



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 276<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vashon, WA 98070

RE: Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment Report for the Tungstar Mine, Idaho County, Idaho

Dear Mr. Marcy:

Attached is an Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment (APA) for the Tungstar Mine near Elk City, Idaho. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) did not visit this property due to lack of contaminant sources and receptors at this site.

A site inspection was conducted by the Idaho Geological Survey (IGS) in 1999. IGS observed the following:

*The site has one small, collapsed adit and a large exploration cut. The cut, which exposes a large quartz vein, is on an old access road west of and above the adit. It measures about 100 feet long and 30 feet high. The adit is caved and has a collapsed wooden framework around the portal, as well as some pipe and minor scrap metal. The dump, consisting predominantly quartz vein material, is 40 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 15 feet thick. The disturbed area covers 1-2 acres.*

The site inspection conducted by IGS provided direct observations that confirmed sources of contaminants of concern including hazardous materials and petroleum products were not present in quantities that pose a threat to human health or the environment. No homes or cabins are downstream of the mine in the drainage. No drinking water sources or residences exist in close proximity to the mine. IGS did not indicate any hazardous or deleterious materials on site. This site is far from any inhabited area. No soil, sediment, or water samples were taken.

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

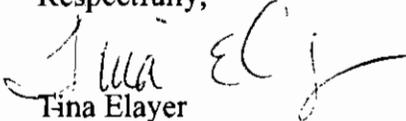
A link to DEQ's Tungstar Mine APA can also be found on DEQ's Mining Preliminary Assessment Web page at:

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

Mr. Ken Marcy  
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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  
Tungstar Mine File

## ABBREVIATED PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

This is an Abbreviated Preliminary Assessment (APA) for the Tungstar Mine 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 Tungstar 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:** Daniel D. Stewart **Date:** 3/21/12  
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
300 W. Main  
Grangeville, ID 83530  
(208) 983-0808  
daniel.stewart@deq.idaho.gov

**Site Name:** Tungstar Mine

**Site Owner:** U.S. Forest Service

**Address:** c/o Mr. Clint Hughes  
Nez Perce National Forest  
104 Airport Road  
Grangeville, ID 83530

**Site Location:** From IGS 2003:

*Access is via State Highway 14 to FS Road 78536, which joins the highway 0.2 mile west of mile marker 33 near the site of Fall Creek. FS Road 78536 goes approximately 1/2 mile northwest. The adit is near the end of this road, either on Forest Service land adjacent to a patented claim or just on the claim.*

Township 29 North, Range 6 East, Section 36

**Latitude:** 45.81408°N **Longitude:** -115.65544°W

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

DEQ did not visit this property due to lack of contaminant sources and receptors at the Tungstar Mine site.

The Tungstar Mine was investigated by IGS on September 17, 1999. IGS reported one small collapsed adit, but apparently dry and an exploration cut. No sediment, soil, or water samples were taken, indicating a dry, innocuous site.

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 had they existed.

**Part 1 - Superfund Eligibility Evaluation**

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

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
1. Is the site currently in CERCLIS or an “alias” of another site?		<b>x</b>
2. Is the site being addressed by some other remedial program (Federal, State, or Tribal)?		<b>x</b>
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)?		<b>x</b>
4. Are the hazardous substances that may be released from the site excluded by policy considerations (i.e., deferred to RCRA corrective action)?		<b>x</b>
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>	<b>x</b>	

**Please explain all “yes” answer(s):**

The site inspection conducted by IGS provided direct observations that confirmed sources of contaminants of concern including hazardous materials and petroleum products were not present in quantities that pose 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 occupied 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.

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

<b>If the answers to questions 1, 2, and 3 above were all “yes” then answer the questions below before proceeding to Part 3.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
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. No occupied homes or cabins exist on the claim and none are present downstream of the mine. A small dump remains and no mention was made of any water exiting the adit.

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.

<b>Suspected/Documented Site Conditions</b>		<b>APA</b>	<b>Full PA</b>	<b>PA/SI</b>	<b>SI</b>
1. Releases or potential to release are not documented at the site. <b>YES</b>		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) <b>YES</b>		Yes			
3. On-site, adjacent, or nearby receptors are not present. <b>YES</b>		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). <b>YES</b>	Option 1: APA	Yes			
5. There is documentation that a sensitive receptor has been exposed to a hazardous substance released from the site. <b>NO</b>	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. <b>NO</b>	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. <b>NO</b>		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. <b>NO</b>		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:**

*Daniel D. Stewart*  
 Daniel D. Stewart

*3/27/12*  
 Date

**Please Explain the Rationale for Your Decision:**

The 2003 IGS report indicated no areas of concern were found. No occupied homes or cabins exist on the site, thus no pathways exist relative to human health risks or environmental risks. No homes or cabins are downstream of the Tungstar Mine in the drainage. No drinking water sources or residences exist in close proximity to the mine. IGS did not indicate any hazardous or deleterious materials on site. This site is far from any inhabited area. No soil, sediment or water samples were taken.

**As a result of the information contained in this APA, DEQ recommends the property status of the Tungstar 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 site has one small, collapsed adit and a large exploration cut. The cut, which exposes a large quartz vein, is on an old access road west of and above the adit. It measures about 100 feet long and 30 feet high. The adit is caved and has a collapsed wooden framework around the portal, as well as some pipe and minor scrap metal. The dump, consisting predominantly quartz vein material, is 40 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 15 feet thick. The disturbed area covers 1-2 acres.*

*Geologic Features: This mine is near the contact between Late Cretaceous biotite*

*granodiorite and the quartzite and schist unit of the Middle or Early Proterozoic Syringa metamorphic sequence. North-south striking and east-west-striking faults intersect near the mine (Lewis and others, 1990, 1993). The mine explored scheelite-bearing quartz veins in the country rock.*

**History:** *The Tungstar Mine produced tungsten in 1951.*

**Structures:** *No structures were found at the site.*

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

**Reference:**

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 C: 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 03-23.

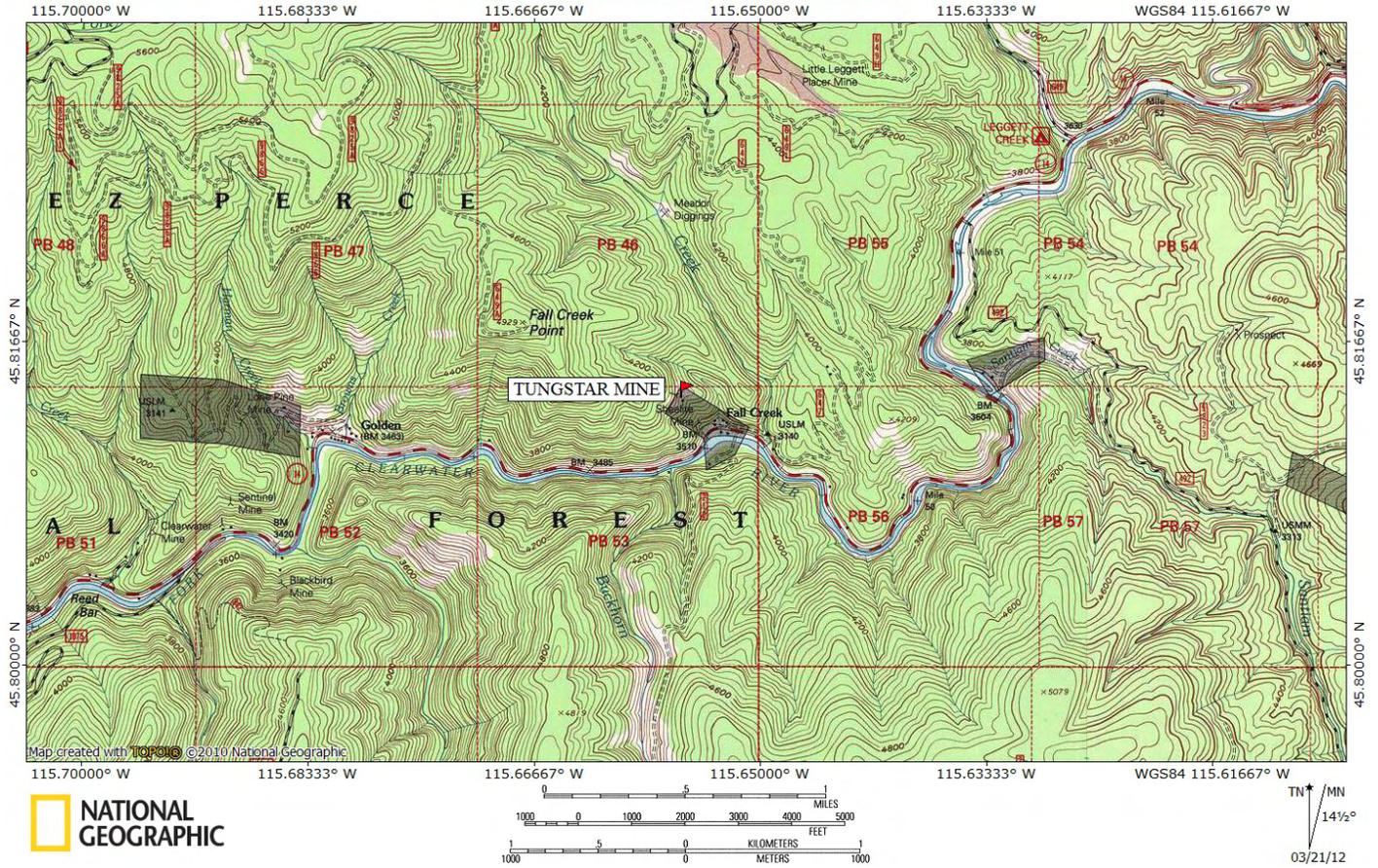
Topographic Overview Map of the Tungstar Mine Location. 10/25/2011. 1:24,000. Daniel Stewart; National Geographic Topographic Software.

<http://shop.nationalgeographic.com/ngs/product/topo%21-state-series/topo%21-idaho>

**Attachment:**

Map

TOPO! map printed on 03/21/12 from "Untitled.tpo"



**Topographic Overview Map of the Tungstar Mine Location  
(Map Source: National Geographic Topographic Software).**