



Invitation to Comment on the Proposed Plan for the Groundwater Remedial Action at the Nemo Work Center, Nemo, South Dakota

The chemical ethylene dibromide (EDB) has been detected in groundwater in the vicinity of Nemo, SD as a result of historical pine beetle control practices implemented by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). In response, the USFS recently completed a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) per the requirements of the Comprehensive Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The intent of the RI/FS is to identify the nature and extent of the subsurface impacts and evaluated potential remedial alternatives to address the potential for human health impacts. Following completion of the RI/FS, the selected remedial alternative is being published for public review and comment as the Proposed Plan. Following CERCLA protocol, the Proposed Plan provides a window of opportunity for the public to review, question, and comment on the selected remedial action alternative. The Proposed Plan is a condensed summary of the much more detailed RI/FS which was conducted at the site over a period of several years.

You have a chance to comment on the Proposed Plan for the Nemo Work Center during the period from July 21, 2015 to August 20, 2015 (**extended to September 11, 2015**) and at a public meeting scheduled for August 20, 2015. The USFS would like to hear your views about the plans for managing the impacted aquifer and ensuring the continuous supply of potable water to affected Nemo residents. Following extensive studies, implementation of interim remedial actions, and assessment of risks to the community, USFS believes that the following actions are the best way to protect your health and the environment as part of a permanent remedy:

Tell us what you think
Public Comment Period July 21, 2015 – August 20, 2015, Extended to September 11, 2015
You may submit your comments during the Public Comment Period to: Ralph Adam Physical Resources Staff Officer Black Hills National Forest 1019 N. 5 th Street Custer, SD 57730 radam@fs.fed.us / 605-673-9204
Public Meeting – August 20, 2015 The meeting will be held at the Nemo Community Center beginning at 7:00pm.
USFS will hold a public meeting to explain the Proposed Plan and the alternatives evaluated in the Feasibility Study. Oral and written comments will be accepted at the meeting.
The Administrative Record , including copies of the RI and FS reports, is available for viewing online at http://74.55.97.90/nemo/ and at the following locations: US Forest Service Black Hills National Forest 1019 N. 5 th Street Custer, SD 57730 Northern Hills District Office Black Hills National Forest 2014 North Main Street Spearfish, SD 57783 Rapid City Public Library 610 Quincy Street Rapid City, SD 57701

- Restrict access to EDB-contaminated groundwater by limiting the installation and/or use of new groundwater wells at the site (Land Use Controls/Institutional Controls).
- Continue to monitor the decline of EDB concentrations in groundwater due to naturally occurring processes that break down the contaminant (Monitored Natural Attenuation).
- Provide point-of-entry (POE) treatment systems for EDB-impacted domestic wells to provide potable water for affected residents.

You may make comments at the public meeting. You also have until September 11, 2015 to supply written comments on the RI/FS, Proposed Plan, and/or other documents in the Administrative Record file. At the end of the comment period the USFS will review the suggestions and make a final decision. Your input on the Proposed Plan is an important part of the decision-making process. We want to hear from you and will pay serious attention to what you have to say.

The Risks

EDB is classified as a probable human carcinogen. The long-term effects in humans are not well documented, but studies on animals suggest that it may be harmful to the liver, kidneys, and testes. Studies on rats suggest that EDB may also increase the incidences of a variety of tumors.

EDB was used in Nemo in the 1960s and 70s and its behavior and migration have been studied extensively over many years. Since the 1990s, the USFS has provided a temporary alternative water supply system. However, this system was not designed to be a permanent solution.

While the chance of exposure to the contaminants is minimal, it is serious enough to require that actions be taken to treat well water and continue to monitor the long-term behavior and location of the EDB that is in the groundwater.

Our Goals

Many different parts of the project have been analyzed and discussed. Given everything we have learned and the input we have had from the community, we have arrived at two goals that have driven our recommendations:

- Reduce the mass of EDB in the groundwater to the extent practical, and
- Prevent human exposure to EDB-contaminated domestic groundwater supplies where levels exceed regulatory standards.

The Preferred Alternative is anticipated to cost approximately \$180,000 in capital investment and \$680,000 for operations and maintenance over the next 20 years.

Your Comments

We considered several different ways to meet the water supply and quality goals, which are described more completely in the Proposed Plan and Administrative Record file. USFS believes that the Preferred Alternative will protect your health and the environment. However, before making a final decision, we want to hear what you think. We encourage you to find out more about the work that has been done, the alternatives that have been considered, and the proposed approach to the problem. The plan that is finally chosen will be described in a Record of Decision (ROD). That document will include a summary of the comments received along with how those comments affected the decision that was reached.

