



## Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Spill Prevention and Response

# Beatson Mine Site Update

## Contaminated Sites Program

Rio Tinto has been investigating contamination from the former Beatson Mine on the northwest side of Latouche Island in Prince William Sound since 2016. Rio Tinto has assessed the site conditions, nature and extent of contamination, potential for human and ecological exposure, and other factors that will impact its cleanup options. Below you will find a summary of the latest assessment activities, and information about proposed cleanup levels that may impact future uses of the Beatson Mine site.

## Site Assessments

Beatson Mine produced copper from 1904 until it ceased operation in 1930. Via Minaska Inc, Rio Tinto purchased a portfolio of assets from Kennecott in 1989 and became the holder of the mineral rights originally held by Kennecott Copper Corporation. Although Rio Tinto never operated the mine and does not have any intention of resuming mining operations on Latouche Island, as the owner of the mineral estate it has been working with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to characterize the site and develop a Site Cleanup Plan.

Waste rock and mine tailings across the site contain high concentrations of certain contaminants that could pose a risk to people and ecological receptors. Rio Tinto's assessments have identified areas where soil contains petroleum hydrocarbons and metals above DEC's cleanup levels. Other impacted media include surface water, groundwater, and marine and freshwater sediment.

Recent assessments aim to better define the boundaries of the contaminated soil. This has informed what kind of cleanup levels will apply to different areas of the site as well as possible institutional controls to prevent exposure to contaminants.

## Alternative Cleanup Levels

DEC is responsible for approving cleanup levels at contaminated sites in Alaska. In its regulations, DEC allows the entity conducting the cleanup to propose cleanup levels calculated for different land uses. The cleanup levels proposed by Rio Tinto are differentiated based on their ability to protect human health if the land is used in a certain way. These uses are defined as residential or commercial. Rio Tinto has conducted risk calculations which show that both residential and commercial scenario cleanup levels are protective of exposure to site contaminants under a recreational land use. These calculations included short-term stays at the site and incidental consumption of on-site wild foods such as blueberries. DEC will approve cleanup levels individually for each parcel at the Beatson Mine site.

### Residential Cleanup Level

Areas of the Beatson Mine site that fall under the residential cleanup level will be remediated to a standard that protects human health in all land use scenarios. A residential cleanup level is based on a risk calculation that assumes that children would be potentially exposed to the contaminated soil full-time. Parcels with residential cleanup levels will not require an Environmental Covenant, as the cleanup will be safe for all uses.

### Commercial Cleanup Level

Areas of the Beatson Mine site that fall under the commercial cleanup level would be remediated to a standard that protects human health when exposed to soil in the area during recreational and commercial use of the land. This assumes that exposure would occur 40 hours per week and the receptor is an adult. The calculation for a commercial cleanup level does not include consumption of on-site wild foods. In order to set a commercial cleanup level, DEC must consult the public, determine current and future land use, and receive consent from the owners of each contaminated

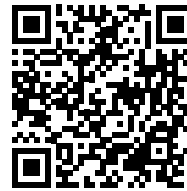
parcel to place an Environmental Covenant on their land. The Environmental Covenant would state that the parcel could not be used for full-time residential use or recreationally for more than a certain number of days. The majority of the parcels in this area are owned by Rio Tinto. For any parcel not owned by Rio Tinto, DEC will need consent from the landowner to approve a commercial cleanup level and agreement to place a covenant on their property.

## Alternative Cleanup Level Map

This map shows where alternative cleanup levels have been proposed as well as the boundaries of each parcel within the Beatson Mine site. The map was provided courtesy of Rio Tinto.

## Public Comment Period

In October 2024, DEC will collect public comments on the proposed Alternative Cleanup Levels for the Beatson Mine site through our online comment submission form. For more information about how to comment visit <https://dec.alaska.gov/spar/csp/sites/beatson-mine/> or scan the QR code below:



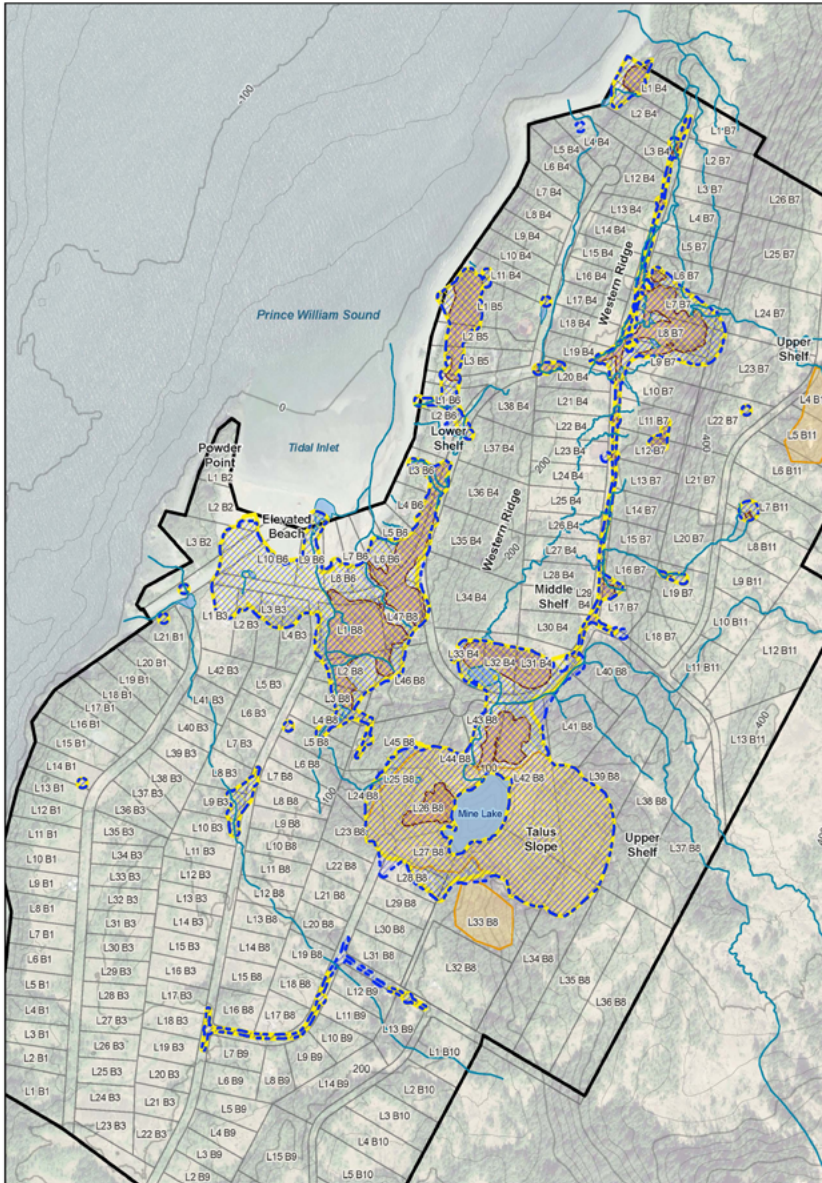
## Additional Information

For more detailed information about the Beatson Mine site including a site chronology with past reports visit <https://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/SPAR/PublicMVC/CSP/SiteReport/2626>

### DEC Contact Information

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<b>Legend</b> <b>Soil ACL Exceedance Extent Protective of Human Health</b> Soil ACL Exceedance Extent Protective of Human Health Method 2 ACL - Residential Land Use Method 3 ACL - Commercial/Non-Full Time Residential Land Use <b>Contours</b> 100 Foot Contour 25 Foot Contour <b>Site Features</b> Waste Rock Pile Subsidence Zone Extent Watercourse Waterbody Site Boundary Parcel Boundaries (with Block Lot IDs)	<b>Note:</b> The ACL exceedance extents presented take into account natural background arsenic soil concentrations. Orthoimage provided by WSP, 2018. <b>Abbreviation:</b> ACL = Alternative Cleanup Level
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	Former Beatson Mine Latouche Island, Alaska	Soil ACL Exceedances Protective of Human Health
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