



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Last Trainload of Sediments Leaves the Milltown Reservoir Sediments Superfund Site Today

Milltown --

Today marks another historic milestone for the cleanup and restoration of the Milltown Reservoir Sediments Superfund Site as the last trainload of contaminated sediments leaves the Site -- over three million tons and nearly two years later. The last trainload of contaminated sediments represents another important step towards the project goals of cleaning up the local drinking water supply, restoring the native and sport fishery, and restoring the Clark Fork and Blackfoot Rivers.

Witnessing the event, EPA Acting Region 8 Administrator Carol Rushin noted, "Today is an important day in the long story of the Milltown Project. Moving millions of tons of contaminated sediment can only be done with a superb team and that is what we have on the Milltown project. It's a story of collaboration and cooperation, of restoring rivers, a fishery and the local drinking water supply."

"This is an exciting milestone for the citizens of Montana and the Tribes because it marks the removal of century-old contamination from the rivers," says Richard Oppen, MT DEQ Director. "The DEQ commends EPA and all of the agencies and communities that have worked together to restore economic and recreational opportunities to a formerly contaminated area. This is a great example of the Restoration Economy at work in Montana."

Looking back over the past two years much has been accomplished and literally, millions of tons of contaminated sediments have been removed.

October 2, 2007 was the day the first trainload of contaminated sediments was loaded and sent approximately 90 miles by rail to the Anaconda Smelter Superfund Site for reclamation use. Nearly every day since then, work crews have loaded 45 rail cars, each carrying about 100 tons of sediment. Work progressed as excavators methodically removed the sediments from a series of excavation cells.

By May 2009, sediment had been excavated from all the cells and the only remaining contamination to be removed lay under the rail spur on-site. Therefore, for the last several months, workers have been removing sections of the rail line to allow excavation of those sediments. This meant the train had to be shortened and fewer rail cars could be loaded at a time. The schedule continued with forty-five loaded train cars leaving the Site each day.

To date, approximately 3200 feet of rail has been removed and now only four rail cars can be loaded at once. Today, the last trainload will leave the Site.

Today's milestone brings the Milltown project one step closer to completion; however, much work remains before the work is finished.

A recent agreement between the State of Montana and Atlantic Richfield Company (and its representatives) calls for removal of an additional 230,000 cubic yards of sediments. These sediments are located in a section of the former Clark Fork River channel and are known as the Sediment Accumulation Area IIIb (SAA-IIIb) sediments. These sediments will not be hauled off-site but will be disposed of in the Tunnel Pond repository located on the south side of the Milltown Superfund Site. This removal should be complete by December 2009.

In addition, the State of Montana is actively implementing its Restoration Plan, including construction of new Clark Fork River channel and side channels, floodplain, and wetlands areas. The Milltown Redevelopment Working Group is collaborating with MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and Missoula County with the goal of eventually turning this Superfund Site into a Montana State Park.

For more information, please visit EPA's Milltown web page:

<http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/sites/mt/milltown>

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