

STRONGER TOGETHER IN 2017

The Northwest Toxic Communities Coalition's Board of Directors would like to wish you and your family a happy and healthy New Year, and encourage you to actively participate in NWTCC's ongoing efforts to coalesce grassroots organizations throughout Region X. As citizens concerned with protecting the environment, our coalition magnifies your voice and, indeed, makes us **stronger together**.



Serving Region 10 communities since 2007.

**Support the Silver Valley Community Resource Center --
Funding Urgently Needed**



Barb Miller, Director SVCRC

People living in Idaho's "Silver Valley" have struggled for decades with lead polluting their homes, community, and their bodies from industrial mining for silver. Despite decades of studies, actual interventions to protect human health have been limited. Now the EPA has decided to locate and build repositories in the Coeur d'Alene River's floodplain near the Old Mission, a National Historic Landmark important to indigenous people. These repositories are nothing more than unlined toxic dump sites in violation of CERCLA. The Silver Valley now has more than ten of these toxic repositories. More are planned, many acres in size, with locations close to the Coeur d'Alene River and area communities.

The Silver Valley Community Resource Center (SVCRC) is a non-profit, grassroots organization based in Kellogg ID within the original 21-square-mile "Superfund Box" designated in 1983. The SVCRC has worked for three decades to restore quality of life to the community by cleaning up lead and other heavy metal pollution and running the "Children Run Better Unleaded" effort to have children tested for blood lead levels.

SVCRC is asking for support and contributions to their very important Children Run Better Unleaded project. It is the only proactive lead intervention program in the entire 1500 sq. mile Superfund site!

See Children Run Better Unleaded [Facebook's](#) page for contact information and friend the CRBU program!

NWTCC 2016 Summit Draws Both New and Continuing Members

The Summit provided three great speakers and an opportunity for regional organizations to cooperate on issues involving toxics. The NWTCC is grateful for the participation and expertise shared by the following speakers:

- **Cora Sacks MD, MPH**, UW School of Public Health- sharing recent research on air particulates of the Joel Kaufman laboratory. Department of Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences
- **Dr. Edward Kolodziej**, UW Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering and affiliate of Center for Urban Waters (UW) Tacoma - speaking about multiple chemical exposures and cutting edge methods of analysis.
- **Jacob Caggiano**, a leader in mapping toxic sites with the Smarter Cleanup Project

THANK YOU!

Record of Decision Announced for Portland Superfund Site

On Friday afternoon, January 6, representatives from the Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group (PHCAG) gathered in anticipation at the office of the United States Environmental Protection Agency in downtown Portland, Oregon to hear the long-awaited final



decision on the lower Willamette River superfund cleanup. The 10-mile site is one of the largest and most complex in the US. Its contaminated sediments, caused by 100 years of industrial dumping, contain contaminants such as PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) DDT, dioxins, furans and PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) as well as heavy metals, along with many other chemicals.

The Portland Advisory Group has fostered close ties to the Northwest Toxics Community Coalition over the years. Several members have served on the board in the past and three are currently NWTCC board members, Darise Weller, Jackie Calder and Barbara Quinn.

The Portlanders have found the connection with other cleanup site representatives

invaluable in learning what has been possible at other sites, best practices, problems to avoid, details about the EPA Technical Assistance Grant and recommendations for technical consultants. Particularly helpful has been the relationship with the Duwamish River Community Coalition representatives in Seattle. DRCC has a similar contaminated river sediment site and happens to be a little ahead of Portland in its superfund process.

The PHCAG, an all-volunteer group, has been involved in the process for 16 years. With the help of a grant the group went into high overdrive in early 2016 organizing a series of public forums and the Willamette River Festival over six months to rally public awareness and support for an effective cleanup. They joined with environmental groups and the Yakama Nation in creating a unified message in response to the EPA Proposed Plan announced in June. The partnership aimed high in negotiations by requesting ultimate safety for humans and the environment including safely edible resident fish. All were unified in rejecting the Proposed Plan as too weak.

The joint campaign resulted in a record number of public comments, 5,300, covering 20,000 different issues according to the EPA. 90% of the comments asked for a more effective cleanup than the EPA recommended option.

EPA said the community's comments were essential in crafting the Record of Decision that increases the cleanup effectiveness by one-third over that of the Proposed Plan according to EPA Region 10 chief Dennis McLerran. It increases dredging 40% from 167 acres to 247.6 acres and will also include 120 acres of capping, and 28 acres of enhanced natural recovery within the total 2200 acre site. It's important to the community that there will not be a Confined Disposal Facility in the river. In addition, 23,305 lineal feet of riverbank will be excavated and covered with a cap or vegetation.

PHCAG members hope that political representatives and potentially responsible parties will heed the feedback from the majority of the community and move quickly to start the cleanup process in order to decrease residents' and the environment's exposure to toxins.

The Community Advisory is reorganizing and seeking to build membership to help oversee the next steps: the design and action phase of the cleanup. The group is planning strategy meetings in January and February to help focus on priorities going forward.

To see the Record of Decision go to: tinyurl.com/gnqzd2l. For updates on the superfund process go to PortlandHarborCAG.info.

Please send comments, action alerts and other information that you would like to share with the Northwest Toxic Communities Coalition to toxiccommunities@gmail.com.

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