

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Wednesday, October 5, 2011
From: Terrence Byrd, On Scene Coordinator

Subject: Slag Processing
Gulf States Steel
2800 Norris Ave, Gadsden, AL
Latitude: 34.0119000
Longitude: -86.0469000

POLREP No.:	33	Site #:	A499
Reporting Period:	08/09/11 to 10/04/11	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	8/1/2007	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	8/1/2007	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	ALD004014973	Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

A Time-Critical Removal Action began in September 2009 to address the hazards associated with the former Gulf State Steel Powerhouse, lagoons and Slag Piles.

Remaining removal activities: Slag pile processing, remaining waste lagoon management (2) and slag pile landfill creation. The slag piles are the source of continued release of characteristic hazardous waste. The caustic leachate containing pH values as high as 12.5 from the slag piles is directly discharging into Black Creek, an adjacent wetland area, and a residential neighborhood from drainage ditches outside the Site fence. Sloughing of slag from the piles has been observed on both the northern and southern piles. The sloughing allows for the production of more leachate due to the increase in surface area of new unweathered slag.

Current Activities

Slag processing from both the North and South piles continues. Material from both piles is transported to two on-site processing facilities for separation. Recyclable material is transported off-site. Non-recyclable material is moved to an area close to the North pile for consolidation in an on-Site Landfill and capping to halt the further production of high pH leachate.

Leachate coming from slag piles is currently being monitored for pH. pH ranges from 9 to 12.5. Air monitoring for particulates is also conducted during operations.

Material is de-watered if necessary before processing. Dust control continues.

Operation of processing at two plants (north and south) continues.

USCG GST on-site to assist with ERRS and START contractor oversight, including the operation of Data-rams for air monitoring.

Planned Removal Actions

Operations at the North slag pile will be suspended due to the large encountering waste material that cannot be processed nor can it be landfilled without halting operations of the processing plants that are built on-site. The material is a soft, moist material that readily absorbs water. OSC Byrd concludes that it will be most beneficial to continue processing waste streams that the plant is equipped to handle. Return to excavation of the North pile will resume at a later date. Meanwhile, it will be contoured to allow run-off to be gathered on-site before discharging into Black Creek. If necessary, the pile will be covered with remnants of processed ore that are currently on-site in order to reduce the amount of water that may seep into the pile.

Operations will move primarily to the South pile on October 5, 2011. Also, Harsco is constructing a on-

site processing center to further refine the grade "C" fines in attempts to produce a saleable product, thereby reducing the amount of waste left on-site. EPA and ERRS will monitor the amount and types of wastes generated by this process, if any.

Slag screening, reclamation and leachate reduction operations will continue.

Additional sources for recycling of A, B and C fines continues to be sought.

To date slag pile totals:

non ferrous and ferrous metal for July, 18,522,756 lbs

Recycled non ferrous and ferrous for slag piles 279,371,635 lb

Materials awaiting shipment off-site, A-60 tons, B-2000 tons, C-400,000 tons

To date 60% of North pile has been processed

To date 19% of South pile has been processed

Next Steps

EPA will investigate potential actions to stabilize the remaining two waste lagoons.

EPA will also develop a final landfill management plan.

Key Issues

START has completed sampling of the creek and waste lagoons. Preliminary data does not indicate lagoon contamination that exceed EPA's industrial risk based levels. Data from the Black Creek sampling event is still being analyzed by the lab and should be available in a matter of days.

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