The Coeur d'Alene Basin (Idaho)

Our Goal: *To protect public health and the environment in the Coeur d'Alene Basin by preventing exposure to mine waste and improving water quality.*

Background

Historically, the Coeur d'Alene mining district in Idaho was one of the largest producers in the world of silver, lead and zinc, and remnants of those mines are scattered over 600 square miles. More than a century of mining has degraded the ecosystem and contributed to elevated blood lead levels in children. An estimated 70-100 million tons of mining waste are spread throughout 150 river miles – many streams in the Basin cannot sustain fish populations and waterfowl are feeding in contaminated wetlands.

The Focus of Our Efforts

Our top priority is preventing human exposure to unsafe levels of lead and other metals. For the past several years, we have been conducting an intense soil and water clean-up in a 21-square mile area of the Basin with the greatest human health risk, and clean-up is nearly complete. Our focus is to:

- Complete mine waste clean-up work in the 21-square mile "box";
- Issue and begin implementation of a targeted Basin clean-up plan that will provide environmental improvement and aid economic development in the Basin;
- Improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River and the Spokane River; and
- Issue permits with updated metals requirements for point sources along the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

Environmental Outcomes by 2007

✓ Human exposure to lead has been reduced through soil clean-up work in residential areas (our goal is to target ~700 remaining properties in the 21-square mile box and ~900 properties in the Basin).

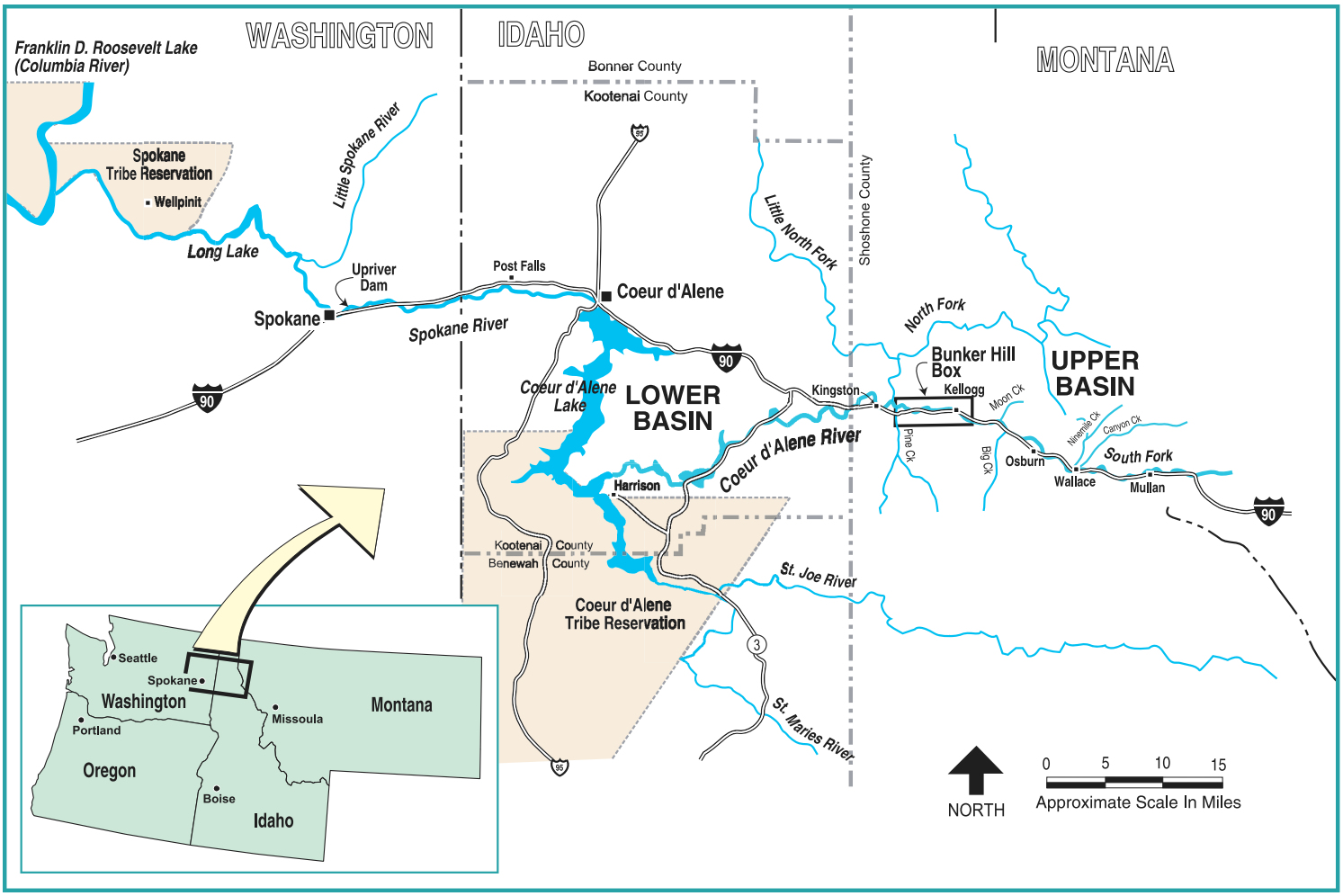
✓ Water quality in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River has been improved by reducing loadings of metals by point sources.

✓ Water quality in the Spokane River and Lake Coeur d'Alene has been protected by preventing contaminated sediment from moving downstream.

✓ Wildlife habitat has been improved through wetlands sediment clean-up and habitat restoration.

✓ Sufficient space is available for safely storing contaminated materials from clean-up activities.

Coeur d'Alene Basin



Environmental Indicators for Measuring Success

- Number of properties cleaned up to safe levels of lead in soils
- Number of NPDES (**N**ational **P**ollutant **D**ischarge **E**limination **S**ystem) permits issued with updated metals requirements
- Reduced metals loading to streams as a result of compliance with updated permits

Key Actions: Next 1-2 Years

- Issue Record of Decision for Basin
- Participate in the multi-jurisdictional Coeur d'Alene Basin Environment Improvement Project Commission that will implement the Record of Decision
- Complete upgrades at Central Treatment Plant
- Issue updated NPDES permits for point sources along the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River
- Approve water quality criteria for metals in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River
- Evaluate and site at least one waste repository for contaminated soils
- Start "pilot" studies for bank stabilization, wetlands clean-up and sediment removal

Yard Remediation *(Lead Soil Clean-Up Work)*