



BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM PROJECT FACT SHEET

Gooseberry Mine Storey County

SITE BACKGROUND

Gooseberry operated as an underground mine from about 1906 until 1992, then fell into bankruptcy in 1998. The mine was deeded to Storey County for non-payment of back taxes in 1999. The site is located immediately adjacent to the Reno-Tahoe Industrial Center, the largest industrial park in the world. After the County assumed ownership stakeholders conducted some cleanup actions to mitigate outstanding threats posed by the presence of uncontained waste. Insufficient funds were available for full site reclamation. Although the site is in an excellent location for heavy industrial re-use development and developers showed interest in the site, they were deterred by the liability and costs associated with full site reclamation.

Storey County, via the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), applied and was accepted for Nevada Brownfields Program (NBP) funding for site characterization and cleanup planning to move the Gooseberry Mine site towards reclamation and redevelopment. The County government had limited resources to manage a Brownfields grant due to its very small population. Therefore, NDEP prepared the grant proposal and assumed the administrative and financial management of the grant.

The site covers 90 acres and holds several structures including a mill, laboratory, and reagent storage sheds. The site became contaminated through the operation of a hard rock mine for the extraction of precious metals through milling and cyanidization of low concentration ores. The majority of the mine site is covered with mine waste materials including several tailings impoundments, a leach pad, pregnant solution ponds, and a solid waste landfill. Some waste materials are contained in unlined impoundments. The waste sources in lined impoundments do not have appropriate soil cover material.

In 2004 a pond that was down gradient from the tailings pile was treated chemically to remove cyanide. The leaching through the tailings causes water with elevated levels of cyanide to be released and thus necessitates the pond to be chemically treated.

FUNDING

Activity	NBP Funding	Date
Site Characterization	\$150,000	2005
Cleanup Planning	\$175,000	2005
Community Notification	\$25,000	2005
SUM	\$350,000	

SITE LOCATION

- T19N, R22E, Section 25 (Mt. Diablo base meridian), Storey County
- APN: 800-002-44
- 90 acres

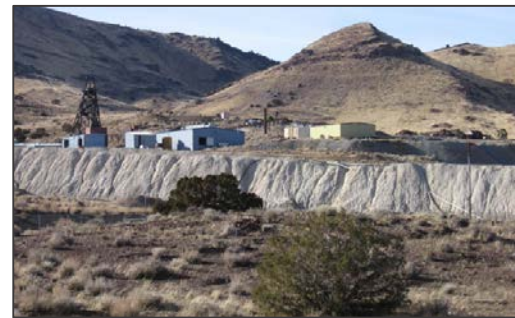
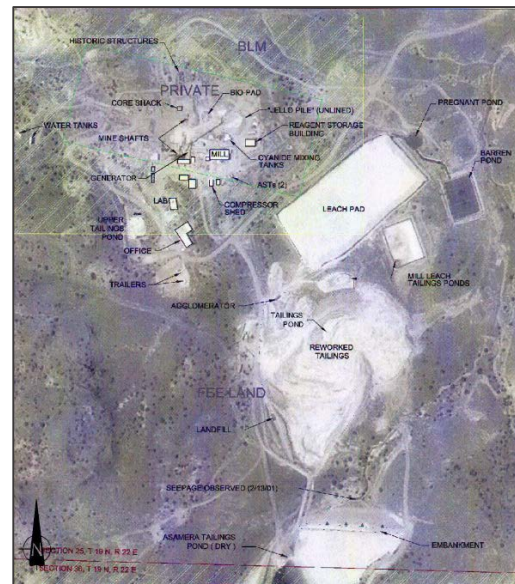


SITE INVESTIGATIONS

Site characterization addressed three potential exposure threats: on-site worker contact with waste materials, degradation of existing water resources, and wildlife exposure. Assessment activities included waste source characterization, hydrologic mapping, and site sampling.

Based on the site characterization, a Final Permanent Closure Plan was developed to describe the necessary closure and reclamation activities and estimated costs. The Plan includes an assessment of onsite hazardous materials and the future management of these materials. The Plan was intended to provide the guidance for both Storey County and prospective developers on the issues to be managed at the site and how they may be addressed.

A Community Involvement Plan was developed and implemented throughout the planning process to ensure that local government and local interests had the opportunity to provide input in all aspects of the decision-making process.

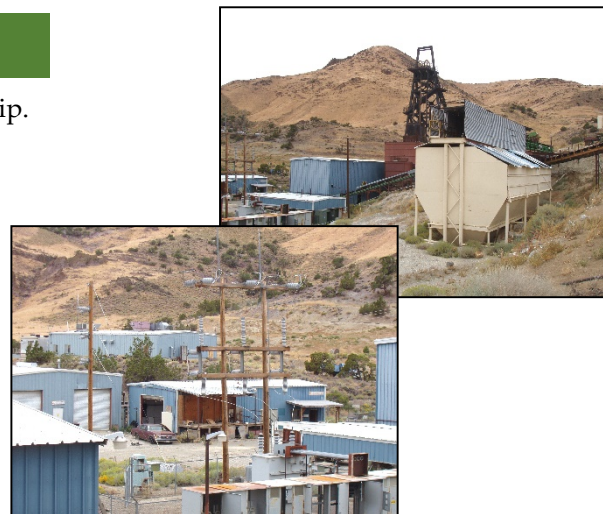


CLEAN-UP ACTIVITY

Under a separate grant, in 2006 NDEP hired a contractor to place a soil cover system over the top of the tailings pile to stop the leaching of cyanide to the downgrading pond, and treat the pond for the last time. The tailings areas, waste rock dump, and heap leach pad were capped with three feet of local borrow material.

CURRENT STATUS

As of August 2018 the site remained under Storey County ownership.



RESOURCES

To learn more about the Nevada Brownfields Program, visit:
<https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/brownfields>



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