

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER
LT. GOVERNOR

December 17, 2012

James B. Martin, Regional Administrator
US Environmental Protection Agency
Region 8
1595 Wyncoop Street
Denver, CO 80202-8917

Re: Superfund National Priority List - Former Smurfit-Stone Mill site, Frenchtown,
Montana

Dear Mr. Martin:

I write to offer my support for listing the former Smurfit-Stone Mill site located near Frenchtown on the Superfund National Priority List (NPL).

I appreciate the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to investigate the site. Sampling from that investigation has shown that the historical paper manufacturing and other industrial activities at the site have contaminated portions of the floodplain adjacent to the Clark Fork River. The contamination is serious enough to indicate potential long-term risks to the health of the community and the Clark Fork River downstream from the site.

Although the nature and extent of contamination is not fully characterized, we know there is sufficient data to justify an NPL listing. The next issue to address is what approach the community believes is the best way to tackle the cleanup. I have seen widespread local support for listing of the site on EPA's NPL. I base this on my conversations with the Missoula County Commissioners, and letters the state has received from the Missoula County Water Quality Advisory Council, Missoula City-County Board of Health and Water Quality District Board, and Missoula County commissioners in letters of November 13, 15, and 29, 2012, respectively (attached). The community clearly wants to tackle the cleanup through a Federal Superfund approach.

I offer the following suggestions of how I believe EPA should proceed if this site is approved for NPL listing:

- Support and maintain a close working relationship with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as you proceed with the site characterization and

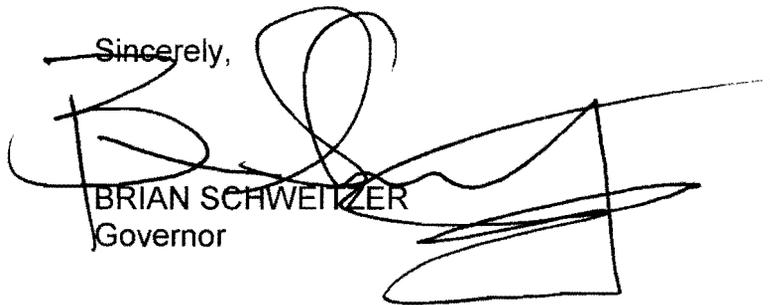
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cleanup, especially in the development of cleanup levels of pollutants like dioxins and furans.

- Encourage community involvement and coordination with Missoula County throughout the process.
- Based on concerns we have heard from local resident about dust emissions from contaminated soil, I encourage EPA to evaluate this potential exposure pathway before summer and implement dust suppression measures, if appropriate.
- Where possible, use contractors that can maximize the potential for local employment in the cleanup process.
- Facilitate redevelopment of the site in ways that support the types of green industries being proposed by the current facility owners.

I have directed the Montana DEQ to provide assistance to and full cooperation with EPA as it proceeds with the listing process, site characterization, development of cleanup plans, and the cleanup itself. As always, I urge you to oversee a process that is timely, transparent, and cost-effective. Please work with Richard Opper, Director of the Montana DEQ, and his staff to meet our common goals.

Sincerely,



BRIAN SCHWEITZER
Governor

Attachments (3)

- c: Richard Opper, Director, Montana DEQ
Bill Carey, Missoula County Commissioner
Jean Curtis, Missoula County Commissioner
Michele Landquist, Missoula County Commissioner
Dale Bickell, Chief Administrator Officer, Missoula County
Martin Hestmark, Assistant Regional Administrator, EPA Region 8
James Woolford, Director, EPA Headquarters Office of Superfund Remediation