



Red Devil Mine

December 2017

Red Devil Mine ore processing facility, 1947

This newsletter provides updates on the environmental project at the Red Devil Mine, an abandoned cinnabar mine and mercury production facility on the Kuskokwim River. A link to the complete record of documents for this project, including previous newsletters, is available at <https://www.blm.gov/alaska/red-devil-mine>

Red Devil Mine Investigations Nearing Completion

Informational meetings to be held in early 2018

The BLM continues to work in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, and other State agencies on a feasibility study for clean up of the Red Devil Mine site. A series of informational meetings will be held in early 2018 to update communities on the status of the project. Dates, locations, and times of the meetings will be announced and posted on the BLM website.

Contaminants at the site include mercury, arsenic, and antimony. While the risk to humans and fish from exposure to tailings at the mine site is high enough to require action, the risk due to exposure of sediment in the Kuskokwim River is much less.

When completed, the feasibility study will define multiple alternatives for site-wide action. The site-wide clean-up alternatives will be evaluated for how well human health and the environment are protected and other criteria established by the EPA. The alternatives will then be compared to determine which is most technically feasible.

Once this process is complete, the BLM will develop a Proposed Plan identifying the preferred clean-up alternative. BLM will present the Proposed Plan to tribes and communities in winter 2018-2019 and request comments. Once the BLM has received input from tribes and communities, we will determine what remedial action will be taken and how the site will be monitored in the future.



Collecting a groundwater sample from a monitoring well at Red Devil Mine. BLM Photo

Let's Meet!

The BLM Red Devil Mine project team would like to provide updates on the Red Devil Mine project. To schedule an informational meeting or tribal consultation contact Public Affairs Specialist Maureen Clark at 907-267-1420 or by email, m1clark@blm.gov

How to Stay Informed

If you received this newsletter by regular mail, we will notify you when the Proposed Plan is available for public comment. As in the past, we will contact communities to offer meetings to explain the plan and invite your comments. You may read the plan online and submit comments via the website if you cannot attend a public meeting. In addition, you can find information about Red Devil Mine online at <https://www.blm.gov/alaska/red-devil-mine>

Your comments and suggestions are helpful to BLM! We invite your continued participation as we move toward a long-term remediation plan for the Red Devil Mine site.

HOW TO CONTACT US:

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Red Devil Mine and Regional Aquatic Habitat Assessment on the Kuskokwim

In 2017, the BLM implemented an aquatic habitat assessment program on BLM-managed lands in the Kuskokwim region. This effort is part of a greater statewide implementation in the Bering Sea-Western Interior Land Management planning area. The area consists of 62.2 million acres, of which BLM manages 13.2 million acres.

This area includes portions of the Yukon River, the entire Kuskokwim River drainage, and Unalakleet River. The project will provide the BLM data on the conditions of aquatic habitats in small rivers and streams, including disturbed streams such as Red Devil Creek.

In 2017, BLM staff flew nearly 40 flight hours to sample 19 sites in the region. Two sites were surveyed upstream of the Red Devil Mine to aid in creek reclamation planning following the mine site's remediation in the future. The sample design will allow the BLM to establish the range of regional reference conditions on wadeable streams, which can be used in the development of habitat management objectives, as well as stream reclamation design criteria for rehabilitating mined streams. By resampling a portion of the sites in 5-10 years, the BLM can assess if conditions are changing on the landscape based on permafrost thaw and other factors. This project will result in the sampling of over 50 sites in the region over the next two years.

Additional information about the BLM's Aquatic Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring Program can be found at: <http://aim.landscapetoolbox.org/national-aquatic-monitoring-framework-faqs/>.



*A sampling crew assessing aquatic habitat conditions in the Kuskokwim Basin.
BLM Photo*