



NEVADA DIVISION OF

**ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

THREE KIDS MINE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MARCH 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) is the lead agency overseeing the remediation of historical contamination at the Three Kids Mine in Henderson, Nevada. This document answers common questions about the history, condition, planned cleanup, and future development of the Three Kids Mine. Many of these questions were asked by the community at the June 2022 and March 2023 Community Information Meetings.



Historic mill site, circa 1954

SITE HISTORY AND OPERATIONS

1. What is the history of the Three Kids Mine?

Manganese ore was mined between 1917 and 1961 and was mainly used for the construction of ships and tanks during World War I and World War II. The total project area is 1,165 acres, but only 411 of those acres make up the impacted area of the former mine site. The project area was historically owned and operated by various parties. Currently, 851 acres are federally owned and 314 acres are privately owned. Key features include three open pits, each several hundred feet deep, with a total collective volume of approximately 9 million cubic yards.

2. What is happening at the site now?

Although the Three Kids Mine is not a Superfund site, the Superfund process is generally being followed to protect public health and the environment. As part of the Superfund process, a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study were recently conducted to define site contaminants and their location, and to evaluate cleanup options. These recent site assessments under the Superfund framework have been much more comprehensive than past site assessments. A Proposed Plan summarizing the recent site assessments was developed to identify the preferred cleanup alternative and invite neighboring communities to provide their input. The final cleanup approach will be selected in the upcoming Record of Decision.

In 2023, the land currently owned by the Bureau of Land Management will be transferred through the City of Henderson Redevelopment Agency to a private developer accepting responsibility for remediating the site to meet federal, state, and local cleanup standards. The City of Henderson does not and has not owned any of the land and will not be held liable for the cleanup. NDEP will require that the site meets residential cleanup standards before any residential development at the site can begin.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINANTS

3. What contaminants have been found at the site?

Site contaminants include:

- Metals
 - Arsenic
 - Cadmium
 - Lead
 - Manganese
 - Hexavalent chromium
- Petroleum hydrocarbons
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
- Dioxins
- Asbestos

Contaminants are primarily found in mine wastes such as tailings, which are processed ore wastes generally dark in color due to trace amounts of manganese. Elevated metals can also be found in overburden/waste rock, which is the lighter colored piles of dirt moved to get to the manganese ore.

4. Does the contamination affect groundwater?

Contaminants in soil do not reach groundwater because groundwater is hundreds of feet below the site and rainfall is minimal in this dry, desert environment. Furthermore, groundwater beneath the site is not used as a source of drinking water.

CLEANUP PROCESS

5. What will the cleanup process look like and how long will it take?

Asbestos and other debris from the surface will be taken to an offsite landfill. Concrete from former mine structures will be demolished and placed in the pits. Tailings, waste rock, and impacted soil will be excavated and disposed in the pits. Then, a clean, 10-foot-thick soil cover will be placed over the impacted area of the site using soil from undisturbed areas to the east, south and west of the site; the Hydro Pit will include an impermeable liner covered by a minimum of 2 feet of clean soil since tailings will be placed in this pit. The site will be graded for development, and an environmental covenant for excavations deeper than 10 feet will be enacted.

Currently, it is expected that tailings will be cleaned up in 2023 and 2024, and waste rock will be cleaned up in 2023 through 2027 as development phases occur.

6. Who will pay for this cleanup, how much will it cost, and is there a chance the cleanup is never finished?

Because the development will progress in phases over the course of several years, it's possible that backfilling of the pits could experience some delays due to economic downturns, if any. However, the cleanup will be financially guaranteed via a master developer performance bond and binding agreement to ensure the completion of the remedy.

Original worst-case scenario estimates of the characterization and remediation ranged from \$350 million for an on-site remedy to \$1.2 billion to truck all the materials off site. However, after extensive testing at the site, the current estimate has been refined and costs are estimated at less than \$250 million.

So far, funding for the investigative work, site planning, and cleanup planning has been provided by private investors. After the federal land is transferred, land sale money will be used to complete the cleanup and infrastructure work. Additional cleanup costs will be reimbursed from property taxes generated by homes within the City of Henderson Redevelopment Agency's Lakemoor Canyon Redevelopment Area over a 45-year period. Property taxes from homes outside of the redevelopment area will NOT be used to fund the cleanup.

7. Who is overseeing this project?

NDEP is the lead agency overseeing the remediation of historical contamination at the Three Kids Mine in Henderson, Nevada. NDEP has authority delegated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to oversee environmental cleanups in the state of Nevada and to enforce applicable cleanup standards. The Bureau of Land Management and City of Henderson have also provided oversight through their review of site assessment reports. There has been federal, state, and local oversight of the project since its inception in 2007.

Additional oversight is also being provided by Certified Environmental Managers (CEM) – individuals whom NDEP has certified as being qualified to oversee the remediation of environmental contamination in Nevada. Some of the requirements to become a CEM include: a bachelor's or advanced degree from an accredited college or university in a relevant field, at least 3 years of relevant environmental experience, and a passing score on the NDEP-administered CEM exam. As licensed professionals, CEMs must adhere to ethical and professional standards.

8. How has the public been involved in the cleanup process so far?

Following Superfund guidance, NDEP hosted two community information meetings as part of our community outreach efforts for the Three Kids Mine cleanup project – the first in June 2022 and the second in March 2023. On each occasion, invitations were mailed to approximately 2,800 households in neighboring communities, and the meetings were well-attended by members of the public. Additionally, NDEP held a 30-day public comment period from February 23 to March 25, 2023. NDEP will continue to keep the community updated in accordance with the Community Involvement and Participation Plan available on the NDEP website.

DUST CONTROL

9. How will dust be managed during construction?

Throughout the duration of the project, dust will be controlled and air quality will be monitored in accordance with Clark County Air Quality Regulations. Air sampling devices will be located around the perimeter of the project area, including upwind and downwind of cleanup activities. Due to the dust control measures that will be implemented during cleanup and development of the site, any dust that is generated by site activities is expected to be less than the uncontrolled dust that is currently generated by wind and trespassers. Additional details regarding air monitoring procedures will be available upon finalization of the Air Monitoring Plan that is currently being developed.

10. What can I do if I have concerns about dust at the site?

You can contact the Clark County Air Quality Complaint Hotline at **(702) 385-DUST**. Signage displaying this contact number will be located onsite.

DEVELOPMENT

11. How many homes will be built at the site and how long will development take?

3,000 homes will be built in a master-planned community with various housing types. Development is expected to occur in phases from spring 2025 through 2032. The first homes are expected to be occupied in late 2025.

12. Will homes be built over the pits?

Current development plans include the following: the backfilled Hydro Pit will be covered by an impermeable liner, a minimum of 2 feet of clean soil, and a community park and detention basin to control stormwater; the backfilled Hulin Pit will be covered with 10 feet of clean soil, and a community park or open space element; and the backfilled A-B Pit will be covered by 10 feet of clean soil and homes in selected locations.

13. Where is the water for the homes coming from?

Drinking water will be supplied by the City of Henderson. City of Henderson drinking water is sourced from Lake Mead and meets all safe drinking water standards.

CONTACT

FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

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Please let us know a day in advance if you would like to review files at our office

MORE ON THREE KIDS MINE:

<https://bit.ly/3PVadvE>

