

Fact Sheet

Red Rock Road Cleanup Project

This fact sheet is a follow up to the letter mailed to residents in June 2016 regarding the Red Rock Road Site located near Sutherlin, Oregon. It provides an update on activities that were completed during the last 2 years and a determination that no further action is needed for properties along Red Rock Road.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) approved a risk assessment and feasibility study for the former Red Rock Road railroad line (railbed) cleanup project in 2015, and completed remedy implementation in 2017. Results of the risk assessment and feasibility study are presented in this fact sheet. DEQ has determined, because of several factors, that the majority of the former railbed does not present a risk to public health, and that homes located more than 30 feet from the former railbed meets DEQ cleanup guidelines that are protective of public health. The feasibility study recommended removal of a portion of the former railbed for three properties containing Red Rock Road.



Red Rock Road near Sutherlin

Background

Since 2000, DEQ has been studying the former railbed and working with property owners to determine the risk to public health from arsenic-containing soil in the former railbed. The 17-mile-long railbed was constructed in the 1930s and ran from Sutherlin along Calapooya Creek to the forest lands east of Sutherlin. The railroad line transported logs until 1966. The rails and ties of the original railroad track were removed a few years after the railroad stopped operation.

The former railbed crosses numerous private and public properties as dirt roads, driveways, and walking paths. On some properties, the railbed may have been removed, may be hard to see,

could be obscured by brambles, or may have been covered with pavement or gravel.



Red Rock Road near Nonpareil

Mine tailings from the former Bonanza Mine were used to construct the former railbed. The mined rock on the former railbed has a reddish color; therefore, the former railbed is known as Red Rock Road. The rock from the former railbed contains higher-than-normal concentrations of arsenic. The Bonanza Mine was a mercury mine; however, most of the mercury was removed from the ore during processing. The residual concentrations of mercury that remained in the mine tailings are below DEQ's health-based standards. Arsenic is a secondary element common in the type of ore at Bonanza Mine. Arsenic was not removed from the ore during processing and the residual concentrations of arsenic became the focus of the risk assessment.

Interim Cleanup Action

As part of its cleanup process, DEQ must determine the risk to public health before conducting a final cleanup. Based on results of a preliminary assessment in 2009, DEQ conducted an interim cleanup action, which involved capping a few portions of the former railbed.



Red Rock Road capped with gravel in Sutherlin

Risk Assessment Results

The final risk assessment involved more detailed study, including an arsenic bioavailability study, which provided a better assessment of risk to



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public health from the railbed. DEQ determined that under current conditions, coming into direct contact with the former railbed, such as by walking or driving, meets DEQ's cleanup guidelines that are protective of public health. The 2015 risk assessment showed that the results of the 2009 preliminary assessment overstated the risk on most of the properties along Red Rock Road that were included in the 2009 interim cleanup action. However, there is one exception: the former railbed may pose an unacceptable risk if there is frequent contact with railbed soils over decades, such as by living in a home within 30 feet of the former railbed.

Feasibility Study Results

A feasibility study to evaluate a range of remedial actions was completed. The feasibility study recommended the removal of the former railbed from three properties to meet DEQ cleanup guidelines that are protective of public health.

Remedial Actions

DEQ directed the excavation of portions of Red Rock Road on three properties that were determined to have unacceptable risk or a high potential for future unacceptable risk. Remedial actions on those three properties was completed in 2016-2017.



Stockpiling Red Rock Road soils for landfill disposal

DEQ prepared a staff report in 2018 that summarizes the findings from past studies and remedial actions showing that all properties along Red Rock Road meet DEQ cleanup guidelines. This report is available on the DEQ website. DEQ has determined that no further remedial action is needed for properties along Red Rock Road.

Public Comment

DEQ is soliciting comments and will hold a 30-day public comment period from December 1 through 30, 2018, to solicit public input on the proposed No Further Action determination for Red Rock Road. If there is sufficient interest

from the community, DEQ will hold a public meeting. After the public's questions and concerns have been addressed, DEQ will issue a final decision for properties along Red Rock Road.

Comments should be sent to Bryn Thoms at thoms.bryn@deq.state.or.us or by mail to 165 East 7th Ave, Suite 100, Eugene, OR 97401. After DEQ has addressed comments, it will provide a No Further Action Letter to the property owners and update the Environmental Cleanup Site Inventory (ECSI).

For More Information

More detailed information can be found on DEQ's website at: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/env-cleanup/Pages/ecsi.aspx>. Type the URL into your web browser, click "Search complete ECSI database" and enter number 1833 in the box titled "Site ID".

Alternative Formats

Alternative formats of this fact sheet can be made available. For more information, call 503-229-5696, Portland, or call toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696. Hearing-impaired persons may call 711.