

ASHLAND/NSP LAKEFRONT SITE
CERCLA Docket No. V-W-04-C-764
USEPA ID# WISFN0507952
January 2021 MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT (No.102)

Pursuant to Paragraph 31 of the Consent Decree effective October 19, 2012, in the United States District Court, Western District of Wisconsin, Case No. 12-cv-00565, Northern States Power Company (NSPW), a Wisconsin Corporation, submits the following Monthly Progress Report for Phase 1 Remedial Design (RD) and Remedial Action (RA).

A. Activity for This Reporting Period

The following is a summary of the actions that were taken toward compliance with the Consent Decree during this reporting period.

- NSPW issued the December 2020 Monthly Progress Report in January 2021 to EPA and WDNR.
- Site activities included progress on the following:
 - Operation of the Long-Term Water Treatment System (WTS) equipment. 963,387 gallons of extracted groundwater were treated in the month of January. The total extracted groundwater treated from startup through January is 81,122,309 gallons.
 - Operation of the hydraulic control wells in the Kreher Park area.
 - Operation of Copper Falls Formation wells for non-aqueous phase liquid (NAPL) recovery. Direct NAPL recovery volumes and measured NAPL layer thickness, for the isolated NAPL recovery wells (CFW-12 thru CFW-15) and select wells in Kreher Park, are presented on the attached Table. As the Table indicates, 317 gallons of NAPL were recovered directly from various wells in January 2021 and collected in totes for proper disposal. An additional 960 gallons of NAPL were collected from the EQ Tanks in January. The total volume of NAPL recovered year to date is 1,277 gallons.
 - The groundwater monitoring well network was sampled in October 2020 (4th Quarter 2020). The October 2020 Groundwater Monitoring Report is currently being reviewed by Xcel Energy. The next groundwater sampling event is scheduled to begin in April 2021.

B. Summary of Results

The following is an estimate of the percent complete of RA through January 2021:

- Percentage of Kreher Park Containment complete: 100%
- Percentage of Upper Bluff complete (based on tons): 100%
- Percentage of Kreher Park complete (based on tons): 100%
- Percentage of Copper Falls Design complete: 100%
- Percentage of Copper Falls construction complete: 100%
- Overall RA complete: 100%

Groundwater and Long Term WTS Data are available to EPA and other regulatory agencies on the O&M, Inc. Project Portal site. Data from the Long-Term WTS are also being generated and provided to the regulatory agencies under separate submittal.

Kreher Park Capping and Restoration design, remedial action construction quality assurance documents and other construction related documents are available on the Braun Intertec project portal site.

Kreher Park Capping and Restoration

NSPW received comments on the Pre-Final Design from the EPA on May 15, 2019. NSPW submitted a response to comments document and a revised Pre-Final Design on June 17, 2019. NSPW received final approval of the Final Design from EPA on July 11, 2019. EPA approved the revised City redevelopment plans on July 24, 2019. NSPW provided the requested approved Final Design follow-up responses to EPA on August 2, 2019.

Cap construction continued through summer and fall 2019. The Cap construction was completed in November 2019. The EPA determined the capping project complete in the issuance of a Preliminary Close-Out Report (PCOR) in December 2019. New electrical power wires, communication wires, pumps and controls installation were completed July 1, 2020. Some new sod was placed in July and has established well. The Contractor watered the sod and other select areas during dry periods in September.

The City no-mow grass was growing but at a less than optimal rate. Following conversations with the City and the capping project landscape contractor, the City authorized overseeding the no-mow cap grass area with turf grass seed that was used on other areas of the project. It was hydroseeded using water the week of September 7. Following seeding, the entire KP cap area, including sod areas, received fertilizer.

EPA issued comments on the KP Cap and Restoration Project Construction Completion Report on August 6. Braun Intertec posted a revised KP Cap and Restoration Project Construction Completion report to the project portal on September 28 for review and concurrence.

The cap construction contractor and engineers reviewed the vegetation establishment conditions in late October and early November. The engineers and contractor determined that seeded areas had established at a rate of greater than 70 percent coverage and that the sod was well established. The contractor mobilized to the site in mid-November and removed all remaining stormwater BMPs (silt fence, biorolls, gravel bags in swales). Bare soil areas where the silt fence and biorolls were removed were hand seeded. No further stormwater inspections or BMP maintenance is required related to the KP Cap construction project. Cap inspections and maintenance have now shifted to operations, maintenance and monitoring of the Phase I remedy.

EPA approved the KP Cap and Restoration Project Construction Completion Report in a letter dated January 15, 2021.

EPA also issued the Phase 1 Certification of Completion in a letter dated January 15, 2021.

C. Upcoming Actions

The following data collection or other activities are anticipated to be conducted over the next six weeks.

- Operation of the Long-Term WTS.
- Continued DNAPL recovery from the CFW and Kreher Park wells.
- Routine inspections of the KP cap and groundwater extraction system wells.
- Submit a technical memorandum recommending modifications to the groundwater sampling program.

D. Challenges Encountered and Corrective Action Taken

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there are many potential challenges. Contingencies have been put in place to address situations that may occur.

- Since O&M, Inc. specializes in operating groundwater remediation systems we have additional highly trained and experienced water treatment plant operators on standby, should the Ashland site operators get infected by COVID-19 or otherwise need to quarantine due to exposure.
- O&M, Inc. has increased the inventory of carbon, chemicals, equipment, etc. to keep the plant running if the supply chain is interrupted.
- Specific procedures are in place to keep the site operators and vendors from contacting one another during deliveries or pickups, keeping everyone as safe as possible.
- A “Notice of Critical Infrastructure” letter from Xcel Energy was provided to O&M, Inc., contractors and vendors. This letter should allow contractors and vendors to travel to and from the site to perform their various services.
- The laboratory used for LTWTP sampling encountered quality control issues with one of the four December 2020 samples. The lab is investigating the potential causes of the issues and is performing an audit. One potential quality verification the lab is proposing is to split samples and send to two of their labs for analysis. NSPW will report back to DNR when audit results are received and recommendations are implemented.

E. Modifications Proposed or Approved

- The WDNR approved modifications to the WPDES permit requirements that included changing the PAH method from 625 SIM to 8270 SIM and eliminating benzo(e)pyrene from the list of compounds.
- Due to laboratory challenges, quality control issues were identified with one of the four samples collected in December and scheduled to be reported out by January 15. The WDNR approved an extension of the eDMR due date for January and the report was submitted on January 20.

F. Community Involvement

The following activities associated with the Public Communication and Involvement Plan, led by the WDNR, were either conducted during this reporting period or are being planned over the next six weeks.

- The next CAG and public meetings have not been scheduled.