

STATE OF ALASKA

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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DIVISION OF SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE CONTAMINATED SITES PROGRAM

File No. 580.38.002

September 14, 2004

Kristin K'eit
Environmental Scientist
Bureau of Indian Affairs
PO Box 25520
Juneau AK 99802

Subject: White Mountain Drum Area, Section 26, Township 9S, Range 24W, Kateel River Meridian, ADL 412330, DEC database RECKEY #19983201224081

Dear Ms. K'eit:

This letter is to advise you that the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has received information that indicates improper disposal of drums has occurred at the above referenced location near the Village of White Mountain. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) may be legally and financially responsible for this matter.

In 1998, Ecology and Environment, under contract to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), conducted a Preliminary Assessment (PA) of the site in response to concern over the drums and potential contamination. Approximately one-thousand 55-gallon drums were located in a lightly forested area, approximately four acres in size. The PA report (copy attached) describes the site and analytical results from eight soil samples. Minor petroleum contamination, up to 550 mg/kg of Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH), was found. One water sample was collected from the city water well and did not contain contaminants of concern.

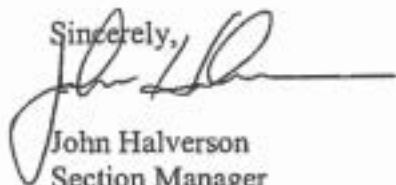
The PA report indicated that the Alaska Army National Guard (AKANG) White Mountain Armory was the likely source of the drums. The AKANG notified DEC in 2000 that it did not believe these drums were from its' operation and provided supporting documentation.

In 2001, DEC requested that the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) re-evaluate the site for eligibility under the Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) program. In 1992, the Corps had determined the White Mountain National Guard or Federal Scout Armory Site did not contain hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants eligible for cleanup under the FUDS program. Early this year, the Corps completed its' review and again determined there are no FUDS program eligible projects at the site. The Corps provided documentation indicating residents of White Mountain reported the drums contained fuel used at the BIA boarding school between 1948 and 1955 (see attachment 2).

Based on all the information available to DEC pertaining to this site, it appears BIA is responsible for the large number of drums that have been improperly disposed of at the site. The available data does not indicate any significant contaminant problem exists; however, remaining drums may contain residual fuel that could cause future releases. Additionally, the drums are solid waste and may pose a physical hazard to people and wildlife. Therefore, the department requests BIA inspect the site and properly cleanup and dispose of the drums.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to call me at 269-7545, or Deb Caillouet at 269-0298.

Sincerely,



John Halverson
Section Manager
Federal Facilities Oversight

Attachments:

- 1998 PA Report by E&E
- 2004 USACE FUDS eligibility determination

cc: Deb Caillouet, DEC