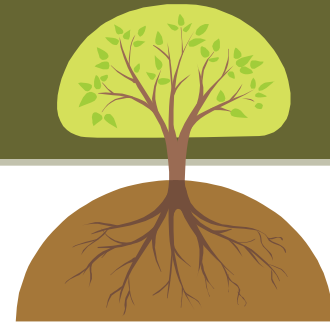


# BROWNFIELDS UPDATE



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## Brownfields Day Is Coming

Due to the popularity of last year's Brownfields day, the Environmental Waste Management Program (EWMP) will be hosting another day of education and entertainment, tentatively set for September 20, 2010.

Events at the brownfields day will include a fun run, and seminars designed to educate people of all technical levels about what the brownfields program is, how the EWMP is using it, and what the community can do to get involved.

The brownfields program is a powerful tool that can be used by the tribal government and tribal members to reclaim rundown buildings and old industrial sites so that they can be put to better uses. Currently, the EWMP has 24 brownfields sites at some level of reclamation. Once reclaimed, these sites will be used for various purposes, all aimed at benefiting the community.

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### Brownfields day 2010 tentative schedule:

6:30 am	Fun Run/Walk
7:30 - 8:30 am	Registration
8:30 am	Keynote Speaker
9:00 am	Session 1 - 1.25 hours
10:15 - 10:30 am	Break
10:30 am	Session 2 - 1.5 hours
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Session 3 - 1 hour
2:00 pm	Session 4 - 1 hour
3:00 - 3:15 pm	Break
3:15 pm	Optional discussion group

## ESAs to be Performed

An Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is a study conducted on a plot of land to determine the extent and nature of contamination on that site. In the first phase of an ESA, the site is examined without any actual environmental sampling of the area. This includes visual inspection of the property as well as investigation of historical documentation on the site. The EWMP currently has several ongoing and upcoming Phase I ESAs.



Section of 1991 Fort Hall 7.5' USGS map.

## New Cleanup and Permitting Standards Proposed

As the EWMP program continues to grow and improve its protection efforts, two new environmental regulations have been proposed. The first is a new soil cleanup standard for contaminated waste sites. The second is a set of permitting regulations for new hazardous and solid waste disposal facilities.

The soil cleanup standard was developed to better deal with current and future soil contamination. The proposed regulation contains a large list of hazardous chemicals and their maximum allowable concentrations in the soil. Should a site be contaminated with any of the chemicals on this list, they would have to be cleaned to at least these levels. Additionally, the proposed regulation provides guidance for setting cleanup levels for chemicals that do not specifically appear in the regulation.

The soil standards were submitted for public comment on June 9<sup>th</sup>. The public comment period will end on July 9<sup>th</sup>, at which point, the comments will be addressed and the new standards will be adopted, adjusted, or abandoned.

The proposed hazardous waste permitting regulations will give the EWMP a robust set of tools to deal with future solid waste and hazardous waste companies that might want to start operations here in the future.

*“A copy of the proposed regulations can be obtained at the legal office in the business center or at the EWMP website.”*



Under the proposed regulations a waste disposal company would have to apply for, and obtain an operating permit before starting operations on the reservation. During the permitting process, the company would need to pay various permitting fees and develop closure and post closure plans to ensure that the facility would not cause lasting pollution in the area. Additionally, the EWMP would solicit public comments and hold public meetings during this time period to ensure that the opinions of community members can be taken into account.

The hazardous waste permitting regulations will be open for public comments between July 9<sup>th</sup> and August 9<sup>th</sup>.

These new standards are a big step forward in the environmental protection and response fields on the reservation. Having these regulations will further enable the tribes to decide their own future.

Both of these standards were developed based on a comparison similar regulations from various local, state and federal authorities. A copy of the proposed regulations can be obtained in the legal office at the business center or at the EWMP website at:

<http://www.sbtribes-ewmp.com/>

## Report a Site to EWMP

The brownfields program relies on public involvement. One of the most important things that community members can do to help the brownfields program succeed is to report sites that are, or may be contaminated.

To report a site that you either know, or suspect is contaminated to the EWMP, visit our website at [www.sbtribes-ewmp.com](http://www.sbtribes-ewmp.com).

Click on the 'report a site' link at the bottom of the page. Fill out the form on the proceeding page

and then click on the 'submit form' button. Please note that the 'address' field is for the address of the contaminated site, not for your home address.

If you do not have access to the internet you can call Zannita Armell at (208) 478-3904.

All names will be kept confidential. It is important however, that we do have your name on record, in case there are any further questions we might have for you.



Contaminated water at a mine site in SE Idaho

## New Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan

In order to develop a more efficient and effective solid waste program, the EWMP is currently compiling a new integrated solid waste management program (WMP). Developing this plan will enable the EWMP to take a thorough, calculated look at the current solid waste program and make improvements where appropriate. This plan covers all aspects of solid waste planning including collection, storage, disposal, source reduction, recycling and

composting, facilities, and budgeting and financing.

This plan is being developed with the help of the tribal solid waste advisory network and should be complete within the next several weeks. Once the plan has been completed the EWMP can begin making improvements to the existing solid waste program.

## Phosphate Mine Contamination

Environmental contamination caused by old, improperly closed, mines is a serious problem in SE Idaho. This contamination can take many forms, but is mostly found as selenium. Selenium is an element, just like oxygen or lead, and is actually required by our bodies in small amounts. However, in higher doses Selenium is a poison which can be especially toxic to aquatic organisms and livestock. High doses of Selenium cause a condition called Selenosis which can cause cirrhosis of the liver, pulmonary edema, and death.

There are 16 mine sites in the area between Soda Springs and Wyoming that are designated as superfund sites, which means they are particularly badly contaminated. This contamination comes from water leaching through piles of waste rock and old mine pits that were not properly closed.

The EWMP is currently working with various federal and state agencies, as well as industrial representatives to clean up these sites and prevent continuing contamination of surface and

ground waters. The three major companies currently mining in the area are Monsanto, Agrium, and Simplot.

Various techniques can be used to clean up the contaminated water and waste rock piles at the mines. The water itself can be treated through various physical, chemical, and biological methods. However, treating the water is only treating the symptom of the problem, not the cause. Water treatment alone would need to continue until the waste rock piles were depleted in Selenium, a process that could take decades. If the waste rock piles themselves are treated the solution becomes more permanent. Treatment of the waste rock piles is generally accomplished by either capping the piles or by dumping them back into the old mine pits.

Despite the many technologies that can be used to treat pollution, the strongest weapon is still, and will always be, prevention. If mines follow a set of guidelines called "best management practices" many of these problems can be avoided. Best management practices include rules that cover topics from road construction and ore handling to pit excavation practices and waste rock pile management.



Image of old mine pit that is causing Selenium contamination. This is one of the sites that the EWMP is currently working to clean up.



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