



Date: May 14, 2009

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Technical questions: Dave Farrer, 971-673-0971

Lower Bridge Mine: Public invited to information session May 28 in Redmond

People interested in learning more about Lower Bridge Mine, an abandoned mine in Deschutes County about which some residents have expressed health concerns, are invited to talk with public health officials May 28 in Redmond.

Representatives of the Environmental Health Assessment Program (EHAP), a unit of the Oregon Department of Human Services Public Health Division, will be available to answer questions from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Redmond Senior Center, 325 N.W. Dogwood Ave.

The mine is located 5.5 miles west of Terrebonne.

"This is an opportunity for people to stop by at their convenience to ask us their questions," says Dave Farrer, program toxicologist. "We know some people have concerns about the site, and we will be available to answer their questions."

In an environmental assessment report last month, EHAP recommended that owners of the property:

- Collect more soil samples to determine if there are any areas of high crystalline silica content, which is of concern to people in nearby communities;
- Monitor the area's air at different times of the year to determine if there is crystalline silica in the wind-blown dust; and
- Monitor groundwater beneath the site to verify that the underlying aquifer remains uncontaminated, since future residents would rely on the aquifer for domestic water use.

(more)

The Deschutes County Planning Commission has conditionally rezoned the property for residential use. If land owners elect to develop the property, Farrer says, EHAP will work with owners, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the Deschutes County Planning Commission to ensure recommendations are followed before development begins.

An April 20 news release and a link to the full environmental assessment report can be found at www.oregon.gov/DHS/news/2009news/2009-0420.pdf on the DHS Web site.