

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**EPA Region 10 Dive Team  
ASARCO Piling Removal Survey, Ruston, WA  
April 2010**

**What:** At the request of the EPA Environmental Cleanup program and Aquatic Resource Unit, the EPA Region 10 Dive Team surveyed the Superfund sediment cap at the ASARCO/Ruston site near the 3 piers slated for demolition in 2010. Piers are slated for demolition by the Washington Department of Natural Resources as part of their effort to removal creosote treated materials from Puget Sound.

**Why:** Diver survey objectives were to: 1) photograph any debris, 2) take photos under the dock area, if possible trying to distinguish how much cap is under the dock, if any, 3) take photos looking away from the dock area, 4) note cap condition (outside of docks), 5) hand probe to the extent possible to make observations on cap gradation and 6) piling condition was to be noted.

**Where:** ASARCO Superfund Site, Ruston, WA

**When:** Dive surveys were conducted in April, 2010.

**How:** Diver investigations included several dives to probe and photograph the bottom along each dock face.

**Results:** Divers found no evidence of cap material during the dives due to likely material accumulation on top of and mixing with the cap. Slag material was found on the sediment surface in places near the Ore Dock (eastern/southern most dock). The divers observed few debris in the areas more than 40' offshore of the docks. For example, offshore of the Ore dock, the "blanket" of bivalve shell pieces and scattered slag were absent. The benthic material in the offshore areas was black sand/silt. Divers found that it was difficult to dig into this bottom material.

There was a surprising plethora of marine life on and near the docks. The pilings were covered in *Metridium senile* anemones, tube worms, barnacles, mussels, and oysters. Common biota were: sea stars (*Pisaster ochraceus* and *P. brevispinus*, *Solaster stimpsoni* *Pycnopodia helianthoides*); crab (kelp, *Cancer spp.*); nudibrachs; and jellyfish. Few fish were seen.

**For more information about the Asarco Smelter Cleanup:**

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/webpage/Asarco+Smelter+-+Ruston>

**For more information about the EPA Region 10 Dive Team:**

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/OEA.NSF/investigations/dive+team>

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**Photos:**

Piling on the bottom near the Ore Dock (southern/SE most dock).



Debris located near the Copper Dock (middle dock).



Diver unentangling the GPS raft from a piling that was leaning at a 45 degree angle from the Copper Dock.



View of crabs and bottom near the Ore Dock.



View of the Copper Dock from the surface, near shore. Diver holding the GPS raft is visible in the foreground.



ASARCO survey photo map. Map of dive survey areas and photos taken during the survey. All piers are scheduled to be demolished during the 2010 fish window.

