



## Western Phosphate Field: U.S.G.S.

The Western Phosphate Field is a 350,000-square-kilometer area of the northern Rocky Mountains. Darkened areas represent exposures of the Phosphoria Formation.



VIEW OF THE CONDA MINE, NOW ABANDONED, NORTHEAST OF SODA SPRINGS

**GOVERNMENT-INDUSTRY INDUCED SELENIUM DISASTER  
IN THE U.S. WESTERN PHOSPHATE FIELD**

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

## FINDINGS OF FACT REPORT

### GOVERNMENT-INDUSTRY INDUCED SELENIUM DISASTER IN THE WESTERN U.S. PHOSPHATE FIELD

TYPE OF REPORT:	REPORT DATE	FILE SPECIFICATIONS
FACT FINDINGS – PHOSPHATE MINING	2010	FNL:/FOFCondaMine

**NOTE TO READER:** This is the last in a series of reports prepared by *Patrick Porgans & Associates, Inc.*, (P&A) conducted on phosphate mining, selenium mobilization, and environmental contamination, adversely impacting the public trust resources and private property. This report, entitled: ***Findings of Fact, Government-Industry Induced Selenium Disaster in the U.S. Western Phosphate Field***, provides a comprehensive synopsis of the chronological events leading up to the prevailing conditions responsible for the widespread selenium contamination attributable to mining activities, conducted on private lands and federally-leased properties, throughout the U.S. Western Phosphate Field, by members of the Idaho Mining Association (IMA). Furthermore, it examines the reason(s) why little has been done to begin actual remediation of the yet-to-be quantified mass of contamination that has and will plague this area for centuries to come.

**PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT:** It is not the intent or purpose of this report to cast aspersions or to make unfounded accusations regarding the party(s) at fault for the government-industry induced selenium disaster in the Western Phosphate Field. The findings of fact are self-evident as to whom the responsible parties are in this case, rather, the contents of this report should be viewed as a means to reconcile this longstanding and unmitigated disaster in a manner that is proactive, mutually inclusive, solution oriented and beneficial to all of the affected parties and not just the government and mining industry.

**FINDINGS:** The records attest that the phosphate-mining industry and government representatives have not only failed to adequately identify the extent of the short- and long-term socioeconomic and environmental impacts attributable to phosphate mining, as well as the risks that open-pit mining contamination poses to both public lands and private property, but also how it effects economical sustainability and financial viability of the region.

**OBJECTIVE - TIME FOR ACTION:** It has been more than 13 years since the first reported death of public trust resources and livestock, attributable to selenium poisoning (selenosis). Since that time, a plethora of studies have and continue to be conducted, numerous memoranda of understandings and related agreements have been consummated, between industry and government personnel, and a significant sum of money has been expended. Albeit, the levels of contamination and the risks attributable to the government-industry induced selenium disaster has yet to be fully assessed, let alone abated, necessitating the need to initiate actions to bring this matter to closure. Heretofore, government and industry actions appear to have been more about self-indulgent regulatory ingratiating, conducting business as usual, expanding or renewing phosphate leases, with limited focus on resolution or viable remediation, and/or practical solutions to abate the threat that this disaster has imposed on private property and Public Trust resources in the West. While it is commendable for government to maintain a “friendly” relationship with the mining industry, it should not be at the expense or to the demise of either the public trust resources or private property. **This information contained herein is prefaced on government-industry source data; in order to keep the contents of the “quotations” in context, certain information is repeated in the text of this report.** 🌐