

Upper Columbia River Beach Sampling

Spring 2011



April 2011

In late April and early May, beach sediment samples will be collected from 26 beaches along the Upper Columbia River (UCR). This is part of a larger, multi-year study of contamination along the Upper Columbia to determine the potential risks to people and the environment.

When will the sampling occur?

Sampling will take place during daylight hours between April 20 and May 5, 2011.

How were the sampling locations chosen?

The beaches were identified by the community during public meetings and by staff from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Park Service, Washington State Department of Ecology, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

How many samples will be taken?

It depends on the size of the beach. At most of the beaches, field crews will collect sediment samples at 60 different locations. The 60 samples will be mixed together into 5 batches representing average conditions for that beach. However, a few of the beaches are quite small and on those smaller beaches, 35 samples will be collected and mixed together into 5 batches.

Who is doing the sampling?

Contractors working on behalf of Teck American Incorporated (Teck) will collect the samples with oversight by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Who else will be present during the sampling?

Each field crew will be accompanied by cultural resource professionals from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, and/or the National Park Service.

The cultural resource professionals will help ensure protection of cultural or historic resources that may be uncovered during the sampling.

What are the samples being tested for?

The sediment samples will be tested for heavy metals including arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury and zinc and other contaminants.

What will be done with the results?

The test results will help EPA evaluate whether or not the sediments pose unacceptable risks to people recreating and working on the beaches. We hope to share the results with everyone on the Upper Columbia River email list or paper mailing list, and post them on the internet before the end of the year.

How can I get on the UCR email list?

To be added to EPA's email list, please send a request to Kay Morrison at morrison.kay@epa.gov

Previous Sampling

In 2005, EPA collected and analyzed sediment from 15 Upper Columbia River beaches. At that time, EPA determined that the beaches were safe for recreational use but that additional sampling was needed. EPA has not yet determined the potential risk to tribal and subsistence resource users.

The "Phase 2" sampling plan includes a total of 33 beaches. Teck attempted to sample the "Phase 2" beaches in 2009 and 2010, but high water conditions prevented access to many of the beaches and only seven of them have been sampled so far. Thanks to a low draw-down of the reservoir this year, there will be excellent access to the remaining 26 beaches.

Beaches to be sampled this Spring

"Swimming Hole" (Northport) Flat Creek Bossburg Flat Evans Campground / Beach Kamloops Island Welty Bay Kettle Falls Marina Lyons Island	Colville River Colville Flats Bradbury Beach AA Campground Nez Perce Creek Hunters Enterprise Wilmont Creek Naborlee	Mitchell Point2 McGuire's Seven Bays Mouth of Hawk Creek Whitestone Campground Jones Bay Swawilla Basin Spring Canyon Crescent Bay
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You can see maps with these beaches in the **2009 Quality Assurance Project Plan for the Beach Sediment Study** on the EPA website at <http://go.usa.gov/blw>

Where can I learn more?

Visit EPA's project web site:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/upperc>

Visit Teck's project web site: www.ucr-rifs.com

Information Repositories:

Please 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 Rd.
 (509) 626-4425

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

Upper Columbia River Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is studying hazardous waste contamination in the Columbia River from the U.S./Canada border to the Grand Coulee Dam and surrounding upland areas. The study is called a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. Under the June 2006 Settlement Agreement between EPA and Teck, Teck is required to complete a portion of the RI/FS with EPA oversight and approval.

Teck is responsible for conducting the ecological risk assessment for the site. EPA is responsible for completing the human health risk assessment for the site. EPA is working 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.

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

Who can I call if I have questions?

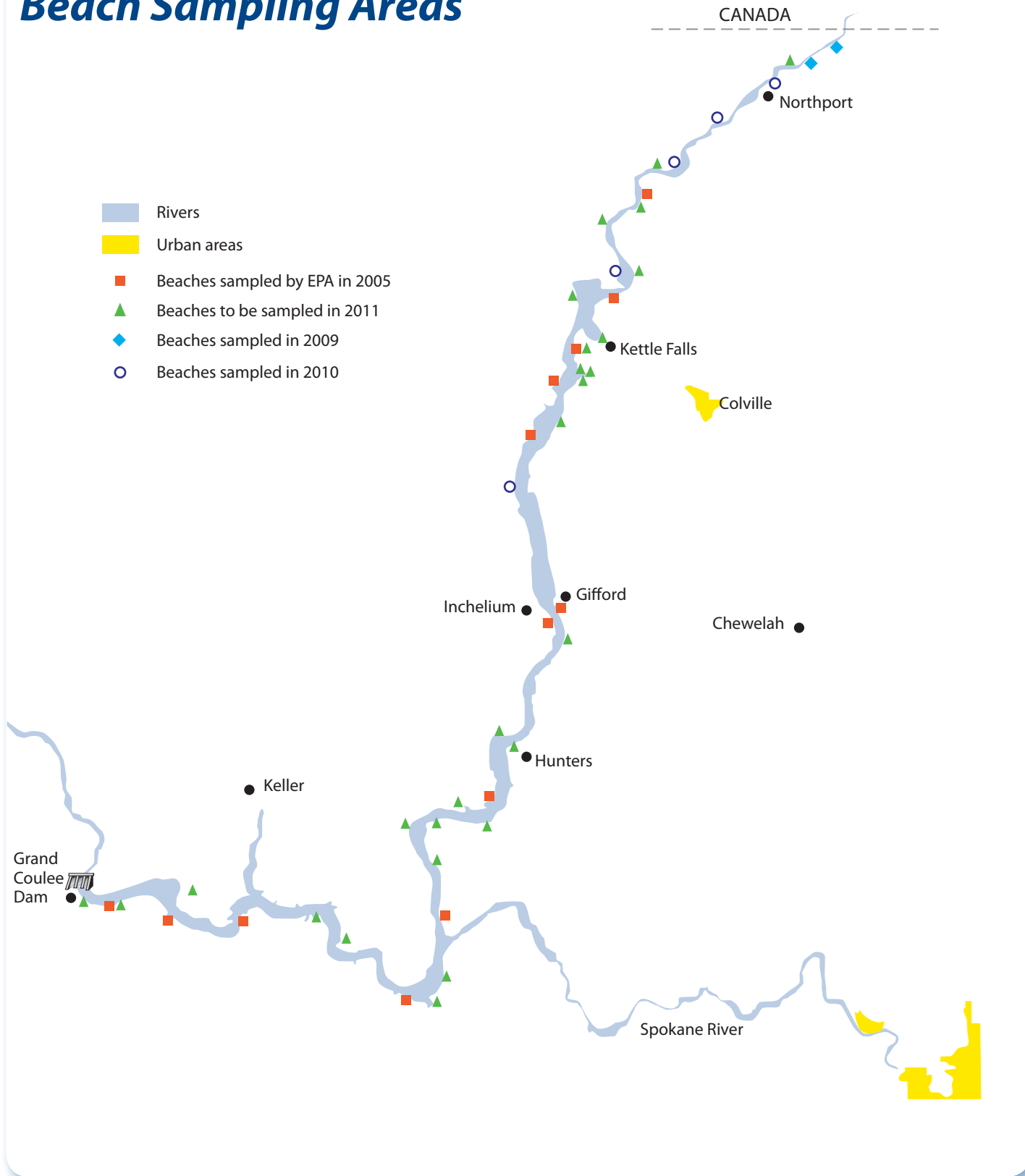
Helen Bottcher, Project Manager (206) 553-6069;
bottcher.helen@epa.gov

Monica Tonel, Project Manager (206) 553-0323;
tonel.monica@epa.gov

Kay Morrison, Community Involvement Coordinator (206) 553-8321
morrison.kay@epa.gov

Toll-free number for all contacts: (1-800) 424-4372

Beach Sampling Areas



If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact Kay Morrison. TTY users please call the Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900, ETPA-081
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

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