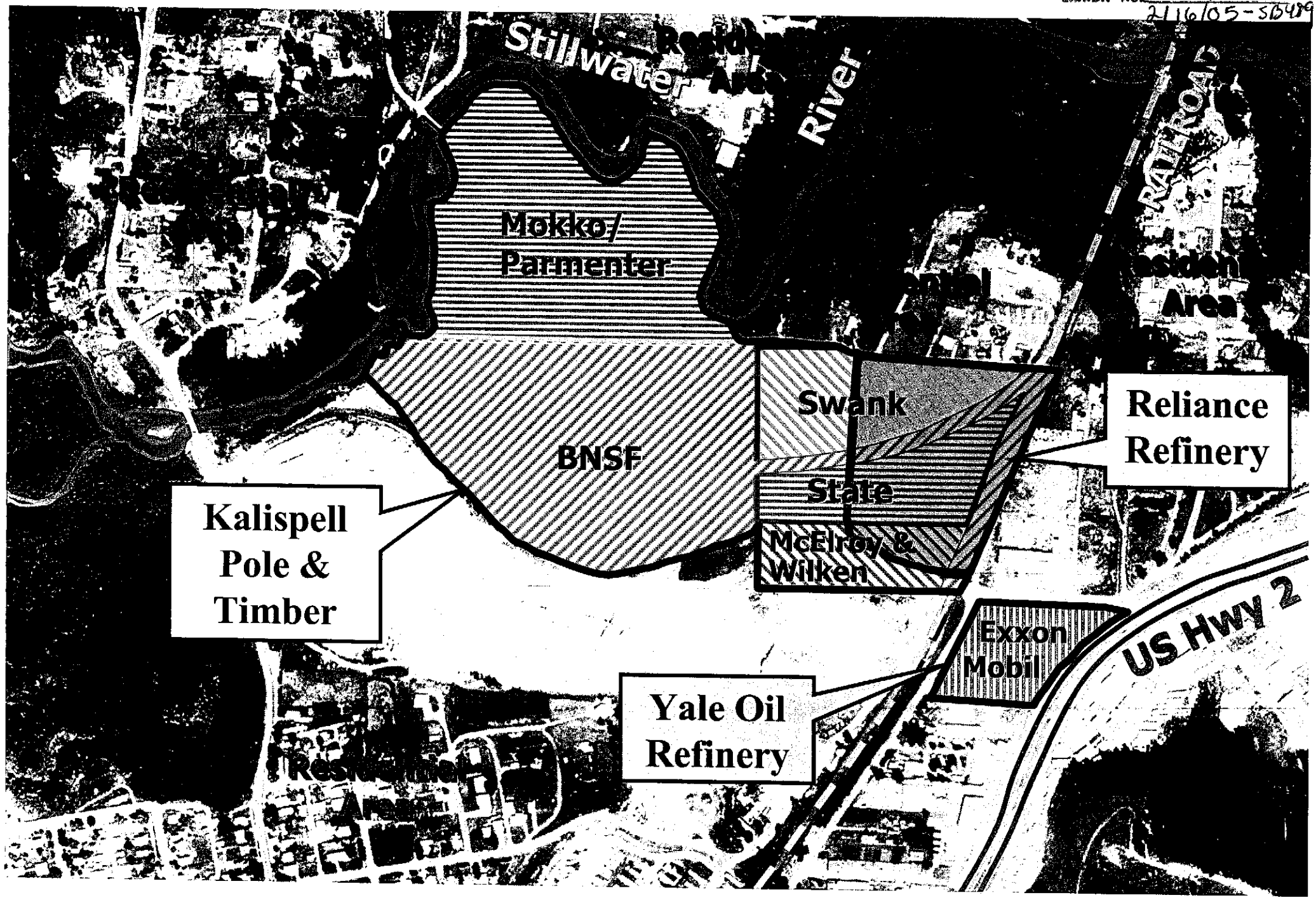
SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES
EXHIBIT NO. 10
2/16/05 - SB409



Kalispell youth saved from death in tar pit

KALISPELL, Mont. (AP) — A 12-year-old boy was up to his neck Wednesday before being rescued from an abandoned pool of tar and oil on the outskirts of this northwestern Montana city, authorities said.

One firemen who answered the call for help said it took 10 minutes to pull Jerry Downing from the dark pool.

City officials said the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Downing was playing on some logs on the pool of tar when he fell and began to sink.

Neighbors tried to pull the boy out but he was still sinking when policemen and firemen arrived, authorities said. Firemen put a ladder across the logs and pulled young Jerry out.

The pool is on state property leased by the Kalispell Post and Pole firm. The manager of the pole yard, William Behenna, said the company has tried everything to get rid of the substance. But he said it is too thick to pump and cannot be burned.

The pool is a remnant of a refinery once on the site.

Pole yard waste contaminates wells

By RICK HULL
The Daily Inter Lake

Contamination from the former Kalispell Pole and Timber site has been found in domestic wells 1,500 and 2,000 feet away.

The discovery adds fuel to the state Solid and Hazardous Waste Bureau effort to get the site on the national Superfund list. It shows a plume of contaminated groundwater is moving southeast across U.S. 2 and toward the Stillwater River.

The site is ready to undergo a point-system ranking for the Superfund list.

"Just the drinking water alone would make it a high-priority site," said Carol Fox of the bureau. "We just want something done soon."

But the Environmental Protection Agency says no new slots have opened on the Superfund list.

The just-released state report on the Kalispell site comes from a new round of testing in June. Five monitoring wells, nine domestic wells and an Evergreen Water District well were tested for contamination.

The sampling was looking for pentachlorophenol, or penta, used in wood treatment at the now-closed post and pole plant.

The plant site is along the Stillwater River, in an industrial complex between McElroy & Wilken and Pacific Steel.

Seven of the drinking-water wells, including the 120-foot well at the Evergreen Water District office and the 29-foot well of County Commissioner Howard Gipe, came up clean.

But a 21-foot well near the Evergreen Water District office on Nicholson Drive and a 25-foot well at Patty Seaman Homes showed traces of penta.

The Nicholson Drive well had 0.7 parts per billion of penta, and the Seaman well had 0.94 parts per billion of 2,4,5-trichlorophenol, a breakdown product of penta. This compares to readings of 2,033 parts per billion on the Kalispell Post and Pole site itself.

The Seaman well isn't used for drinking anymore because of a distinct odor, said Fox.

The proposed national drinking-water standard for penta is 1 part per billion. The standard becomes official next July and is the one being used by agencies, she noted.

Monitoring on the Kalispell Pole and Timber site indicates no major changes since the 1990 sampling. Some monitoring wells showed higher concentrations of penta, others showed slight decreases. One well had 9 inches of oil floating on the water, though the report notes that much of it might be oil seeping out of the soil into the hole.

The posts processed at the plant were soaked in a combination of diesel oil and penta.

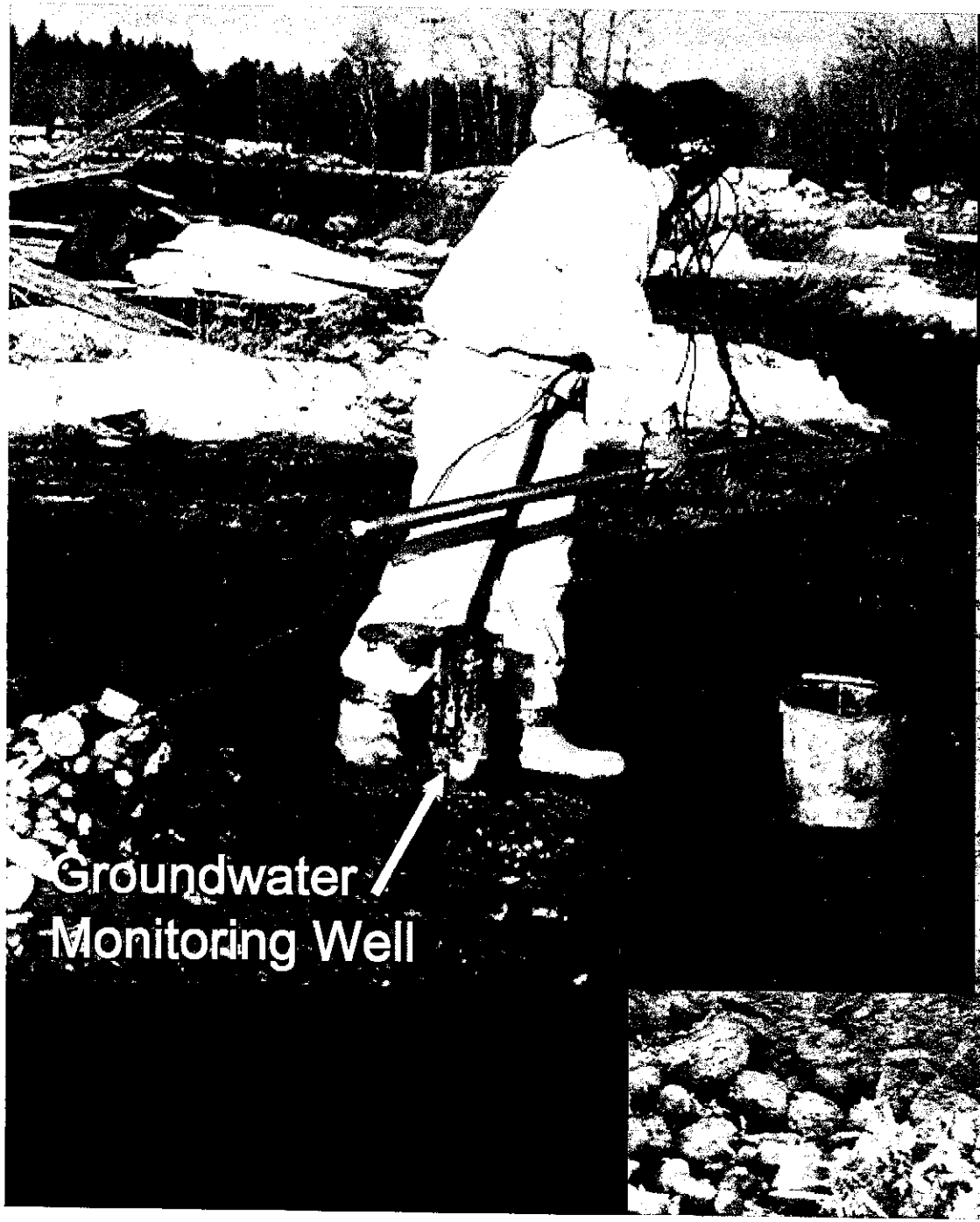
The EPA was supposed to know whether Montana would have another slot for a Superfund site at the start of the federal fiscal year Oct. 1. But Congress has not passed the Superfund budget yet, and the program is operating under a contin resolution, said Ron Bertra the EPA's Helena Super office.

Prime candidate for any tion to the Superfund list i Bitterroot Valley landfill lowed closely by Kalispell and Timber, he said. The sit through a ranking process fo national priority Superfund

There is no decision yet series of tests run by the S fund's removal division the of Sept. 23, said Mary Hag spokesperson for the Den based team. The division loo sites that may need emerg action.

A similar team mandate excavation of a marsh nea old Somers tie plant in May Concerned that a summer s might breach the shrinking rier between the contamin marsh and Flathead Lake EPA ordered the work don Burlington Northern contra pulled out 3,300 cubic yar creosote-laden mud.

Sludge



Contaminated Groundwater

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Barrels with Labels Indicating Hazardous Substances

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY