



January 2007

## Silver Creek Watershed Cleanup Update

### Introduction

The Silver Creek Watershed is located within the Wasatch mountain range in Summit County, Utah. Silver Creek begins high in the mountains, winds its way through the mining areas in the upper watershed into Park City, and continues until it discharges into the Weber River. There are more than 1,200 miles of mining tunnels in the mountains in and surrounding the watershed and Park City, and dozens of old sites where milling and tailings disposal activity took place from the late 1860s until the early 1980s.

The Silver Creek Watershed Stakeholder Group is a group of committed residents and local, state, and federal agency representatives that have been working collaboratively since 1999 to address environmental contamination in the Silver Creek Watershed. Metals such as lead and zinc, primarily leftover from historical mining practices, are the contaminants of concern. The following is a brief update on some of the recent successes that the group has had in cleaning up the watershed, and what is currently happening.

### Major Accomplishments

**Prospector Square:** The United States Environmental Protection Agency is pleased to announce that it has officially archived Prospector Square from the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) database. CERCLIS is the database containing information on sites across the nation that could qualify for a Superfund investigation.

*This concludes EPA's involvement in the environmental management of soils at properties in Prospector Square.*

Park City Municipal Corporation, in cooperation with the Upper Silver Creek Watershed Group, finalized an Environmental Management System (EMS) in 2005 which EPA believes successfully strengthens the existing soils ordinance. The soils ordinance is a program designed to minimize exposure by residents to heavy metals in soils in some areas of Park City. Park City Municipal Corporation has won national awards for its EMS and soil ordinance. EPA is confident that any environmental or health concerns posed by metals in soils at Prospector Square will be adequately managed by Park City through their continued implementation of the soils ordinance via the EMS.

The soils ordinance boundaries were expanded in 2005 to include additional properties with mine tailing impacts, and were expanded again in spring 2006. For more information about the ordinance and/or the boundary area, please contact the Park City Municipal Corporation contact provided in this fact sheet.

Special thanks go to the citizen members of the Soils Ordinance Workgroup, a breakout group from the Stakeholder group, which focused exclusively on this issue, and gave much of their time and energy toward this successful effort.

**Empire Canyon:** Environmental cleanup and restoration in Empire Canyon is nearly complete. Since the fall of 2003, United Park City

Mines, with the support of the Stakeholder Group, removed contaminated mine waste from stream channels, reconstructed stream channels, and covered and recontoured mine waste in selected areas.

The soil removed from Empire Canyon was trucked down through Park City and deposited at Richardson Flat beginning in July 2005. As this involved more than 4,000 truck loads of dirt, Park City Council ensured that a number of precautionary measures were employed, including providing special training for drivers and requiring truck inspections by the Utah Highway Patrol. As a result, not one incident was reported during the action, which concluded in October 2005. Work in Empire Canyon resumed in June 2006, though no more dirt was transported off site.

DV Luxury Resort, LLC (DVLRL) has proposed the construction of a luxury hotel, spa, and condominium project in the section of Empire Canyon called Daly West Mine Dump, to be known as the Montage Resort & Spa. If approved, the development will contribute to the cleanup of contamination at this former mining site. DVLRL also agreed to participate in EPA's initiative to encourage environmentally responsible redevelopment and reuse of contaminated properties (ER3). As an ER3 participant, the Montage Resort & Spa will incorporate extensive "green" features into the design, construction, and operation of the development to minimize the project's environmental footprint.

**Richardson Flat:** Environmental cleanup and construction at Richardson Flat will begin in the spring of 2007. The area is a 160 acre mill tailings impoundment located in a relatively unpopulated area 3.5 miles northeast of Park City, adjacent to Silver Creek. The tailings contain high concentrations of several metals. UPCM, with support from the Stakeholder Group will excavate tailings adjacent to the Richardson Flat impoundment and place them within the impoundment, augment existing soil covers, excavate and/or cover sediments and soils where necessary, fortify embankments, and monitor surface water, among other actions. The work is expected to take at least three years. Once the cleanup is complete, disposal

of mine waste at Richardson Flat will cease, and land use restrictions and easements will be instituted to protect the remedy.

**Lower Silver Creek:** At its January 13, 2006 meeting, the Silver Creek Watershed Stakeholders Group tasked a facilitator to convene a work group to focus specifically on Lower Silver Creek. Current and future development plans for properties abutting Lower Silver Creek make it timely to identify and address any remediation / restoration requirements in this lower stream segment. A convening report dated April 24, 2006 proposed a work group process that would include all landowners and developers in the southern portion of Lower Silver Creek, starting at State Route 248 and ending at Atkinson (aka "the dairy").

Two work group meetings were held on May 8, 2006 and on June 5, 2006. The primary purpose of these meetings was to identify and integrate known information about contaminated areas in Lower Silver Creek, the potential source(s) of contamination, vulnerable resources, and to correlate this information to land ownership and known development plans. This will help guide the work group's next steps in conducting further investigation, if necessary, and in pursuing remediation / restoration options.

## The Watershed Process

The Silver Creek Watershed Stakeholder Group approach is to address various locations within the watershed which may be impacted by heavy metal contamination as a whole, rather than as individual sites. The goal is to minimize environmental or health risks associated with these sites and to bring EPA Superfund involvement to a close in the Park City area. The process is a collaborative effort that encourages efficient, cost-effective and workable solutions. Regular stakeholder group meetings are held throughout the year. These meetings will be advertised on the Silver Creek Watershed Website and in the Park Record and are always open to the public.

# Contacts

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<http://www.silvercreekpc.org>

<http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/ut/>

**richardsonflat**

