



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 Ontario Mine, Idaho County, Idaho.

Dear Mr. Marcy:

Attached is an Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment (APA) for the Ontario Mine near Dixie, Idaho. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was unable to access the property after various attempts to contact the property owner were unsuccessful.

The Ontario Mine was investigated by the Idaho Geological Survey (IGS) in 1999. IGS observed the following:

The access road ends at an extensive waste dump (90 feet long, 25 feet wide, and 35 feet thick on the nose, but only 6 feet thick at the adit) and a caved adit. Water (about 1/2 gallon per minute) flows from a pipe extending from the adit. Below the dump is a large, collapsed ore bin and a big pile of quartz. Across from the waste dump and ore bin are the footings for another structure and a sheet-metal chimney. A small drainage flows along the east side of the dump and forms a small wetland below it.

Uphill and east of the main adit are several additional adits. About 40 feet above the main adit is a trench or collapsed adit. The small waste dump indicates no more than 75-100 feet of workings. Above this small adit(?) and slightly to the east is a larger caved adit with a fairly substantial double dump. Mine rails extend out from the adit onto the dump. Between this upper adit and the lower, main adit are several more pits and trenches.

One water sample was collected from the lower, main adit. The sample from the lower adit did not exceed any standards in the dissolved metals screen. In the total recoverable metals screen, cadmium equaled or exceeded all standards, and copper and nickel are within the range of the Aquatic Life Chronic standard.

These results are not remarkable for a highly mineralized area and are typical for this geology.

As a result of the above information, **DEQ is recommending the Ontario Mine site be designated as No Remedial Action Planned (NRAP).**

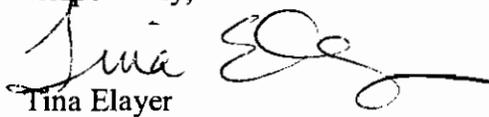
Mr. Ken Marcy
March 28, 2012
Page 2

A link to DEQ's Ontario Mine 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: Clint Hughes – USFS
Scott Sanner – BLM
Ontario Mine File

ABBREVIATED PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

This is an Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment (APA) for the Ontario Mine near Dixie, 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 Ontario Mine. The information to produce this document was taken from the 2003 Idaho Geological Survey (IGS) report. A map generated during desktop research is attached.

Preparer: Tina Elayer **Date:** 3/22/12
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
1410 N. Hilton
Boise, ID 83706
(208) 373-0563
tina.elayer@deq.idaho.gov

Site Name: Ontario Mine

Site Owner: Wesley D. Coppernoll

Address: PO Box 107
Dixie, ID 83525

Site Location: From IGS 2003:

Access from Dixie is on an unnamed road off FS Road 9534 that goes to the Dixie Queen Mine, then on another unnamed road that turns off to the south, parallels Hundred Dollar Gulch, and ends at the Ontario Mine. The property is shown as a patented claim on the Forest Service engineering topographic map of the Dixie quadrangle.

Township 26 North, Range 8 East, Section 33

Latitude: 45.54389°N **Longitude:** -115.46889°W

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

DEQ was unable to access the property after various attempts to contact the property owner were unsuccessful.

The Ontario Mine was investigated by IGS on July 13, 1999. IGS reported the following:

The access road ends at an extensive waste dump (90 feet long, 25 feet wide, and 35 feet thick on the nose, but only 6 feet thick at the adit) and a caved adit. Water (about 1/2 gallon per minute) flows from a pipe extending from the adit. Below the dump is a large, collapsed ore bin and a big pile of quartz. Across from the waste dump and ore bin are the footings for another structure and a sheet-metal chimney. A small drainage flows along the east side of the dump and forms a small wetland below it.

Uphill and east of the main adit are several additional adits. About 40 feet above the main adit is a trench or collapsed adit. The small waste dump indicates no more than 75-100 feet of workings. Above this small adit(?) and slightly to the east is a larger caved adit with a fairly substantial double dump. Mine rails extend out from the adit onto the dump. Between this upper adit and the lower, main adit are several more pits and trenches.

One water sample was collected from the lower, main adit. The sample from the lower adit did not exceed any standards in the dissolved metals screen. In the total recoverable metals screen, cadmium equaled or exceeded all standards, and copper and nickel are within the range of the Aquatic Life Chronic standard.

These results are not remarkable for a highly mineralized area and are typical for this geology.

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.

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:

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.

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			

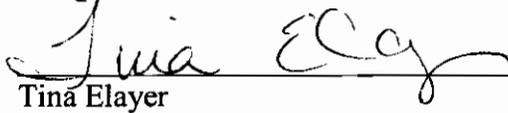
Part 3 - DEQ Site Assessment Decision

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:


Tina Elayer

3/28/12
Date

Please Explain the Rationale for Your Decision:

The 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.

One water sample was collected from the lower, main adit on the mine site. The sample from the lower adit did not exceed any standards in the dissolved metals screen. In the total recoverable metals screen, cadmium equaled or exceeded all standards, and copper and nickel are within the range of the Aquatic Life Chronic standard.

These results are not remarkable for a highly mineralized area and are typical for this geology.

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

Notes:

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

Site Description: The access road ends at an extensive waste dump (90 feet long, 25 feet wide, and 35 feet thick on the nose, but only 6 feet thick at the adit) and a caved

adit. Water (about 1/2 gallon per minute) flows from a pipe extending from the adit. Below the dump is a large, collapsed ore bin and a big pile of quartz. Across from the waste dump and ore bin are the footings for another structure and a sheet-metal chimney. A small drainage flows along the east side of the dump and forms a small wetland below it.

Uphill and east of the main adit are several additional adits. About 40 feet above the main adit is a trench or collapsed adit. The small waste dump indicates no more than 75-100 feet of workings. Above this small adit(?) and slightly to the east is a larger caved adit with a fairly substantial double dump. Mine rails extend out from the adit onto the dump. Between this upper adit and the lower, main adit are several more pits and trenches.

The site covers about 4 acres.

Geologic Features: The Ontario Mine is in Cretaceous biotite granodiorite of the Idaho batholith (Lewis and others, 1990, 1993).

Water Sample: Water sample B7139903 was collected from the lower, main adit.

Sample No.	Location	Specific Conductivity (μ s)	Temperature ($^{\circ}$ F)	pH	Flow (gpm)	Analyzed (Yes/No)
B7139903	Ontario Mine, lower adit	12	Not taken	7.9	0.5	Yes

Sample B7139903 from the lower adit does not exceed any standards in the dissolved metals screen. In the total recoverable metals screen, cadmium equals or exceeds all standards, and copper and nickel are within the range of the Aquatic Life Chronic standard.

History: The Ontario mine was located about 1/2 mile southwest of Dixie, approximately 2,000' above the mouth of Hundred Dollar Gulch. P. S. "Jake" Pritchard and A. W. Brownall located the group in 1893 (or George Blaine in 1885), and they leased it to Thomas and Frank Hye in 1896. The ore shoot was about 3' wide, mostly free milling, and carried much quartz and iron sulfide.

By 1900 George Blaine and others owned the property, and Blaine continued to be associated with it through at least 1911, when he patented the claim. Some ore was milled in 1901 and 1902 by the Dixie Queen's steam-driven, 10-stamp mill, but water in the shaft caused difficulties. Reported ore values ranged from \$12 to \$76 per ton. By 1911 the workings included a 40' shaft and a 300' tunnel that tapped the vein about 100' deep, and it was considered one of the best-developed claims in the district. In 1932 J. F. Millins relocated the Ontario group, and J. B. McDonald owned it in the early 1930s through 1937. In the late 1930s Leonard Rufus Baker and Frank and Ronald Robberson leased the mine, and they hauled

ore to the Kellogg smelter and also to the local Comstock and Hugo mills. They had a hand windlass at the mine at that time.

Structures: *The only structure at the site is the ore bin, which is completely collapsed. The footings for another building and a sheet-metal chimney are near the lower adit. The foundation measures 30 feet long and 10 feet wide, but the purpose of the structure is unknown.*

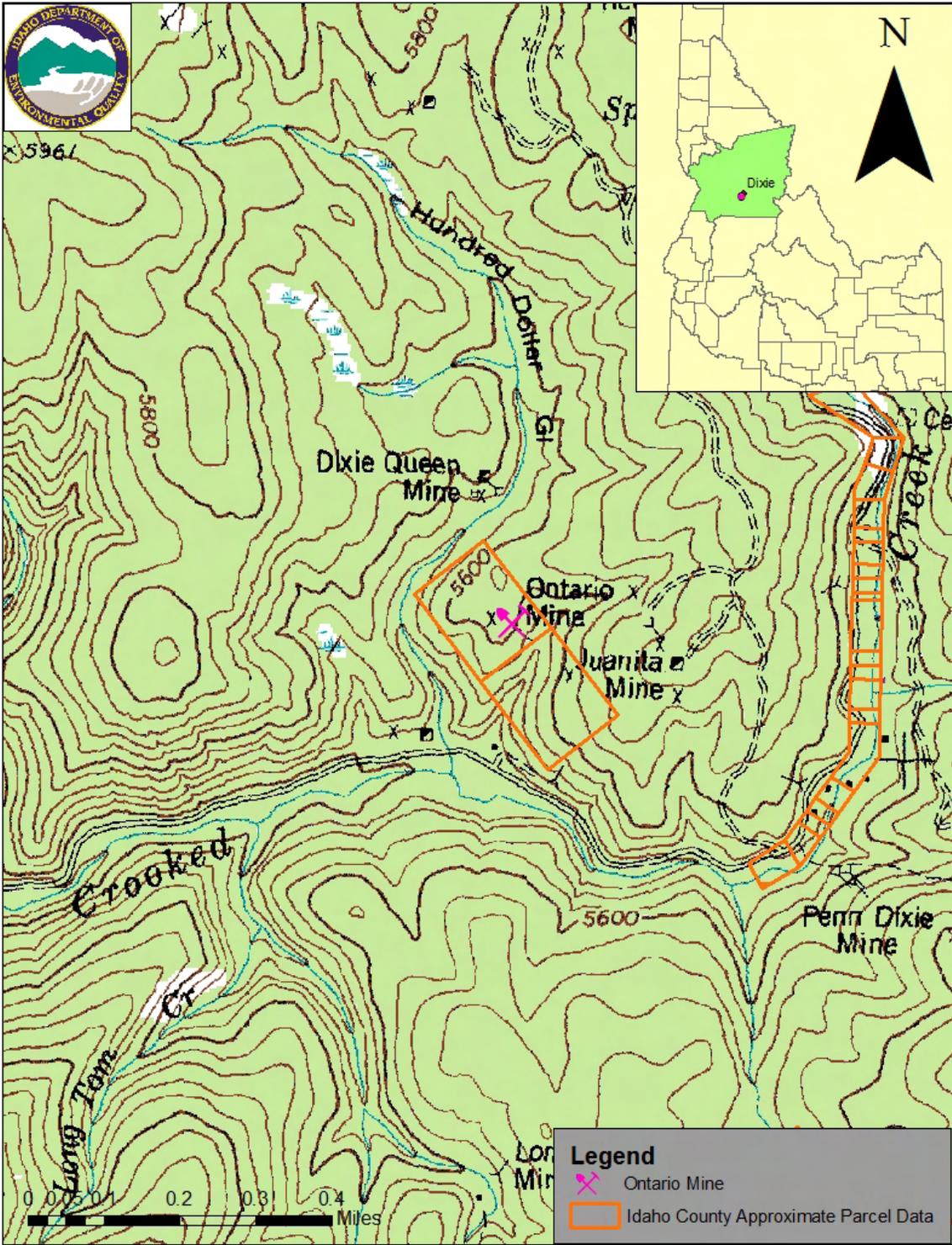
Safety: *There are no safety hazards at the site.*

References:

IGS (Idaho Geological Survey), Bennett, Earl H., Kauffman, John, and Mitchell, Victoria E. 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 II, Dixie Area, Idaho County, Idaho.*

Attachment:

Map



**Location of the Ontario Mine in Idaho County, Idaho
(Map Source: USGS 24k Quads)**