



STATE OF IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

1410 North Hilton • Boise, Idaho 83706 • (208) 373-0502

C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor
Curt Fransen, Director

March 28, 2012

Mr. Ken Marcy
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
12928 SW 276th Street
Vashon, WA 98070

RE: Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment Report for the American Eagle Mine and Mill Site,
Idaho County, Idaho.

Dear Mr. Marcy:

Attached is an Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment (APA) for the American Eagle Mine and Mill site near Elk City, Idaho. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) made several attempts to request access from the landowner of the American Eagle Mine and Mill site, but permission was never granted.

The American Eagle Mine and Mill site was investigated by the Idaho Geological Survey (IGS) on May 31, 1999. The IGS report contained no information indicating any environmental concerns were observed or documented. This would indicate no potential releases of heavy metals by airborne, surface water or ground water pathways existed which would cause any human health risks or ecological health risks. Additionally, potential discharges of other deleterious materials, such as petroleum products and ore processing chemicals, would have been investigated. No sediment, soil or water samples were taken; signifying no areas of concern existed.

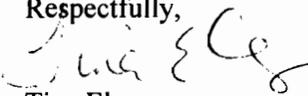
As a result of the above information, **DEQ recommends the property status of the American Eagle Mine and Mill site be designated as No Remedial Action Planned (NRAP).**

A link to DEQ's American Eagle Mine and Mill site APA can also be found on DEQ's Mining Preliminary Assessment Web page at:

<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/waste-mgmt-remediation/remediation-activities/mining-preliminary-assessments.aspx>

If you have any questions about this site, the report, or DEQ's recommendations, please do not hesitate to call me at (208) 373-0563.

Respectfully,


Tina Elayer
Mine Waste Specialist

attachment

cc: Scott Sanner – BLM
American Eagle Mine and Mill File

ABBREVIATED PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

This is an Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment (APA) for the American Eagle Mine and Mill site near Elk City, Idaho. This document provides the rationale for the determination of No Remedial Action Planned (NRAP) and that no additional analysis or site investigation is necessary for the American Eagle Mine and Mill site. The information to produce this document was taken from the 2003 Idaho Geological Survey report. A map generated during desktop research is attached.

Preparer: Daniel D. Stewart **Date:** 3/19/12
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
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Grangeville, ID 83530
(208) 983-0808
daniel.stewart@deq.idaho.gov

Site Name: American Eagle Mine and Mill

Previous Names (aka): American Eagle 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11; Surprise; Pansy; Fish Hawk Group

Site Owner: Katherine Russell

Address: 1138 Golf Club Drive
Laughlin, NV 89029

Site Location: From IGS 2003:
Access is via USFS road 1182 northeast up Siegel Creek 2 miles from the junction with County Road 222. The mine and mill are located 0.1 miles northeast of the confluence of Siegel Creek and Little Siegel Creek.

Township 28 North, Range 9 East, Sections 4, 5, 8, 9

Latitude: 45.789°N **Longitude:** -115.35573°W

Describe the release (or potential release) and its probable nature:

DEQ was unable to access the American Eagle Mine and Mill site property after various attempts to contact the property owner were unsuccessful.

The American Eagle Mine and Mill site was investigated by IGS on May 31, 1999. The IGS report contained no information indicating any environmental concerns were observed or documented. This would indicate no potential releases of heavy metals by airborne, surface water or ground water pathways existed which would cause any human health risks or ecological health risks. Additionally, potential discharges of other deleterious materials, such as petroleum products and ore processing chemicals would have been investigated. No sediment, soil or water samples were taken; signifying no areas of concern existed.

Part 1 - Superfund Eligibility Evaluation

If all answers are “no” go on to Part 2, otherwise proceed to Part 3.

	YES	NO
1. Is the site currently in CERCLIS or an “alias” of another site?		x
2. Is the site being addressed by some other remedial program (Federal, State, or Tribal)?		x
3. Are the hazardous substances that may be released from the site regulated under a statutory exclusion (e.g., petroleum, natural gas, natural gas liquids, synthetic gas usable for fuel, normal application of fertilizer, release located in a workplace, naturally occurring, or regulated by the NRC, UMTRCA, or OSHA)?		x
4. Are the hazardous substances that may be released from the site excluded by policy considerations (i.e., deferred to RCRA corrective action)?		x
5. Is there sufficient documentation to demonstrate that there is no potential for a release that constitutes risk to human or ecological receptors? <i>(e.g., comprehensive remedial investigation equivalent data showing no release above ARARs, completed removal action, documentation showing that no hazardous substance releases have occurred, or an EPA approved risk assessment completed)?</i>	x	

Please explain all “yes” answer(s):

A site inspection by IGS involving direct observations confirmed that contaminants of concern including hazardous materials and petroleum products were not reported in concentrations that present a threat to human health or the environment. No contaminants or hazardous substances remain on the site. No surface water, ground water or airborne pathways were detected. No homes or cabins exist on the claim.

Part 2 - Initial Site Evaluation

For Part 2, if information is not available to make a “yes” or “no” response, further investigation may be needed. In these cases, determine whether an APA is appropriate. Exhibit 1 parallels the questions in Part 2. Use Exhibit 1 to make decisions in Part 3.

If the answer is “no” to any of questions 1, 2, or 3, proceed directly to Part 3.	YES	NO
1. Does the site have a release or a potential to release?		x
2. Does the site have uncontained sources containing CERCLA eligible substances?		x
3. Does the site have documented on-site, adjacent, or nearby targets?		x

If the answers to questions 1, 2, and 3 above were all “yes” then answer the questions below before proceeding to Part 3.	YES	NO
4. Does documentation indicate that a target (e.g., drinking water wells, drinking surface water intakes, etc.) has been exposed to a hazardous substance released from the site?		
5. Is there an apparent release at the site with no documentation of exposed targets, but there are targets on site or immediately adjacent to the site?		
6. Is there an apparent release and no documented on-site targets or targets immediately adjacent to the site, but there are nearby targets (e.g., targets within one mile)?		
7. Is there no indication of a hazardous substance release, and there are uncontained sources containing CERCLA hazardous substances, but there is a potential to release with targets present on site or in proximity to the site?		

Notes:

The IGS report stated the American Eagle Mine had abundant scrap metal around the mill building. No tailings were found below the mill. The disturbed area covers about one acre. It is unlikely any human health risks or ecological health risks are associated with this mine site. No surface water, ground water or airborne pathways were reported by IGS. No homes or cabins exist on the claim.

During the site assessment, DEQ used references from several different documents including U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps, county tax rolls, and historical reports that have spelled numerous claim names, town sites, and/or geographic features differently from one and another. DEQ’s use of the different spellings is to remain in context with the reference used for each given section of text or written in this report.

Exhibit 1 – Site Assessment Decision Guidelines for a Site

Exhibit 1 identifies different types of site information and provides some possible recommendations for further site assessment activities based on that information. The assessor should use Exhibit 1 in determining the need for further action at the site, based on the answers to the questions in Part 2. Please use your professional judgment when evaluating a site. Your judgment may be different from the general recommendations for a site given below.

Suspected/Documented Site Conditions		APA	Full PA	PA/SI	SI
1. Releases or potential to release are not documented at the site. YES		Yes			
2. Uncontained sources with CERCLA-eligible substances have not been documented as being present on the site. (i.e., they do exist at site) YES		Yes			
3. On-site, adjacent, or nearby receptors are not present. YES		Yes			
4. There is no documentation or observations made leading to the conclusion that a sensitive receptor is present or may have been exposed (e.g., drinking water system user inside four mile TDL). YES	Option 1: APA	Yes			
5. There is documentation that a sensitive receptor has been exposed to a hazardous substance released from the site. NO	Option 2: Full PA or PA/SI	No			
6. There is an apparent release at the site with no documentation of targets, but there are targets on site or immediately adjacent to the site. NO	Option 1: APA SI	No			
	Option 2: PA/SI	No			
7. There is an apparent release and no documented on-site targets and no documented targets immediately adjacent to the site, but there are nearby targets. Nearby targets are those targets that are located within one mile of the site and have a relatively high likelihood of exposure to a hazardous substance migration from the site. NO		Yes			
8. There are: no indications of a hazardous substance release; uncontained sources containing CERCLA hazardous substances; but there is a potential to release with targets present on site or in proximity to the site. NO		Yes			

Part 3 - DEQ Site Assessment Decision

When completing Part 3, use Part 2 and Exhibit 1 to select the appropriate decision. For example, if the answer to question 1 in Part 2 was “no,” then an APA may be performed and the “NRAP” box below should be checked. Additionally, if the answer to question 4 in Part 2 is “yes,” then you have two options (as indicated in Exhibit 1): Option 1 -- conduct an APA and check the “Lower Priority SI” or “Higher Priority SI” box below; or Option 2 -- proceed with a combined PA/SI assessment.

Check the box that applies based on the conclusions of the APA:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Remedial Action Planned (NRAP)	Defer to NRC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Priority SI	Refer to Removal Program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lower Priority SI	Site is being addressed as part of another CERCLIS site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Defer to RCRA Subtitle C	Other:

DEQ Reviewer:

[Handwritten Signature]
 Daniel D. Stewart

[Handwritten Date]
 Date 3/28/12

Please Explain the Rationale for Your Decision:

The 2003 IGS report indicated no areas of concern were found. No homes or cabins exist on the site. No pathways exist relative to human health risks or environmental risks. IGS did not indicate any hazardous or deleterious materials on site. No soil, sediment or water samples were taken indicating no areas of concern existed.

A collapsed adit was noted but IGS could not find the other adit. No safety hazards were reported. The total disturbed area was approximately one acre and had been logged.

As a result of the information contained in this APA, DEQ recommends the property status of the American Eagle Mine and Mill site be designated as No Remedial Action Planned (NRAP).

Notes:

The italicized text below was taken directly from the 2003 IGS report.

Site Description: The site is dominated by the collapsed ten-stamp mill. One of the two adits related to the mine is approximately 150 feet north of the upper level of the mill building. The adit is collapsed and difficult to identify. A large dump is north of the probable adit. The other adit mentioned in Shenon and Reed (1934) was not found. Much of the area has been logged, and this second tunnel may have been obliterated.

Geologic Features: *The American Eagle Mine is in the Middle Proterozoic augen gneiss of Red River (Lewis, 1990, 1993). The quartz vein had an average strike of N. 55° E. and a dip 65°-80° SE. (Shenon and Reed, 1934). Pyrite and galena were the main sulfide minerals (Thomson and Ballard, 1924).*

The following history of the American Eagle Mine and Mill site is from Shenon and Reed (1934):

The deposit was discovered in 1897 by Ed. Brown and Lawrence Painter. In 1898-1899 a 90-foot shaft was sunk in ore by Otto Abling, and in 1900 R. L. Sherman ran a tunnel from a point near the shaft for 345 feet along the vein. This tunnel was in fairly good ore throughout its length. In 1901 the American Eagle Consolidated Mining & Smelting Co. took over the property under the supervision of A. W. Boyd. A mill was completed in January 1903, and during the rest of that year and in 1904 9,200 tons of ore was treated. From 1904 to 1910 a production of 556 tons was reported. The mine was idle in 1919, and that year the Homestake Gold Mining Co. bought the property. This company drove a crosscut tunnel about 1,150 feet long that is known as the mill level. The property was shut down in 1923 and has since [to the early 1930s] been idle. Most of the workings are accessible and in good repair. The total reported production is about \$110,000, most of which came from one ore shoot.

The American Eagle Consolidated Gold Mining Company, Ltd., was incorporated in 1902 and forfeited its corporate charter in 1912. The property was sold in a sheriff's sale to Edward O'Shea and bonded to the Rio Tinto Consolidated Mining & Milling Company, Ltd., which was incorporated in 1912 and forfeited its corporate charter the following year. The owners of the mine appear to have organized themselves as the Fishhawk Mining Company (no corporate information available).

Homestake Gold Mining was incorporated in 1919. The company purchased both the American Eagle Mine and the Homestake Mine south of Orogrande. In 1919, there was a ten-stamp mill on the property that had a capacity of 25 tpd. For the next few years, Homestake apparently concentrated its development efforts on the American Eagle property. By 1924, the mine had two tunnels (1,200 feet and 400 feet), two vertical shafts, and a total of about 6,000 feet of workings. The mill processed 100 tons of ore before the mortar blocks failed. Homestake apparently confined its efforts to assessment work on its unpatented claims after that.

In 1928, the mine was leased to Seattle American Eagle Mines, Inc. (incorporated in 1928). This company apparently did a little prospecting on the property. Seattle American Eagle forfeited its corporate charter in 1931, and Homestake forfeited its charter the following year. According to Shenon and Reed (1934), between 1903 and 1927, the American Eagle produced 9,931 tons of ore. This material yielded 5,223.12 ounces of gold and 1,830 ounces of silver, valued at approximately \$110,000. The property had two ore bodies. The northeast orebody had a 195-foot shaft and three levels totaling over 1,500 feet of workings. The orebody near the mill was opened by a 90-foot shaft and five levels totaling over 2,000 feet of workings.

In 1933, the mine was reopened under the supervision of Stewart Campbell, a former State Mine Inspector (Bennett and others, 1999). Idaho Eagle Mines, Inc. (incorporated in 1934), leased the mine in 1934. The company started rehabilitating the mine and remodeling the mill in October, and the mill started operations in November (IGS Mineral property files). By 1935, a crew of twelve was working at the property and the mill was operating (Bennett and others, 1999). Idaho Eagle forfeited its corporate charter in 1937.

In 1938, the mill was purchased by Dr. A. W. Boyd, who used it to process about 25 tons of ore per day from the Blue Ribbon Mine (Bennett and others, 1999). The Elk Leasing Corporation was incorporated in 1940. By 1943, the company was leasing both the American Eagle and the nearby Blue Ribbon Mine, but later noted the American Eagle was last operated in January 1942. The company changed its name to American Eagle Mines, Inc., in 1945. By 1949, all the workings were caved and the company had decided to liquidate its assets. The equipment was sold by the following April. The company forfeited its corporate charter 1966.

References:

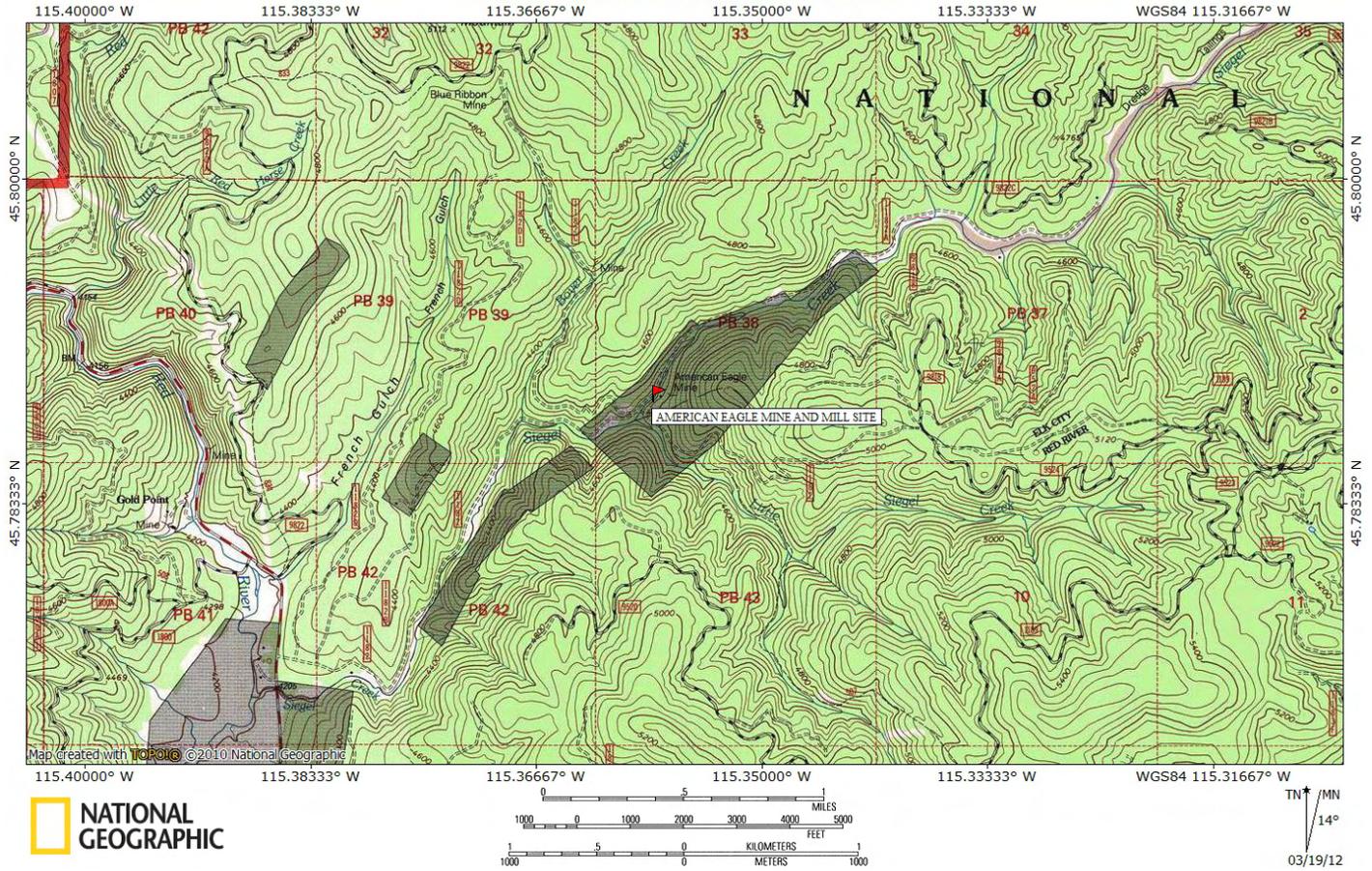
IGS (Idaho Geological Survey). Erdman, Ted, John Kauffman, Earl H. Bennett, and Victoria E. Mitchell. 2003. *Site Inspection Report for the Abandoned and Inactive Mines in Idaho on U.S. Forest Service Lands (Region 1) Nez Perce National Forest. Volume III, Section A: Elk City, Orogrande, Buffalo Hump, and Surrounding Areas, Idaho County, Idaho*. Prepared for the U.S. Forest Service Under Participating Agreement No. FS-01-96-14-2800. Staff Report 03-21.

Shenon, P.J., and J.C. Reed. 1934. *Geology and Ore Deposits of the Elk City, Orogrande, Buffalo Hump, and Tenmile Districts, Idaho County, Idaho*: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 9, 89 p.

Topographic Overview Map of the American Eagle Mine and Mill Site Location. 10/25/2011. 1:24,000. Daniel Stewart; National Geographic Topographic Software.
<http://shop.nationalgeographic.com/ngs/product/topo%21-state-series/topo%21-idaho>

Attachment:

Map



**Topographic Overview Map of the American Eagle Mine and Mill Site Location
(Map Source: National Geographic Topographic Software).**