

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Department of Toxic Substances Control
 Brownfields and Environmental Restoration Program
 8800 Cal Center Drive
 Sacramento, CA 95826-3200

Subject: DRAFT FINAL MITIGATED

Project Title: Arsenic Relative Bioavailability Study at Empire Mine State Historic Park, 10791 East Empire Street, Grass Valley, Nevada County, California 95945

State Clearinghouse No.:

Project Location: Empire Mine State Historic Park, located at 10791 East Empire Street, in Grass Valley, California.
County: Nevada y

Project Description: The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has been awarded a Training, Research and Technical Assistance Grant to conduct an Arsenic Relative Bioavailability Study (Study) by the United States Environmental Protection Agency Region IX (EPA). The goal of the Study is to determine the range of arsenic bioavailability that may exist in contaminated soil at former abandoned mine land (AML) sites and develop better methods to determine the human health effects caused by exposure to arsenic. The Study is also intended to develop an assessment tool that would allow risk assessors to reliably predict the in-vivo relative risk based bioavailability of arsenic in soil in a scientifically sound, defensible and cost effective manner. DTSC intends to produce an arsenic bioavailability guidance document in addition to the assessment tool that will assist in the proper characterization of arsenic at former AML sites.

DTSC has prepared a Field Sampling Plan, Quality Assurance Project Plan, and Site-specific Health and Safety Plan to allow for the proposed collection of soil samples at the Empire Mine State Historic Park (EMSHP), located in Grass Valley, Nevada County, California. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DTSC has also prepared an Initial Study and Draft Negative Declaration for the proposed soil sampling action project. The proposed Project does not make any provisions for DTSC to make remedial action decisions or conduct remedial action activities at the EMSHP. The Project's Grant funding was provided solely for specified investigation and research activities.

Project Activities: DTSC, as the recipient of the EPA Grant, has coordinated with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to plan the proposed sampling activities at specified areas within the EMSHP. The intent of the soil investigation is to collect soil data to study the relationship between the geochemistry and relative bioavailability of arsenic, and develop cost-effective methods to analyze and clean up arsenic contaminated sites. DPR will assist DTSC with the sampling effort and provide on-Site consultation to ensure that sampling activities will not impact any sensitive archeological, cultural or biological resources.

The objective of the proposed field sampling action is to obtain sufficient soil related mine waste material (approximately 30 to 60 soil samples) to conduct the Study. Field work will require a minimum of two DTSC employees and two DTSC designated sub-contractors. The sampling will be implemented using an excavator, and or hand tools to collect soil from a maximum depth of four feet below ground surface. The proposed field work will be conducted in two separate events, and all soil excavation and sampling will be completed under the observation of a DPR approved archeologist, and or biologist as required by DPR. Each soil sampling event is expected to last 3 - 5 days and will be conducted during daylight hours Monday through Friday.

Finding of Significant Effect on Environment: 1. DTSC has determined that the proposed soil sampling action will not pose any environmental impacts due to the limited nature and duration of the soil collection activities. 2. An Initial Study supporting this finding is attached.

Mitigation Measures: DTSC has prepared an Initial Study and determined that implementation of the proposed Project would not pose any impacts to the environment. No mitigation measures are required for the proposed Project.

Signature

Date

Name

Title

Phone #