

Ask Inspector Sleuth



Dear Inspector Sleuth,

Cotter is being accused of dragging their feet with the clean up of Lincoln Park groundwater. Is that true?

Signed,
Don't B. Draggin

Dear Mr. Draggin,

Since Lincoln Park was added to the Superfund List in 1984, Cotter has performed remediation of both the soil and the groundwater. In 2002, the US Environmental Protection Agency issued a Record of Decision that stated the soils in Lincoln Park were no longer part of the Superfund site.

As recent as 2008, Cotter moved 233,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil from the Old Ponds Area to the Primary Impoundment. This was preceded by more than 2½ million cubic yards of contaminated soils moved between 1981 and 2000. In Lincoln Park, 9,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil were removed from 1.25 miles of Sand Creek.

Cotter's groundwater remediation efforts are listed in "Site Conceptual Model and Proposed Corrective Measures for the Cañon City Milling Facility, Colorado" published on the Colorado Department of Public Health web site and www.fcio.org click Topics and Golf Course Plume.

Page 4 of the report refers to "Historic overland flow along the Sand Creek Drainage rapidly transported uranium and molybdenum impacted water out to the Lincoln Park area." In 1965, Southern Colorado experienced severe flooding which carried tailings and ore stored on bare ground down Sand Creek into Lincoln Park. The Soil Conservation Service constructed two flood control dams southwest of Canon City in 1971 to prevent future flooding.

On page 6 of the document, there is a long list of what Cotter has been doing to alleviate a problem that began when there were few regulations to direct the handling of mill waste. The report also states that "water quality has shown significant improvement from the time that groundwater sampling and monitoring was initiated to the present."

Contrary to dragging their feet, during the past three years particularly, Cotter has been diligently working, and spending large sums of money, to move forward with the eventual solution to the original contamination.

Your faithful inspector
Inspector Sleuth

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