Anaconda Smelter and Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area among Superfund sites targeted for immediate attention

EPA announces elevation of 21 sites nationwide

DENVER – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released the list of Superfund sites that Administrator Pruitt has targeted for immediate and intense attention. The 21 sites on the list – from across the United States – are in direct response to the Superfund Task Force Recommendations, issued this summer, calling for this list.

"By elevating these sites we are sending a message that EPA is in fact restoring its Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the agency's mission," **said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.** "Getting toxic land sites cleaned up and revitalized is of the utmost importance to the communities across the country that are affected by these sites. I have charged the Superfund Task Force staff to immediately and intently develop plans for each of these sites to ensure they are thoughtfully addressed with urgency. By getting these sites cleaned up, EPA will continue to focus on ways we can directly improve public health and the environment for people across America."

Two sites in Montana are on the Administrator's Superfund list for emphasis: The Anaconda Smelter and Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area (SBCBA). EPA Region 8 Administrator, Doug Benevento, recently visited SBCBA and Anaconda smelter sites and met with key stakeholders and members of the communities.

"In response to seeing and hearing the issues associated with Superfund first hand, and in recognition of the magnitude and complexity of the issues associated with these sites, EPA has prioritized these sites to move more quickly in the Superfund process to ensure remedies protect human health and the environment," said Doug Benevento.

At SBCBA, EPA has taken steps to accelerate the enforcement negotiations for implementation of the Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit Record of Decision and has set the end of January as a key date for parties to reach an agreement. If an agreement in principle cannot be reached, EPA will issue an order to ensure the remaining work is completed in a timely fashion. This includes additional capping and removal activities and the completion of stormwater controls along upper Silver Bow Creek and Blacktail Creek. An adequacy review for the water treatment plant that will pump and treat water from the Berkeley Pit is also underway. This process will ensure that the plant will have the capacity to pump and treat water at the necessary scale. In addition, EPA will begin further remedial investigations next year to characterize the nature and extent of contamination in the West Side Soils Operable Unit so that cleanup options can be identified, agreed upon, designed and implemented as soon as feasible.

At the Anaconda Smelter site, EPA has directed Atlantic Richfield Co. to complete residential and commercial property sampling and cleanup of lead and arsenic on a rigorous

schedule. One thousand homes have been addressed since 2015, and another 1,000 homes will be addressed over the next three years. EPA will start sampling, and where necessary, cleaning up school grounds for lead and school interiors for lead and arsenic ~~early next year~~beginning this year. EPA and Anaconda-Deer Lodge County are discussing the final plan for institutional control measures that will be put in place to address residual contamination that may be encountered through excavation or redevelopment; raise awareness of potential sources of contamination in the community; and sample interior dust.

In developing this initial list, EPA considered sites that can benefit from Administrator Pruitt's direct engagement and have identifiable actions to protect human health and the environment. These are sites requiring timely resolution of specific issues to expedite cleanup and redevelopment efforts. The list is designed to spur action at sites where opportunities exist to act quickly and comprehensively. The Administrator will receive regular updates on each of these sites.

The list is intended to be dynamic. Sites will move on and off the list as appropriate. At times, there may be more or fewer sites based on where the Administrator's attention and focus is most needed. There is no commitment of additional funding associated with a site's inclusion on the list.

EPA remains dedicated to addressing risks at all Superfund sites, not just those on the list. The Task Force Recommendations are aimed at expediting cleanup at all Superfund sites and Administrator Pruitt has set the expectation that there will be a renewed focus on accelerating work and progress at all Superfund sites across the country.

The Task Force, whose work is ongoing, has five overarching goals:

- Expediting cleanup and remediation;
- Reinvigorating cleanup and reuse efforts by potentially responsible parties;
- Encouraging private investment to facilitate cleanup and reuse;
- Promoting redevelopment and community revitalization; and
- Engaging with partners and stakeholders.

The Task Force will provide the public with regular updates as it makes progress on the Administrator's Emphasis list and other Task Force activities.

The list of sites can be found here.