

Celebrating 10 Years of Returning Superfund Sites to Beneficial Use



REGION 10 Success Story

Bunker Hill: Shoshone County, Idaho



Pictured: Mine tailings at the Bunker Hill site prior to remediation. Source: EPA



Pictured: Reforested mountainside at the Bunker Hill site. Source: EPA

Collaboration between EPA and local communities supported redevelopment at the Bunker Hill Superfund site. The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) awarded the City of Kellogg community group, Panhandle Health District (PHD), a Pilot grant in 2001 that they used to develop and maintain a coordinated, valley-wide approach to cleanup and reuse. This approach, which includes the provision of site investigation data to developers for their environmental due diligence and financing, has allowed for the successful redevelopment of significant portions of the site.

The Bunker Hill Superfund Site was placed on the National Priorities List in 1983. More than a century of mine tailings deposited throughout the valley floor and toxic emissions from smelting activities resulted in widespread metals contamination in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin. The site includes the 21-square mile area known as the Bunker Hill Box, which was EPA's initial area of focus for Superfund cleanup actions.

The City of Kellogg is located in the Bunker Hill Box. In the Bunker Hill Box, EPA has cleaned up more than 3,800 residential properties, demolished 200 contaminated structures, and remediated contaminated soils, gulches and stream channels. EPA also re-vegetated over 200 acres of hillsides that now prevent contaminated soils from moving down into residential areas and surface waters. Cleanup is on-going.

Beginning in 1987, the City of Kellogg began to pursue redevelopment opportunities at cleaned up portions of the site. But the processes for obtaining liability protection for developers were complex and often lengthy. In an effort to facilitate the process, PHD, in partnership with federal and local agencies, created the Institutional Control Program (ICP). The ICP works through existing local administrative structures and programs. Tailored to have the flexibility to meet the needs of the community and the particular challenges of the Bunker Hill site, the ICP succeeded in instilling faith in local lenders to fund redevelopment projects. The Bunker Hill Superfund site is now home to the Silver Mountain Resort, a mixed residential neighborhood and commercial development and 18-hole golf course; the Silver Valley Business Center, which supports industrial and commercial development; and light manufacturing, outdoor recreation, telecommunications, workforce training, environmental remediation businesses.

"We developed here because of the Superfund site. The cooperation and support of the EPA, State of Idaho, and Panhandle Health District were invaluable to getting our project off the ground." - Terry Turnbow of Silver Mountain Resort

"The funding for development was a breeze. The local lenders were very willing, as long as the project was economically viable and within the ICP guidelines." - Ken Shueman, owner of Motel 8 located on the Bunker Hill

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