

# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



## Upper Columbia River, Northern Washington

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10

January 2007

## Fish sampling results nearly complete

EPA expects to release our fish-tissue data evaluation by early spring 2007. We are currently working with our tribal, state, and federal partners to evaluate the data, which will be used to help develop a full risk assessment over the next several years.

In fall 2005, with help from our federal partners, local tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, EPA collected about 1,000 fish between the Grand Coulee Dam and the Canadian border, including walleye, rainbow trout, whitefish, large scale sucker, and burbot. The fish were tested for environmental contaminants such as metals (including lead and mercury), dioxins/furans, and PCBs.

EPA anticipated that the results would be ready to release before the end of 2006, but data analysis and evaluation took longer than expected.

### Sediment and beach-screening reports available now

The following reports summarize data from EPA's first phase of sediment sampling. We will likely collect additional sediment samples during future phases of the RI/FS investigation.

*Phase 1 Sediment Sampling Report* — This report describes EPA's analysis of 400 sediment samples collected from the Upper Columbia River in 2005. It is the most comprehensive sediment study conducted for the area.

*Screening-Level Risk Assessment for Recreational Use at Beaches* — EPA analyzed sediment samples from fifteen Upper Columbia River beaches to evaluate possible health risks from using the beaches for limited recreation, such as camping and picnicking. The study concluded the beaches are safe to use for recreational activities.

Both reports are available at all Information Repository locations (*see back page*), or you can download them from EPA's website at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/UpperC>.

### Teck Cominco has taken over RI/FS work

Under the Settlement Agreement between EPA and Teck Cominco that was signed last summer, Teck Cominco is required to take over responsibility for completing a portion of the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) with EPA oversight and approval.

The company drafted a plan for the next phases of work that is currently under EPA review. The plan must identify additional work needed to support future cleanup decisions by EPA and to propose a schedule for completing sampling and analysis. EPA must review and approve the plan to make sure it meets these objectives.

During the RI/FS, EPA will oversee all work, including validating and interpreting data collected by Teck Cominco and their technical consultants.

EPA, not Teck Cominco, will be responsible for completing a human health risk assessment for the site. We will be working closely with local tribes and other partners to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of potential risks to human health, such as eating fish, food gathering, cultural practices, extended beach use, and wind-blown dust.

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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*Upper Columbia River  
Fish Sampling Results  
Northern Washington  
January 2007*

### Funding for technical assistance

As part of the Settlement Agreement, Teck Cominco will provide limited funding (up to \$50,000) for a community group to hire independent advisors to explain technical aspects of site reports and proposals for site cleanup. Funding can only be provided to one group, so groups are encouraged to work together.

EPA has received a "Letter of Intent" from Citizens for a Clean Columbia to apply for technical assistance funding for this site. If you would like to work with Citizens for a Clean Columbia, or submit a joint application, contact **Hilary Ohm**, Chairperson, Citizens for a Clean Columbia, P.O. Box 172, Northport, WA 99157, (509) 685-0933.

General questions should be directed to **Sally Hanft**, Technical Assistance Coordinator, U.S. EPA, 1200 Sixth Avenue, ETPA-086, Seattle, WA 98101, (206) 553-1207 or (800) 424-4372, extension 1207.

### Questions?

Please contact us if you have questions or would like more information:

**Sally Thomas**, Project Manager –  
(206) 553-2102; [thomas.sally@epa.gov](mailto:thomas.sally@epa.gov)

**Kevin Rochlin**, Project Manager –  
(206) 553-2106; [rochlin.kevin@epa.gov](mailto:rochlin.kevin@epa.gov)

**Jeanne O'Dell**, Community Involvement Coordinator –  
(206) 553-6919; [odell.jeanne@epa.gov](mailto:odell.jeanne@epa.gov)

Or call toll-free at (800) 424-4372

### On the Internet

Visit: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/UpperC>

### Information Repositories

Visit one of the Information Repositories listed below to find information about EPA's work on the Upper Columbia River, including full copies of technical documents. Be sure to call ahead for hours.

**Northport:** Northport Town Hall, 315 Summit St., (509) 732-4450

**Colville:** Colville Public Library, 195 S. Oak St., (509) 684-6620

**Inchelium:** Inchelium Tribal Resource Center, 12 Community Loop, (509) 634-2791

**Nespelem:** Colville Confederated Tribes Office of

Environmental Trust, Building #2, (509) 634-2413

**Grand Coulee:** Grand Coulee Library, 225 Federal St., (509) 633-0972

**Wellpinit:** Spokane Tribe Department of Natural Resources, 6290 B Ford-Wellpinit Road, (509) 258-7709, extension 13

**Spokane:** Spokane Library, 906 W. Main, (509) 444-5336, extension 5404



*Alternative formats are available. For reasonable accommodation, please call Jeanne O'Dell. TTY users, please call the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.*