

Mike Horse Messenger

Site Update

January 2013

It's a Team Effort

We appreciate the time the landowners in the area spent this past summer meeting with the UBMC Construction Manager, Shellie Haaland, and their input on safety and timing of cleanup. Another thank you goes out to the Upper Blackfoot Valley Community Council and Lincoln Chamber of Commerce members who were able to meet with Shellie to discuss the potential economic impacts to the Lincoln community. The discussion was very positive, focusing on the contracting process, training opportunities for Lincoln residents in order to facilitate employment during the cleanup, and resources in the Lincoln area available to contractors. Lewis & Clark County is pursuing a federal grant to provide training (see Training Opportunities on page 2). Thank you to everyone giving us the opportunity to implement the restoration of the Blackfoot River. Your input and cooperation are sincerely welcomed and valued.

In Remembrance

A special good-bye to Linda Bordeleau who passed away in December. She and her husband Denis are the project's closest downstream neighbors. The project will miss her sharp eye and her willingness to provide solutions to every problem. I will miss her friendship and fabulous baking. – SH

Recent Developments

Section 35/Floodplain Investigations Complete

Design level investigations were completed in December 2012 within the Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex (UBMC) at the Section 35 repository site and in the Beartrap Creek and Blackfoot River floodplains near the Mike Horse dam. The purpose of these investigations was to collect information crucial to designing a protective repository.

A series of test pits and drill holes were dug at Section 35, allowing for identification of the soil and bedrock layers within the repository, and to monitor seasonal changes in groundwater. Piezometers (mini wells) were installed in several test pits and in all drill holes. These are being monitored to understand the groundwater within the repository location.

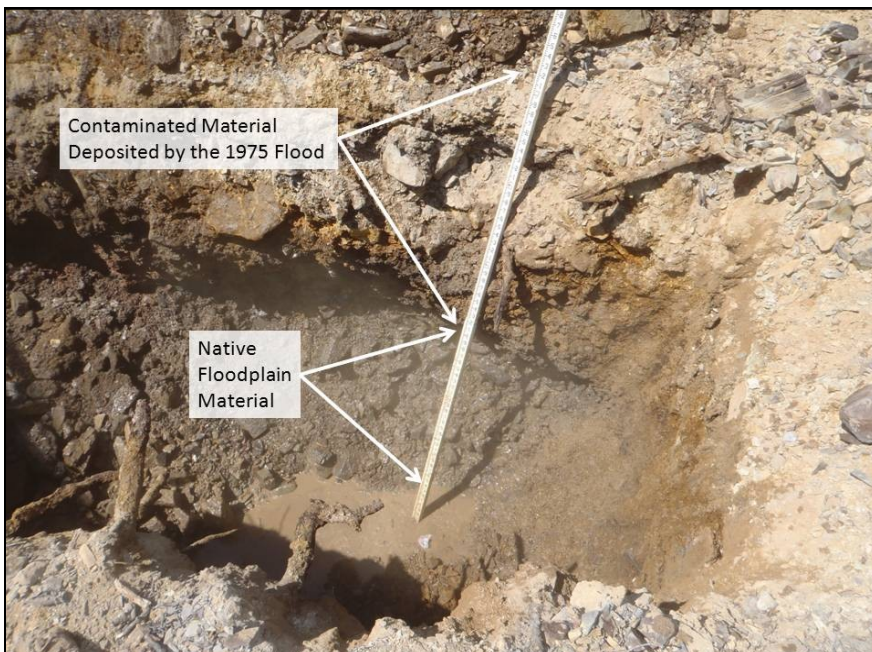
There are also 22 transducers (electronic monitoring devices) installed in a subset of the piezometers that will read the water level every 4 hours throughout the spring. That data will be used to confirm the site conditions and finalize the design of the repository.

The physical properties of samples from soils and bedrock layers at Section 35 are being tested to determine how the site will react under different design options.

Samples are also being tested for properties associated with supporting vegetation to determine how they can be used in reclamation of the UBMC mining area and what supplements (fertilizer, compost) will be necessary.

A series of test pits and piezometers were installed in the floodplain of the Blackfoot River below the Mike Horse dam to enable better understanding of the impacts from the dam breach in 1975. The investigation within the river floodplain collected information to determine mine waste removal depths, estimate volumes and types of materials that will be moved to the repository (rocky, sandy, chemically reactive or stable, etc.), how much and what kind of borrow will be needed for reclamation and restoration, and to provide data to assist in restoration design of the river. The information and data gathered from investigations at both areas are necessary to design a stable and protective repository. This information will also help create an effective, functional restoration plan for the river.

One of the eighty test pits sampled in the floodplain. There were also 53 soil borings in the wetland and 7 drill holes in the floodplain. The data will be used to identify contaminated material, calculate the volume of material to be removed, and determine how to best place the material in the repository to ensure it will be isolated from air and water.



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Future Use Restrictions

As we move closer to construction in 2013, the agencies are committed to communicating to the public any access restrictions within the UBMC, including the Section 35 repository area. We understand that people hunt and recreate in these areas and because of this, we hope to minimize disruptions as much as possible. The construction seasons are expected to begin in June or July, depending on the weather conditions. While construction will generally progress through bow season and access restrictions will occur during that time, operations should be winding down during rifle season. Prior to construction, the agencies will publish a notice in the Great Falls Tribune, Helena Independent Record, and Blackfoot Valley Dispatch to notify the public of travel restrictions and closures necessary for safety. We appreciate everyone's understanding that the restrictions are for the safety of the public and the workers at the site. Your cooperation with all posted restrictions is critical to the success of the project. We look forward to working with the hunting and recreating community to get the cleanup done as quickly as possible. Upon completion of the project, the ultimate result will be enhanced hunting and recreational activities for everyone to enjoy.

For More Information

For additional information on the schedule of the project, please contact Shellie Haaland at (406) 431-1401.

What's Next

Data Summary Reports from the Section 35 and floodplain investigations will be finalized over the winter. The reports will be available on the DEQ's UBMC website: <http://deq.mt.gov/StateSuperfund/UBMC/default.mcpX>. As the reports are being written this winter, the design process will begin. We estimate the construction work for preparing the repository will be advertised for bid by DEQ this summer on the following website: <http://svc.mt.gov/gsd/OneStop/SolicitationDefault.aspx> (see screen shot at right). The target start date for



The screenshot shows the Montana OneStop Vendor Information website. The header includes the Montana logo and navigation tabs: OneStop Home, Contact Us, Doing Business with the State, Forms & Documents, Laws & Rules, Solicitations, Public Meetings, Contract Awards, and State Contracts. The main content area is titled "OneStop Vendor Information: Solicitations" and features two dropdown menus for selecting a solicitation by quote group or agency, each with a "GO!" button. To the right, there are "Additional Solicitation Links" including Tribal Government, ARRA Funded, Solicitation Overview, Building Construction Projects, Highway Construction Projects, FWP Construction Projects, and NRDP/Milltown Construction Projects. The footer contains links for Privacy & Security, Accessibility, Contact, and Search, along with the mt.gov logo.

initiating construction of the repository is late summer/early fall 2013, with wastes to be hauled from the dam and mining area to the repository beginning in 2014.

Agency Coordination

The DEQ, DOJ/NRDP and USFS are coordinating the removal of the Mike Horse Dam and the remediation and restoration of the Blackfoot River.

Training Opportunities

Work beginning in 2014 at the UBMC will require 40-hour HAZWOPER training with a current 8-hour HAZWOPER refresher, if applicable. Several potential training opportunities exist that may help people compete for jobs. Check out <http://www.safetyfestmt.com/> for free Department of Labor & Industry (DLI) sponsored training. Online training is available at <http://www.oshacampus.com/hazwoper-training>. There are also several privately run courses such as those found at <http://www.safetyandhealthservices.com/>. Lewis & Clark County is teaming up with other counties economic development organizations, DLI, and DEQ to apply for a federal grant to secure funds for workforce development and training opportunities. If successful, this may provide additional low-cost or no-cost options for people interested in training to work on solid or hazardous waste sites.