedy that included capping around one of the town's historical resources—the stone foundation of an old mine—in order to protect an important historical community resource. In a related example, the Old Works Golf Course in Anaconda, Montana demonstrates a successful redevelopment project that integrates historic mining artifacts. With bunkers made of slag and fairways that weave around old smelting ladles, flues, and smelting ovens, Anaconda demonstrates an innovative approach to historic preservation.

3.2 Successful Solutions Used at AML Sites

Every AML site presents a unique set of challenges to EPA staff working at the site. EPA cannot apply a uniform set of activities across mining sites to address site-specific community involvement challenges. The unique circumstances of each site means a solution for one site might be the source of tension at another. Solutions such as reaching out to stakeholders, diffusing conflict, encouraging Community Advisory Groups (CAGs) and TAGs, maintaining interest throughout the process, and creating innovative partnerships were successful for the sites interviewed for this report. However, many times these successes were due to years of trial and error with other ideas and solutions that preceded them.

3.2.1 Reaching Out to Every Stakeholder

The effects of AML sites can be felt by a vast and widely dispersed population. Reaching stakeholders sometimes involves taking steps above and beyond the CERCLA requirements. While there always will be some stakeholders who make themselves known upfront, and others that would rather not get involved with the project at all, engaging all stakeholders can lead to greater success at mining sites. The following activities were used at mining sites to successfully target various stakeholders.

Utilize Local Information Centers

As noted in several interviews, availability of EPA staff to address mining community questions and concerns is important for successful community involvement. Local information centers are one way to address this issue. In order to be more available to the residents, RPMs and CICs at the Palmerton Zinc Pile site worked with the PRP to staff a local information center. The office was open several days a week while residential yard sampling was conducted at the site. Community members were encouraged to stop by the office to ask questions, pick up information, or share their concerns with EPA and sampling contractors. Initially, the community was hesitant to allow their yards to be sampled. The EPA interviewees felt that opening this local office influenced a number of people who eventually had their properties sampled. In the end, the local presence and consistent availability of EPA staff seemed to lead to greater participation in the sampling process. At the Herculaneum Lead Smelter Site in Missouri, technical experts staffed an onsite trailer that provided the community members with the opportunity to discuss concerns in-person with EPA personnel. Likewise, the local information center in Libby, Montana was identified by EPA staff as one of the most effective community involvement tools at the site. These examples demonstrate how face-time with community members can lead to increased trust, participation, and success.

Maintain Toll-Free Hotlines

As EPA staff at two sites in Region 7 discovered, a toll-free hotline is also an effective way of listening to stakeholder concerns and connecting with communities. At the Cherokee County site in Kansas, EPA has a 24-hour return call policy to answer extensive questions that cannot be addressed immediately. Both the hotline and the return call policy have helped build trust between EPA and the community members. Many residents recognize and use the toll-free number as a reliable resource for project-related information. Similarly, EPA staff at the Madison County Mine site in Missouri interact with residents not only through a toll-free number, but through daily interaction because an EPA employee lives within the site boundaries and serves as an active member of the community. These toll-free numbers and onsite employees help to reach out to those stakeholders who prefer to have their questions or concerns addressed by someone directly on a one-on-one basis, rather through questions in fact sheets or by attending a public meeting.

Develop Relationships with Local Officials and Politicians

Working closely with local officials and politicians is beneficial at any Superfund site because these individuals represent numerous constituents and can pass information along through different avenues. Building relationships with these civic representatives can help broaden the distribution of information, build community confidence in EPA staff, and can lead to a greater understanding of public sentiment. CERCLA regulations require that the public be allowed to comment on Five-Year Reviews. For the most recent Five-Year Review at the Bunker Hill site, the CICs contacted all the mayors in the area and asked if they had any comments. While some mayors were uninterested, others thanked EPA for calling, and provided suggestions. Instead of assuming that the mayors would read advertisements in local newspapers about the available public comment period, the CICs took the extra step of reaching out to the mayors. By doing so, EPA staff accomplished two things: they reassured the mayors that their input was valued, and they ensured that their final report had the approval of these representative community leaders.

Broaden the Distribution of Materials

EPA staff expressed the importance of providing information to stakeholders through written materials. Developing a comprehensive mailing list, with both email and home addresses, is an important step in being able to send out these materials. However, for those citizens not included on site distribution lists, making documents available in public places (in addition to the CERCLA-required information repositories) can also increase citizen awareness of site activities. This approach was used by RPMs and CICs at the Tar Creek site. EPA staff worked with local stores and gas stations to have informational materials available at the storefront. Likewise, copies of project-related publications about the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical site in Idaho are placed in local library branches. These additional methods of distribution are especially important for community members in rural areas who may not have Internet access or who prefer hard copy materials.

Develop a Rapport with the Media

As noted in many interviews, utilization of local media outlets, such as newspapers, radio stations, and local TV news stations is an effective way to reach a wide range of stakeholders. Having a good rapport with local media associations can increase opportunities to spread project-related news, as these organizations have a larger distribution than

the typical AML site contact list. Announcing upcoming community involvement events in the newspaper, on the radio, or on television may broaden awareness and lead to increased participation rates. Media coverage during activities also creates a way to reach community members who cannot attend the events in person. In Libby, Montana, EPA placed weekly "Frequently Asked Questions" ads in three local newspapers. This gave EPA a platform to share information on a variety of topics, such as sampling, cleanup, public health issues, and community advisory group meetings, all the while, helping to keep the community updated and informed. Conversely, EPA staff from other sites noted that poor relations with media groups led to strained community relations and, in extreme cases, threatening remarks. They indicated that had there been a more amiable relationship between EPA and the press, a lot of stress and tension could have been avoided. Not only do these examples point to the beneficial use of the media as another means of distributing information, but they also highlight the negative impacts that can result when a relationship with the press is lacking.

Seek Alternatives to Public Meetings

RPMs and CICs interviewed for this report noted that engaging community stakeholders may sometimes mean seeking out other forums, besides the traditional public meeting format, to share information and listen to community concerns. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings proved to be a useful forum for providing information, answering questions, and having personal contact with residents from the Questa, New Mexico community regarding the Molycorp, Inc. site. In this way, parents in the community who otherwise did not have time to attend a public meeting about the site were able to keep up-to-date on site progress. At the Copper Basin site in Tennessee, EPA holds tours of the site every year on Independence Day so that community members can see the progress that has been made and learn about activities that are underway. This annual event has been a great way to highlight successes in a fun and consistent way. The central library in Silverton, Colorado was turned into a classroom once a month for the Animas River Corridor site Library Series. These educational seminars provided training on Superfund-related issues to enable citizens to gain a better understanding of how decisions were made. All of these events demonstrate successful ways that EPA has gone above and beyond CERCLA meeting requirements to engage a broader range of stakeholders in interesting and appealing ways.

Showcase Projects through Public Exhibits

Educational displays in public spaces can be a great way to reach the local population of an AML site, as well as other visitors passing through the area. EPA and PRP staff from the Central City, Clear Creek Superfund site set up an exhibit in the Idaho Springs Visitor's Center. The exhibit, showcasing site-specific activities and the Superfund program, was well received by the community. It successfully increased awareness of the site in a unique way and allowed EPA and the PRP to market their collaborative efforts. Exhibits can also help dispel some of the fears linked to these Superfund projects by demystifying the program and highlighting site cleanup accomplishments.

Utilize Resources outside the Superfund Program

As noted in several interviews, using resources available outside of the Superfund program can be an effective way to engage stakeholders and address community concerns. Within all of EPA, numerous outreach and educational resources are available. By using materials produced by other EPA programs and offices, EPA Superfund staff can address community concerns about specific issues, such as the health effects of certain contaminants or broader environmental topics, without having to fund the development of these resources at the expense of the community or the Superfund Program. At the Palmerton Zinc Pile site in Pennsylvania, the community was concerned about the effects of the lead dispersed throughout the community from the nearby smelting operations, as well as the effects of lead-based paint in their homes. The RPM and CIC distributed existing lead publications available through the Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances to community members.

Recognize the Role of Demographics

Recognizing site-specific demographics is an important aspect of engaging community stakeholders. If necessary, documents and other materials should be translated into multiple languages. For example, at the Molycorp, Inc. site in New Mexico, project-related publications were produced in both Spanish and English. Community members deserve to be kept informed on site progress, no matter what language they speak.

3.2.2 Managing Conflict

In many interviews, individuals stated that one of the most effective ways to keep communities engaged and involved was to create a neutral, productive, and tension-free working environment. Throughout the Superfund process, some conflicts

and difficulties may arise, but a few techniques were identified that helped set the stage for dynamic, constructive conversations and interactions at selected AML sites.

Listen First

The goal of community involvement at any Superfund site is to not only inform the public about site activities, but also to engage them in the process and incorporate their suggestions and concerns into the cleanup plan to the greatest extent possible. The Superfund process incorporates public comment periods and public meetings so that every stakeholder that wishes to participate can be heard. For AML communities, there is no easy way to learn that the daily operations of their local mining industry have resulted in contamination of their back yards and community. To address the emotions and concerns that come with this and any Superfund-related information, numerous EPA interviewees indicated it is most important to listen before reacting. Difficult conversations are bound to arise throughout the cleanup process and one of the best ways to handle these discussions is to allow individuals to share their frustrations and understand where they are coming from, without reacting on a personal level. Once individuals feel that they are being understood and listened to, they are more likely to be attentive to other information that needs to be shared or other plans that need to be fleshed out. As was discussed in previous sections of this report, being present in the community can go a long way toward developing a rapport with and earning the trust of the local citizens. Several site RPMs and CICs noted that getting to know community members on an individual basis can lead to greater productivity when a larger group of citizens get together.

Set Site-Specific Goals to Focus Attention

Conflicts may often arise at AML sites between EPA and stakeholders when project-specific goals and outcomes are not clear. As an example, during one period in the history of the California Gulch site, tensions were high between EPA and the community. To alleviate conflict, the community worked out specific goals to document cleanup progress at the site. By deciding that water quality and the return of wildlife to rivers and streams were top priorities, conversations between EPA and stakeholders focused on reaching these important milestones. An activity like this brainstorming session can help set a common goal and lead to a collaborative spirit between EPA and community members. Additionally, it informs EPA staff about the community's cleanup goals so that they can take the necessary steps to reach those goals.

Utilize Facilitation and Mediation Resources

Many individuals stated that neutral third parties can provide valuable community involvement assistance to EPA staff. This assistance can take many forms, including conducting situation assessments, designing community involvement processes, planning and facilitating dialogues or meetings, or mediating disputes. Use of a neutral third party typically frees EPA staff from the burden of managing the community involvement process or event so they can focus on the substantive issues. EPA has a number of resources available to provide support for community involvement activities, such as *Just In Time* dispute prevention and resolution services. The Community Involvement and Outreach Branch has funding to provide neutral third party assistance for projects of short-term duration. At both the Elizabeth Mine in Vermont and Herculaneum in Missouri, the *Just In Time* resource was used to provide community involvement assistance. A third party facilitator worked with the Elizabeth Mine Community Advisory Group (EMCAG) to create subcommittees to focus on technical, historical, and human health issues and facilitate EMCAG and subcommittee meetings. Similarly, a neutral third party conducted a conflict assessment in the Herculaneum community and was instrumental in rebuilding trust in the community and convening a Citizens Advisory Committee to address revitalization issues.

Collaborate with Partnering Agencies and Clarify Agency Roles

AML sites can cover vast expanses of land and typically have a combination of landowners—both public and private. When multiple agencies are involved with various portions of the site cleanup, communities can end up with a muddled understanding of all the different regulations and processes operating at the site, which can lead to frustration or conflict.

At the Copper Basin site in Tennessee, multiple activities were being conducted in the area by federal and state programs. With multiple projects occurring simultaneously in the community, citizens were confused about what questions each different agency could answer. EPA Superfund staff collaborated with EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Air, and Water offices, the Forest Service, and the state Superfund program to set up a joint meeting with representatives from all the groups. This crossover meeting was beneficial in that the public received answers to all of its questions in one single setting, and the agencies gained a better understanding of each program's role in the area.



Animas River Corridor, Colorado

Similarly, many agencies are involved with the cleanup at the Kennecott Mining site in Salt Lake City, Utah. In an effort to organize cleanup work performed by the various agencies at the site, the RPM at Kennecott formed two Technical Review Committees. The committees consisted of representatives from two Utah state agencies, two non-EPA federal agencies, EPA, the Kennecott Utah Copper Corporation, citizen groups, local officials, and academics. Together, the committees served as advisors to EPA and helped work through complex issues. It was a success from everyone's perspective: the represented groups were able to provide their input and EPA received the assistance it required to address complicated topics.

The Animas River Stakeholders Group in Colorado coordinated the support of a wide-range of federal, state, and local agencies, as well as private and university partners. By working in a coordinated manner, the group leveraged significant resources; a result not as likely if each partner had worked on the project separately.

These three site examples show that clarifying roles and responsibilities of all the different stakeholders at a site is essential and beneficial for good community involvement. Developing and maintaining partnerships with federal, state, and local programs and agencies is as important as forming partnerships with the community.

3.2.3 Encouraging CAGs and TAGs

CAGs and TAGs were both mentioned by EPA staff as being potentially useful ways to involve communities in Superfund site activities. A CAG is made up of representatives of diverse community interests. Its purpose is to provide a public forum for community members to present and discuss their needs and concerns related to the Superfund decision-making process. A TAG is available to any

qualified community group that seeks technical assistance to interpret and help the community understand technical information about its site. As with any stakeholder group, EPA interviewees stated that the key to communicating with CAGs and TAG groups is to operate under the principle of transparency.

For communities like the one around the Standard Mine site in Crested Butte, Colorado, a CAG is a useful tool. On average, CAG meetings draw approximately 20 community members who actively participate in the process. This community is interested in being involved in as much of the EPA process as possible. Meetings are held monthly, if not more often, and the CAG has a strong relationship with associated state programs and EPA staff. This community also applied for a TAG.

The CAG at the Elizabeth Mine comprises 10 community groups and meets regularly with EPA and state officials. The EMCAG works in conjunction with the TAG advisors to ensure effective communication flow. The EMCAG has been effective at communicating with EPA and ensuring that information is exchanged clearly and effectively between the two groups. The TAG has provided invaluable information in reviewing technical documents for the group and helping the stakeholders make decisions and communicate with EPA.

3.2.4 Maintaining Interest in the Process

Developing a cleanup plan for a mining site can take many years. Once the plan has been put into place, it can take several more years for the remedy to run its full course. Many CICs and RPMs noted in the interviews that meeting fatigue and community burnout can lead to decreased community participation. A few ideas were identified to help maintain a community's attention throughout the Superfund process.

Work Toward a Goal

While community involvement often wanes after many years of site activity, engaging citizens in the process of setting site goals can help to maintain strong community involvement. EPA's initial involvement with the Milltown site in Montana took place in the early 1980s. Over 20 years later, members of the community are still dynamically involved with site activities. EPA worked with the Missoula County Commissioners and the Department of the Interior's Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program to launch a public process to develop a redevelopment plan. Part of this process included creating the Milltown Superfund Site Citizen Redevelopment Working

Group, which brought together diverse interests and expertise from local and neighboring communities. Through this collaborative process, the group has helped create a redevelopment plan for the Milltown area that is reflective of local preference and compatible with work occurring at the site. Working groups like this one, where there is discussion about plans and definitive goals for the future, can help to keep community members motivated and interested.

Maintain a Consistent Staff, if Possible

Cleanup of mining sites may take decades to complete. Through the duration of the cleanup process, communities rely on consistent EPA staff for answers. Building relationships with stakeholders takes time and effort. Sustaining these partnerships is more easily accomplished with consistent faces and a shared history. While staffing changes are common and necessary at times, when interviewed, numerous individuals indicated that whenever possible, consistency in site personnel is beneficial at AML sites.

Publicize Accomplishments

As site cleanup progresses, it is important for EPA to market its own successes. For example, EPA should publicize achievements, such as a decrease in blood lead levels in children, increases in fish populations in local rivers and streams, and completion of residential yard sampling. Some successes during the cleanup process at mine sites will be apparent. However, it is important to keep in mind that minor or less visible ones are equally worthy of being shared with the community. While it is routine practice for EPA staff to interview community members as part of its community involvement activities, EPA staff at the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical site took the unique approach of conducting interviews with community members to revise its community involvement plan for the site. That is, they sought community input into the community involvement planning process. As a mature site, CICs were interested in learning how to maintain community interest and involvement at the site. Many residents stated that EPA should market its successes and talk about how cleanup benefits the community.



Bunker Hill Mining & Metallurgical Complex, Idaho

Similarly, EPA staff from Central City, Clear Creek indicated that the community in Idaho Springs responded positively to publicized accomplishments at the site. EPA noted that it took the community a long time to trust EPA and its intentions. Once removal actions and other visible cleanup work started at the site, there was a noticeable increase in the level of public participation and trust of EPA staff. Community members want to see that EPA is not only present at the site, but actively working to protect human health and the environment.

Paradoxically, other RPMs and CICs recognized that a decrease in interest levels at their sites was partially due to a sense of accomplishment and completeness that often accompanies cleanup progress. Working on a site cleanup plan takes a significant amount of cooperation, communication, and discussion. Once the remedy has been selected and the controversial decisions have been made, community members may feel that they can take a break from site activities. When complacency sets in, it is important for EPA to continue to engage community members in site decisions and share project-related information. This will also help address community turnover and will ensure that new residents to the area are informed of site progress and do not disrupt the relationship established between EPA and the community.

3.2.5 Developing Innovative Partnerships

Many RPMs and CICs noted that making use of local resources and established organizations led to greater success at their AML sites. In addition to helping to complete necessary cleanup work, partnerships with colleges and universities also assisted in the education of future scientists and environmentalists.

A partnership between EPA staff at the California Gulch site and the Colorado Mountain College enables classes and professors at the college to conduct field work at the site, which includes

sampling, revegetation, trail development, and restoration projects. Similarly, the Central City, Clear Creek site joined forces with nearby Colorado School of Mines. The university is researching water quality at the site and helping to develop pilot projects to study heavy metal water contamination. In doing so, it is able to provide vital monitoring statistics to EPA staff, while simultaneously gaining valuable experience collecting data and writing reports. Similarly, at some AML sites, specifically in Region 8, TAG advisors have also been associated with universities. Through innovative partnerships with local colleges and universities, EPA is developing vital community relationships and encouraging public participation.

4. CONCLUSION: USING LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SELECTED AML SITES

Based on the general themes and site-specific challenges described, it is evident that no single community involvement approach will work across all AML sites. Instead, each community involvement strategy will differ based on the unique set of circumstances at the site, involving such factors as an active mine or smelter, an active PRP, a large geographic scale, or a community concerned with historic preservation of the area's mining history. Furthermore, community involvement is a process, not just a fact sheet, public meeting, or workgroup; it is the combination and interaction of all of these parts.

This report describes general themes, lessons learned, and best practices at a range of AML sites. RPMs and CICs can combine and tailor these examples and solutions to match the needs of their project communities. By sharing lessons learned and best practices across AML site projects, EPA's community involvement activities will continue to improve, thereby furthering the AML Team's priorities of evaluation, cleanup, and redevelopment of mining sites.

APPENDIX A: INVENTORY OF SELECTED AML SITES WITH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The following tables include a list of the sites interviewed for this report and links to background information on the project and site.

REGION I		
Elizabeth Mine		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Strafford, Vermont	Former Copper Mine	Final - 6/14/2001
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1612.htm http://yosemite.epa.gov/r1/npl_pad.nsf/f52fa5c31fa8f5c885256adc0050b631/2281487131782426852569E400719BBE?OpenDocument http://www.epa.gov/ne/superfund/sites/elizmine/251654.pdf		
Ely Copper Mine		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Vershire, Vermont	Former Copper Mine	Final - 9/13/2001
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1641.htm http://yosemite.epa.gov/r1/npl_pad.nsf/f52fa5c31fa8f5c885256adc0050b631/1BB22E27742B914785256ACA00529857?OpenDocument		
REGION III		
Palmerton Zinc Pile		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Palmerton, Pennsylvania	Former Zinc Smelter	Final - 9/8/1983
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar302.htm http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/super/sites/PAD002395887/index.htm		
REGION IV		
Copper Basin Mining District		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Ducktown, Tennessee	Historic Copper Mines	Non-NPL (MOU Agreements, 1991)
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/region4/waste/copper/copdoctn.htm		

REGION VI		
Molycorp, Inc.		
Location Questa, New Mexico	Site Type Active Molybdenum Mine	NPL Status - Listing Date Proposed - 5/11/2000
<u>Additional Information</u> http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1599.htm www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6sf/pdffiles/0600806.pdf		
Tar Creek		
Location Ottawa County, Oklahoma	Site Type Former Zinc and Lead Mines	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 9/8/1983
<u>Additional Information</u> http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar771.htm www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6sf/pdffiles/0601269.pdf		
REGION VII		
Cherokee County		
Location Cherokee County, Kansas	Site Type Former Lead and Zinc Mines	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 9/8/1983
<u>Additional Information</u> http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar823.htm http://www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/npl_files/ksd980741862.pdf		
Herculaneum Lead Smelter		
Location Herculaneum, Missouri	Site Type Active Lead Smelter	NPL Status - Listing Date N/A - active smelter
<u>Additional Information</u> http://www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/superfund/superfund_herculaneum_lead_smelter_mo.htm www.epa.gov/region7/news_events/factsheets/fs_herculaneum_lead_smelter_site_herculaneum_mo.pdf		
Madison County Mines		
Location Madison County, Missouri	Site Type Former Lead, Copper, Cobalt, Nickel, Iron, Zinc, Silver and Pyrite Mines	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 9/29/2003
<u>Additional Information</u> http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1679.htm www.epa.gov/region7/news_events/factsheets/fs_madison_county_mines_harmonylake_ou1_fredericktown_mo.pdf		

REGION VIII		
Anaconda Co. Smelter		
Location Anaconda, Montana	Site Type Historic Copper Smelter	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 12/30/1982
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar868.htm http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/mt/anaconda/		
Animas River Corridor Watershed Project		
Location San Juan County, Colorado	Site Type Former Mining Area	NPL Status - Listing Date Non-NPL (Mine Scarred Lands Initiative)
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/aml/revital/msl/pdfs/animwkshp.pdf		
California Gulch		
Location Leadville, Colorado	Site Type Former Gold, Silver, Lead and Zinc Mines; Mineral Processing; Smelter	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 9/8/1983
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar853.htm http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/co/calgulch/		
Central City/Clear Creek		
Location Idaho Springs, Colorado	Site Type Former Gold Mines	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 9/8/1983
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar854.htm http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/co/ccclearcreek/		
Kennecott South		
Location Copperton, Utah	Site Type Active Open Pit Mining	NPL Status - Listing Date Proposed - 1/18/1994
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1428.htm http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/ut/kennecottsouth/		
Libby Asbestos Site		
Location Libby, Montana	Site Type Former Vermiculite Mine	NPL Status - Listing Date Final - 10/24/2002
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1661.htm http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/libby/		

REGION VIII (con't)		
Milltown Reservoir Sediments		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Butte, Montana	Historic Mining and Smelter Site	Final - 12/30/1982
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar870.htm http://www.epa.gov/region08/superfund/sites/mt/milltowncfr/home.html		
Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Butte, Montana	Historic Mining and Smelter Site	Final - 12/30/1982
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar871.htm http://www.epa.gov/region08/sf/sites/mt/butte/index.html		
Standard Mine		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Gunnison, Colorado	Former Zinc, Lead, Silver, Gold and Copper Mine	Final - 9/14/2005
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/region8/sf/co/standard/ http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1740.htm		
REGION X		
Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex		
Location	Site Type	NPL Status - Listing Date
Smelterville, Idaho	Active and Former Lead, Zinc, and Silver Mines; Smelter	Final - 9/ 8/1983
<u>Additional Information</u>		
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar981.htm http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/cda		

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT RESOURCES

The following resources provide examples of community involvement tools and resources. These are only a sample of the tools and resources available on the topic. Additional resources can be located from these sources and a general Web search.

Federal Government Agencies and Committees

Community Involvement Plan: Siskon Mine CERCLA Removal Action and Reclamation Project – 2002-2003, Six Rivers National Forest, Siskiyou County, California
USDA Forest Service

www.fs.fed.us/r5/klamath/publications/pdfs/siskonmine/involveplan.pdf

This resource is an example of a Community Involvement Plan developed for a cleanup site. The plan was developed during CERCLA Removal Action planning and identifies community concerns about the mine. The plan outlines opportunities for the public to be informed of and participate in the cleanup activities being planned at the site. Section 3 describes the community profile and section 4 describes possible community involvement activities.

Community Toolbox

NPS, Northeast Region – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program

<http://www.nps.gov/phso/rctatoolbox/>

This resource outlines successful public participation methods that RTCA has learned during its outreach projects. Tools include information on decision making; events; graphic displays; organization; outreach; facilitation; and others.

Cranberry Creek Gateway Park Project Community Engagement Plan

U.S. EPA – Brownfields Federal Partnership Mine-Scarred Lands Initiative

www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/aml/revital/msl/pdfs/crancep.pdf

This is an example of a Community Engagement Plan developed for a non-Superfund site and community. This plan outlines steps for identifying key community members, conducting outreach and communications, obtaining and using community input, and analyzing and evaluating the process. This resource provides information on specific communication vehicles and outreach tools.

Getting In Step: Engaging and Involving Stakeholders in Your Watershed

U.S. EPA

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents/stakeholderguide.pdf>

This report provides the tools needed to effectively identify, engage, and involve stakeholders throughout a watershed project. It includes case studies that demonstrate successes and challenges, as well as tools that communities could implement. The document describes the stakeholder process and communication and outreach tools for effective community involvement.

Mine Site Cleanup for Brownfields Redevelopment: A Three-Part Primer

U.S. EPA –The Brownfields and Land Revitalization Technology Support Center

www.brownfieldstsc.org/pdfs/mining.pdf

This report provides information on the economic, social, and environmental issues that communities face when redeveloping or cleaning up mine sites. Part Three of this report is on hardrock mines. The report discusses public safety and interests in redevelopment.

Redevelopment Planning

U.S. EPA, Superfund Program

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/tools/pdfs/47redev.pdf>

This document provides an overview of EPA's role in identifying and integrating long-term community needs into the reuse plans for a site. By considering a community's vision of future land uses for Superfund sites, EPA often can tailor cleanup options to accommodate community goals. The document provides general tips, related tools/resources from the Community Involvement Toolkit, and two redevelopment planning success stories.

Reference Notebook

U.S. EPA Abandoned Mine Lands Team

<http://epa.gov/aml/tech/refntbk.htm>

This notebook describes the extent, range, and contamination problems of abandoned mine lands, and how the AML Team will address these problems. The notebook provides a good overview of AML issues across the U.S. It does not directly discuss community involvement issues, but it does list sites where the community has been involved in the remediation or cleanup process. There is a section on public safety and how AML sites affect the public.

SMARTe - The Revitalization Decision Support Tool

U.S. EPA

<http://www.smarte.org/smarte/home/index.xml>

This resource is a Web-based decision support system for developing and evaluating future reuse scenarios for potentially contaminated land. SMARTe contains guidance and analysis tools for all aspects of the revitalization process, including planning, environmental, economic, and social concerns. There is a section devoted to community involvement and includes a public participation tool, which helps the user find approaches to public involvement that meet selected criteria.

Superfund Community Involvement Toolkit

U.S. EPA

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/tools/index.htm>

This resource is a practical tool for conducting successful community involvement activities. While it is specifically designed for the Superfund process, it provides tools relevant to all communities with a clean up site. Some tools listed include: community involvement plans, community visioning, community groups, and redevelopment planning. There are 47 separate resources listed in this toolkit.

Tools for Public Involvement

U.S. EPA

<http://www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/involvework.htm>

This Web site provides a list of manuals and tools for planning and conducting effective public involvement activities. This list provides several resources not listed in this report that would provide useful information for community involvement.

Private Institutions and Organizations

Community Involvement in Brownfield Redevelopment

Northeast-Midwest Institute

www.nemw.org/CommunityInvolve.pdf

This report describes components of effective citizen participation and describes its benefits for both communities and developers. This report specifically identifies questions for working with the community, factors in shaping community strategies, communication mechanisms, questions frequently asked by community members, and community involvement through each phase of redevelopment.

The Grassroot's Guide to Abandoned Mine Cleanup

Trout Unlimited

<http://www.tu.org/site/apps/lk/content2.aspx?c=7dJEKTNuFmG&b=478363>

By telling the story of residents in a mining community, this online resource guides users through a six-step process aimed at identifying mine-related problems, organizing community members, and working to improve water quality and wildlife habitat. This guide serves as a blueprint for others to follow.

Innovative Administrative, Technical, and Public Involvement Approaches to Environmental Restoration at an Inactive Lead-Zinc Mining and Milling Complex near Pecos, New Mexico

Southwest Research and Information Center, Mining Program

<http://src.org/mining/docs/Pecos.html>

This paper summarizes innovative regulatory, technical, and public involvement activities associated with the investigation and remediation of mining and milling waste sites near Pecos, New Mexico. The administrative framework and reclamation technology at the mill and tailings portion of the site is reviewed. The administrative

process includes strong stakeholder involvement initiatives, such as technical assistance and community relations contractors to enhance and focus affected community participation.

University and Academic Organizations

Cleaning Up Abandoned Hardrock Mines in the West: Prospecting for a Better Future

University of Colorado at Boulder, Center of the American West - Patricia Nelson Limerick, Joseph N. Ryan, Timothy R. Brown, T. Allan Comp

<http://www.centerwest.org/publications/pdf/mines.pdf>

This report provides practical information and guidance on abandoned mine land concerns. In addition, it explores the need to form broad, cooperative coalitions of interested parties (broad community involvement). The document also discusses the Pennsylvania Good Samaritan legislation as it relates to mine cleanup and the issues that affect community involvement and cleanup of abandoned mine sites in Western communities.

International Agencies and Organizations

International Association for Public Participation Toolbox

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

<http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/toolbox.pdf>

This guide lists the advantages and disadvantages of using various techniques to share information with the public. It lists common techniques including, but not limited to: fact sheets, newsletters, technical reports, Web sites, and interviews.

International Brownfields Redevelopment: Chapter VI Community Involvement and Institutional Capacity

International Economic Development Council

http://www.iedconline.org/Downloads/BRM_Chapter_6.pdf

This report describes and compares approaches to redeveloping contaminated land in Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany. Chapter VI reviews community involvement, institutional capacity, and potential local strategies for brownfields redevelopment. This chapter includes information on approaches to community involvement, conflict resolution, and how to assess and bring together community strengths and skills for redevelopment.

Lessons Learned on Community Involvement in the Remediation of Orphaned and Abandoned Mines: Case Studies and Analysis

National Orphaned/Abandoned Mines Initiative (NOAMI) (Canada)

www.abandoned-mines.org/ci_e.htm

This report provides three Canadian mine site community involvement case studies, including lessons learned. The document discusses the benefits and barriers to community involvement at contaminated sites in the United States and Canada.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW MATERIALS

The following questions were asked of EPA representatives to help evaluate themes and common challenges at several AML sites. Some of the questions may have been used for interviewing non-EPA stakeholders, but were not circulated among these individuals as a survey nor were all questions asked of each stakeholder. This process included interviewing approximately 36 EPA representatives and three public stakeholders.

Sample Interview Questions for AML Site Representatives

- ◆ When did EPA involvement in the project begin? Community involvement activities?
- ◆ What was EPA's role in the community?
- ◆ What are the issues/concerns surrounding the site?
- ◆ Do you only work on AML sites or do you have experience at other Superfund sites?
- ◆ Do you think there is an inherent difference in AML communities and other Superfund sites? What makes working in a mining community different, if at all?
- ◆ Are there stakeholders involved in the project unique to the mining communities?
- ◆ Are there stakeholders not involved in the process that would be helpful to have in the process?
- ◆ What activities did EPA conduct or participate in?
 - What other community involvement activities have been conducted? Which were successful? Which were not?
- ◆ What was done to create opportunities for the community to provide information to EPA?
- ◆ What were the issues that the community provided input on and what methods were used? How effective were they?
- ◆ Do you feel that community involvement influenced EPA decisions? If yes, how so? If no, why not?
- ◆ What were specific community involvement challenges at this site?
- ◆ How was EPA received in the community initially? How is EPA received now?
- ◆ Are there any active partners in the project? Any community organizations develop around the site?
- ◆ Do you think there is a project champion?
- ◆ Is there any grant money or organization lending support to the project?
- ◆ Did any political representatives become involved in the site?
- ◆ What was your overall impression with the community involvement process? Do you think this is a successful model for community involvement? If so, what was the key to success?
- ◆ Are there plans for redevelopment or revitalization of the area?
- ◆ Are there particular EPA resources/materials that were helpful to you for community involvement? (e.g., Cleanup Manual)