

EPA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

SEPTEMBER 2002

Record of Decision Issued For Cleanup of Operable Unit 3

States, Tribes and Federal Agencies Support the Plan

EPA Issues Operable Unit 3 Cleanup Plan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued its plan to clean up mining contamination in the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex Superfund Facility Operable Unit 3 over the next 30 years. The plan, called the Record of Decision or ROD, comes after several years of intensive studies to determine the extent of contamination and the associated risks to people and the environment. The plan describes the specific cleanup work, called the Selected Remedy, which will occur in the Basin at a cost of about \$360 million.

While the agency's work in the Basin has been the subject of considerable controversy, the governments and agencies affected by the cleanup actions in the areas targeted for cleanup – the State of Idaho, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Spokane Tribe, the State of Washington, the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and the USDA Forest Service – have given their support for conducting the cleanup selected in the ROD.

Public Input and Collaboration

The ROD is the result of more than four years of collaboration and discussion among the various levels of government in the Basin and input from the people and communities affected by the contamination.

In October 2001, EPA released a proposed cleanup plan for a 60-day public review and comment period. The comment period was extended to 120 days in response to requests. During that time the agency also held four public meetings to discuss the plan and

take oral comments. EPA received more than 3,000 separate comments on the proposal from more than 1,300 submissions by citizens, agencies, organizations and governments.

Prior to releasing the Proposed Plan, EPA also took comments on drafts of the Remedial Investigation, Feasibility Study, Ecological Risk Assessment and Human Health Risk Assessment reports that served as building blocks for the plan. Since 1999, the agency has hosted and participated in more than 200 meetings with people in the Basin

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to discuss the agency's work and get ongoing input.

This intensive public process was critical to the development of the Record of Decision. Due to the

efforts of citizen groups, local governments, community organizations and individuals, EPA staff and managers have become much more aware of the many ways that people may be affected by the cleanup of Operable Unit 3.

EPA has addressed in the ROD some of the major concerns we have heard over the past several years. Some specific concerns can also be addressed later when specific actions are being designed and constructed. EPA recognizes that some people still may not fully agree with the cleanup plan for the Basin. However, EPA believes that the ROD is based on a solid technical foundation that achieves national policies and goals while responding to regional and local concerns. The ROD represents a fair balance among the many interests while meeting our charge to address remaining human health and environmental risks in the Basin.

It is our sincere hope that the ROD will be the basis from which to move forward to the common goal of improving human health and the environment in the Basin while

supporting economic development efforts.

The ROD Addresses Concerns

The following is a list of some of the ways EPA has tried to address people's concerns in the ROD:

Scope and Cost of Cleanup Clarified The ROD clarifies where cleanup will occur and how much the work will cost. The ROD includes maps illustrating the areas where work will occur.

Disruption to Communities Minimized One goal is to minimize the disruptions caused by cleanup. Where possible, cleanup work will involve treating or containing contaminated soil and sediments instead of excavating and moving large amounts of material from one place to another. Cleanup contractors will be required to schedule work to minimize interference with property owners' plans, community events and

recreational opportunities. Completing the human health remedy in community and residential areas as soon as possible will be a top priority.

What Is The Site Name?

The correct legal name for what has been referred to as the Coeur d'Alene Basin Project is **The Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex Superfund Facility Operable Unit 3**.

This name reflects the correct structure of the overall Superfund project.

Operable Unit (OU) 1 encompasses work in the populated areas of the Bunker Hill Box. OU 2 encompasses work in the non-populated areas of the Bunker Hill Box. OU 3 encompasses work in areas of mining-related contamination outside of the Bunker Hill Box.

Major Role in Cleanup For States and Locals

The States of Idaho and Washington will have a major role in implementing cleanup work in their states. The State of Idaho formed the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission to implement the selected remedy in Idaho. EPA supports the formation of the commission and looks forward to working as a member of the commission to implement the ROD.

EPA has also provided direct funding to state and local governments to support their participation in the cleanup process.

Local Hiring and Economic Assistance

The goal is to encourage as many local people and businesses as possible to be involved with the cleanup work, so that cleanup dollars can benefit the local economies directly.

For example, the State of Idaho is conducting a residential cleanup program that will allow property owners to work directly with smaller, local contractors to do cleanup work. In addition, EPA is providing direct funding for local economic redevelopment efforts.

Community Improvements

A key part of the cleanup will be community infrastructure projects needed to conduct or maintain the remedy, such as drainage improvements.

The ROD Can Be Changed

If new information becomes available that indicates the remedy needs to be modified, the ROD can be changed accordingly.

Coeur d'Alene Lake Not Part of the ROD
 The Selected Remedy does not include remedial actions for Coeur d'Alene Lake. State, tribal, federal, and local governments are currently in the process of implementing a lake management

plan outside of the Superfund process using separate regulatory authorities.

- The Idaho Consensus Building Process
 The ROD incorporates the "common ground" ranges of remedial activity from the State of Idaho's consensus building process. This includes cleanup actions for tailings, riverbanks, floodplains and communities.
- Protection of Wetlands and Lateral Lakes
 In response to public input, the lateral lakes will
 not be used as waste repositories for materials
 excavated from other parts of the Basin.

Historic Areas

During cleanup, agencies will work with communities to help preserve important historic mine and mill sites.

Benefits of the Selected Remedy

The remedy selected in the ROD offers significant benefits for people and the environment. These benefits include:

- Protection of young children from exposure to lead and other metals.
- More certainty for property owners and communities by providing sampling data, cleaning up properties above the level of concern and removal of the Superfund designation from communities where cleanup is complete.
- Reduction of an estimated 580 pounds per day of dissolved zinc loads into the Coeur d'Alene River system from the Upper Basin and Lower Basin.
- Cleanup of 31 recreational areas in the Lower Basin and 10 areas on the Spokane River in Washington to reduce exposure to lead and other metals.
- Addition of 2,669 acres of safe wetland feeding area and 1,859 acres of safe shallow-lake waterfowl feeding area in the lateral lakes.
- Reduction of particulate lead moving downstream and improvement of wildlife areas by biostabilizing 33 miles of the most actively eroding Coeur d'Alene River banks and removing up to 2.6 million cubic yards of contaminated river bed sediments from natural depositional areas (such as near Dudley).

Cleanup Actions Selected In the ROD

The Selected Remedy represents a significant remedial response toward meeting the goal of full protection of human health and the environment in the Basin.

A primary goal of cleanup in the Basin is to prevent people (especially children and pregnant women) from coming into contact with unhealthy levels of metals contamination. Cleanup in residential and commercial areas will continue and will be targeted for completion as quickly as possible, depending on funding and property owner participation.

The Selected Remedy includes the full remedy needed to protect human health in the community and residential areas, including identified recreational areas of the Upper Basin and Lower Basin, as well as at Spokane River recreational sites upstream of Upriver Dam.

The cleanup actions selected for environmental protection in the Basin focus on improving water quality, minimizing downstream migration of metal contaminants and improving conditions for fish and wildlife populations.

For environmental protection an adaptive management approach will be used. The Selected Remedy identifies approximately 30 years of prioritized actions in areas of the Basin upstream of Coeur d'Alene Lake.

Note: Estimated costs in this Fact Sheet are based on the best available information regarding the anticipated scope of the remedy and are expressed in net present worth. Changes in the cost estimates may occur as a result of new information and data collected during the engineering design of the remedy.

Actions to Protect Human Health

Residential Properties, Education for Families and Drainage Improvements

Total estimated present worth cost for this work is \$21 million for yard remediation and \$27 million for other work related to residential cleanup. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) cost is \$200,000.

Children under six years old and pregnant women are the most at risk from exposure to lead and other metals. The primary way that young children are exposed to lead is through contact with contaminated soil outside their home and household dust. The ROD describes the actions needed to reduce children's exposure to lead through these "pathways." The cleanup actions will also ensure that people are aware of the levels of lead and other metals in the soil at their homes. EPA's plan for residential areas is as follows:*

- Begin voluntary testing of residential soils in the communities east of Kingston, Idaho.
- Provide property owners with sample results.
- Remove and replace surface soils with more than 1,000 parts per million lead; provide barriers such as vegetation for soils between 700 and 1,000 parts per million lead; for soils below 700 parts per million lead, no cleanup is needed.
- For homes where the housedust lead levels remain high after soil cleanup, interior cleaning will be evaluated.
- An important element of the cleanup in communities will be drainage controls and other improvements that will prevent recontamination of clean areas.
- In addition to the active cleanup at homes that need it, the ROD calls for a health education and intervention program that builds on the program provided by the Panhandle Health District. This program provides health and hygiene information to families

as well as a free high-efficiency vacuum cleaner loan program to limit exposure to household dust. Blood lead screening will be available as well as interior sampling at homes where young children or pregnant women reside.

* These cleanup actions will only occur in the communities upstream of Coeur d'Alene Lake. There is no need for sampling or cleanup in the residential and commercial areas of Harrison, Coeur d'Alene or Post Falls because there is no evidence of human health risks from mine waste contamination in these areas.

Commercial Areas, Rights-of-Way And Common Areas

Total estimated present worth cost for this work is \$35 million. There are no O&M costs.

Commercial areas and rights-of-way need to be addressed so that residential areas are not re-

contaminated and to minimize the movement of contaminated dust. These areas will be sampled and cleaned up either by capping or by removing and replacing contaminated soil. Access controls may be put in place in some areas to limit contact with contaminated soil.

The 21-Square Mile Bunker Hill "Box"

Superfund Monies Keep Cleanup On Track

Significant progress has been made in protecting human health and improving the environment in the Box.

EPA recognizes that more work is needed and completing residential cleanup in the Box is a top priority for EPA and the State of Idaho.

This year EPA will provide about \$5 million to continue cleanup of 100 properties in the Bunker Hill Box. In past years, the Upstream Mining Group funded these cleanups. EPA and the State of Idaho agreed to use their funds this year to keep the voluntary yard cleanups on schedule and prevent people from exposure to lead and other metals.

Additional work to continue reducing metals loading to the South Fork and ongoing efforts to protect the environment will be prioritized and coordinated with cleanup efforts throughout the Basin.

Recreational Areas Near the Coeur d'Alene River

Total estimated present worth cost for this work is \$5.9 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$720,000.

Thirty-one recreational areas near the Coeur d'Alene River (campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps) have been prioritized for cleanup. The contaminated soil at these areas will either be capped or removed, depending on the site. (See page 9 for a description of cleanup work at recreation areas along the Spokane River.)

Drinking Water

Total estimated present worth cost for this work is \$2.2 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$100,000.

All private drinking water wells east of Kingston will be tested and a safe source of water will be provided to those with contamination above levels of concern.

Information For Fishermen

Total estimated present worth cost for this work is \$910,000. There are no O&M costs.

Education and information will be provided to fishermen to advise them of the potential risks associated with eating fish from areas of concern.

Total estimated present worth cost for all Human Health work is estimated at \$92 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of all Human Health O&M cost is \$1 million.

Actions to Protect The Environment

Three environmental priorities were identified in the ROD— dissolved metals in surface water (particulary zinc and cadmium), lead in floodplain soil and sediment, and particulate lead in surface water. The ROD lays out priority cleanup actions that could be implemented over approximately 30 years and would maximize environmental protection and cost effectiveness.

Ninemile Creek

The estimated present worth cost for Ninemile Creek is \$13.5 million to \$36 million, depending on contingencies. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$1.5 million - \$6 million, depending on contingencies.

The emphasis in Ninemile Creek is on improving water quality by reducing existing sources of metals loading to the creek. A goal is to re-establish a resident fishery above Success Mine and a migration corridor below Success Mine.

The major contributing sources of contamination in Ninemile are the Interstate, Rex and Success mine and mill sites. The State of Idaho and the mining companies are already doing some work at these sites. Work to date has included moving contaminated materials out of the creek flood plain and diverting and treating contaminated groundwater from the Success tailings pile to reduce metals content.

Under the ROD, these actions will be evaluated for their effectiveness. If these actions do not meet ROD goals for reducing the metals loading to the creek, additional cleanup work may be called for. Future work may include (See Figure 1):

- Removing and relocating tailings piles
- Capping tailings piles
- Stabilizing stream banks
- Installing a surface water treatment pond

In the lower portions of the creek the ROD calls for:

 Measures to address protection of human health at the Day Rock mine and mill site

Canyon Creek

The estimated present worth cost for Canyon Creek is \$35 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$18 million.

Canyon Creek contributes more dissolved metals load to the South Fork than any other tributary—

approximately 20 to 25 percent of the load in the South Fork at its confluence with the North Fork. Cleanup of individual sources in Canyon Creek would be very difficult, costly and time consuming. The goal of the ROD for Canyon Creek is to substantially reduce, by at least 50%, dissolved and particulate metals loads discharging from the creek into the South Fork.

One potentially cost-effective approach for Canyon Creek would be to intercept the creek water in lower Canyon Creek and remove metals using passive treatment. The creek water would be diverted into a treatment pond and percolate through a layer of material that would remove the metals. The water would then be discharged back to the creek.

Before a treatment pond is constructed at Canyon Creek, bench-scale and pilot testing will be done to confirm technology effectiveness and the agencies will seek public input on possible locations and design details. Construction of a treatment pond will not begin for several years.

Canyon Creek cleanup also includes stabilizing mine dumps and stream banks that are sources of sediment and particulate metals in the creek (see Figure 1). Locations identified for stabilization are:

- Tamarack
- Omaha
- Standard-Mammoth Loading Area
- Standard-Mammoth mill
- Hercules No. 5
- Oom Paul
- Ajax No. 3, Hecla (Burke)
- Tiger-Poorman
- West Star
- Gertie
- Gorge Gulch

South Fork

The estimated present worth cost for South Fork is \$16 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$1.4 million.

In the floodplain of the South Fork (in areas outside of the Bunker Hill Box), tailings "hot spots" will be excavated and properly disposed. An estimated 102,000 cubic yards of tailings will be removed along the South Fork (See Figure 1).

Streamside actions will include stabilizing the stream channel and banks to reduce erosion. The ROD also identifies six sites along the South Fork that have potential human health risks and ecological impacts:



- National Millsite
- Morning No. 6 Mine and Millsite
- Golconda
- Hercules Millsite in Wallace
- U.S. Bureau of Mines Impoundment
- Silver Dollar Mine

Work at these sites will include excavating material, capping and grading.

Pine Creek

The estimated present worth cost for Pine Creek is \$14 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$2.1 million.

Considerable cleanup work has already been done in the Pine Creek watershed, particularly by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Pine Creek currently supports an adult fishery, including brook trout and a smaller population of native cutthroat trout. However, populations and reproduction in some reaches of the creek are limited, due to mining-impacted habitats and metals concentrations. The long-term goals for Pine Creek include the return of a native fishery and protecting birds and other animals.

The goal for the ROD at Pine Creek is to improve conditions to allow natural increases in salmonid populations, with an emphasis on native fish, and to improve conditions to allow for spawning and rearing.

The actions implemented in the Pine Creek watershed would add to the work already conducted by the BLM. Actions would include bank and bed stabilization and near stream revegetation to mitigate the effects of mining impacts. The actions would also include hot spot removals within the stream and at former mine and mill sites, including:

- Upper and Lower Constitution
- Highland-Surprise
- Nevada-Stewart
- Hilarity
- Little Pittsburg
- Sidney (Denver Creek)
- Nabob

Several of these sites (Upper and Lower Constitution, Highland Surprise, Nevada-Stewart, and Hilarity) also have human health risks for potential recreational users.

Lead in Floodplains Soil and Sediment

The estimated present worth cost for floodplains (lead) is \$81 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$7.2 million.

Approximately 95 percent of the area covered by wetlands and shallow lakes in the Lower Basin have sediment with lead concentrations that are toxic to waterfowl. Resource agencies identified priority areas for cleanup in the Lower Basin based on heavy use by waterfowl, high levels of lead in sediments, accessibility and relatively low potential for recontamination. In total, about 4,500 acres of safe waterfowl feeding areas will be provided by the cleanup actions specified in the ROD.

Areas identified as top priorities are (see Figure 2):

- Thompson Lake (300 acres of wetland area and 256 acres of lake area)
- Thompson Marsh (59 acres of wetland area and 122 acres of lake area)
- Bare Marsh (165 acres of wetland area)
- Medicine Lake (198 acres of wetland area 230 acres of lake area)
- Lane Marsh (213 acres of wetland area)
- Cave Lake (190 acres of wetland area and 746 acres of lake area)
- Anderson Lake (44 acres of wetland area and 505 acres of lake area)

Cleanup work in these areas will depend on the specific site conditions and will include a combination of consolidating contaminated sediment, capping contaminated areas with clean material and amending soils to reduce the toxicity to waterfowl.

In additional to these top priority areas, a goal of the Selected Remedy is to increase the amount of safe feeding areas by identifying and cleaning up approximately 1,500 acres that are currently used for agriculture. These actions would only be taken with the agreement and cooperation of the current owners.

Lead in Surface Water

The estimated present worth cost for surface water (lead) is \$71 million. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of O&M cost is \$5.1 million.

Three sources are suspected to contribute to movement of lead in the Lower Basin: sediments from the Upper Basin, contaminated river bank

Sheet -

Basin Record of

Decision

Lower Coeur d'Alene Basin Cleanup Actions

sediments in the Lower Basin, and river bed sediments in the Lower Basin. The banks in many areas of the Lower Basin are steep and actively eroding into the river. Initially, cleanup actions will focus on removing contaminated material from the most actively eroding river banks in the Lower Basin.

The areas for bank stabilization will be prioritized based on the degree of erosion occurring and the concentrations of metals in the

riverbank sediments.

In addition, the ROD calls for removing up to 2.6 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment from the natural deposition areas such as near Dudley. This may have an added benefit of deepening the river channel for boats.

Total estimated present worth cost for actions in this ROD for protection of the environment in the Upper Basin and Lower Basin is \$250 million, including contingencies. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of all Environmental O&M cost is \$40 million.

Coeur d'Alene Lake

The Selected Remedy does not include remedial actions for Coeur d'Alene Lake. State, tribal, federal, and local governments are currently in the process of implementing a lake management plan outside of the Superfund process using separate regulatory authorities.

Spokane River Cleanup

Total estimated present worth cost for Spokane River Cleanup is between \$4.5 and \$11 million, depending on extent of work needed. Estimated net present worth of 30 years of all O&M cost is \$1.4 million for lower extent of work and \$1.3 million for upper extent of work.

The ROD does not identify any areas needing cleanup on the Idaho portion of the Spokane River. For the Spokane River in Washington, a limited number of sediment and soil sites in and adjacent to the Spokane River have been identified for cleanup on the basis of potential human and ecological risks. The sites are located along a 16-mile reach of the river between the Idaho/Washington state line and Upriver Dam, which is upstream of the city of Spokane (see Figure 3). The identified areas include 10 shoreline sites and an underwater site where

contaminated sediments have accumulated directly behind Upriver Dam.

A range of estimated costs was developed for cleanup of these areas. The lower range was developed based on capping of contaminated sediments. The upper range was developed based on excavation and disposal of contaminated sediments.

How Much Material?

The estimated volumes of material that may require excavation and disposal are about 500,000 to 900,000 cubic yards of material in the Upper Basin and up to 3.9 million cubic yards in the Lower Basin.

By comparison, there are currently about 2.1 million cubic yards of tailings in the Hecla-Star Tailings Ponds in lower Canyon Creek and about 13.6 million cubic yards of dredge spoils in the Mission Flats area. There are about 26 million cubic yards of waste material in the Central Impoundment Area.

Repositories For Material Generated By Cleanup Actions

Cleanup in the Basin will require construction of repositories for disposal of metals-contaminated soils, sediments, source materials, and treatment residuals. The number and size of repositories to accommodate the estimated volumes will be determined during the Remedial Design phase. All locations will be evaluated using criteria such as proximity to cleanup areas, environmental conditions, depth to groundwater, etc. All locations will also be subject to long-term institutional controls and monitoring to ensure the integrity of the repositories. There will be a public evaluation process for the siting and design of all repositories.

Doing The Work: Conducting Cleanup

EPA agrees that in order for the Basin cleanup to be successful, the states, tribes, federal and local agencies will need to work together in a coordinated and cooperative way. EPA will continue to have responsibility for ensuring that the cleanup work meets the requirements of the ROD and of CERCLA laws and regulations. EPA will be a member of the new Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission and looks forward to continuing to work closely with the governments and communities as we implement the cleanup plan. We look to the Commission to help prioritize and coordinate the cleanup activities specified in the ROD.

Next Steps: Remedial Design/Remedial Action

The next step in the cleanup process is Remedial Design/Remedial Action (RD/RA). This phase of cleanup involves the design, construction, and implementation of the work set forth in the ROD. This phase of the cleanup is the time when people can provide input on the specific cleanup actions in their communities. There will be many opportunities to provide input during this phase of cleanup.

Remedial Design

Remedial Design (RD) is an engineering phase during which additional technical information is incorporated into technical plans and specifications for the cleanup action. These specifications are based upon the general descriptions of the actions in the Selected Remedy in the ROD. Treatability testing (which may include pilot-scale field testing or demonstration projects) or other additional data collection activities are commonly required during RD to refine the design specifics.

Remedial Action

After completion of the RD, the Remedial Action (RA) begins. During RA, contractors are hired to construct the remedy. Full-scale implementation can then begin.

Can The Record of Decision Be Changed?

Yes. EPA frequently changes RODs based on new information. For example, if new information or new technologies become available, EPA can formally amend the ROD or can issue what is called an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD). Depending on the nature of the change, EPA may:

- Prepare a fact sheet for public distribution. Nonsignificant or minor changes do not undergo formal public review and comment.
- Document *significant* changes in an ESD.
- Document fundamental changes in a ROD Amendment. A revised Proposed Plan is published that highlights the proposed changes. The final decision to amend is not made until after consideration of public comment. The affected states and tribes would be asked to concur on ROD Amendments.

Where To Get More Information

Dick Martindale, 208-664-4588 EPA Coeur d'Alene Field Office 1910 Northwest Boulevard, Suite 208 Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Marianne Deppman,

1-800-424-4372 EPA Region 10 Office 1200 6th Avenue Seattle, WA 98101

Where to Review the Record of Decision

You can review the Record of Decision and supporting documents on EPA's website and at the following information repositories:

Wallace Public Library

415 River Street Wallace, ID 83873 208-752-4571

North Idaho College Library

(Contains entire Administrative Record) 1000 Garden Avenue Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814 208-769-3355

Harrison City Hall

100 Fredrick Street Harrison, ID 83833 208-689-3212

Spokane Public Library

906 West Main Ave. Spokane, WA 99201 509-626-5336

EPA - Coeur d'Alene Field Office

1910 Northwest Blvd., Suite 208 Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814 208-664-4588 Contact: Dick Martindale

EPA - Seattle Office

(Contains entire Administrative Record) 1200 6th Avenue Seattle, WA 98101 206-553-1200 (Ask for Superfunds Records Center)

EPA's Website:

http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/cda Note: Electronic copy of ROD available after mid-September

Record of Decision Available on CD-ROM

The entire ROD (this includes the Overview Responsiveness Summary and the Point-by-Point, or individual comment responses on the Proposed Plan) will be available on CD-ROM for those who would like a copy in that format. EPA encourages people to use the CD-ROM version of the ROD. However, for those unable to use the CD-ROM format, EPA will have a limited number of paper copies available for individuals' requests.

If you would like to request a CD-ROM and have not already received one, contact EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center (PERC) at 1-800-424-4372 or 206-553-1200.

We expect the CD ROM to be available after September 16th. Please do not call the PERC until after the 16th to make your request.



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