



**California Regional Water Quality Control Board**  
**Central Valley Region**  
Katherine Hart, Chair



Linda S. Adams  
Acting Secretary for  
Environmental Protection

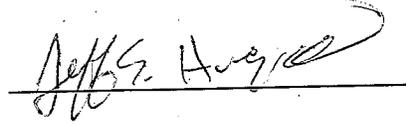
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Governor

TO: Victor Izzo  
Senior Engineering Geologist  
Title 27 Permitting and Mining

FROM: Jeff Huggins  
WRCE  
Title 27 Permitting and Mining

DATE: 15 June 2011

SIGNATURE: 

SUBJECT: **WALKER MINE - RESPONSIBLE PARTY RECORDS SEARCH,  
ANACONDA GEOLOGICAL COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING**

**Background**

Walker Mine is an inactive copper mine in northeastern Plumas County. The mine was discovered in 1904 and in production from 1915 until 1941. The underground workings are extensive, with about thirteen horizontal miles of workings extending vertically almost 2,000-feet. Oxidation of the sulfides in these workings has caused acid mine drainage and severely impacted water quality in Dolly Creek and Little Grizzly Creek.

In 1987, the Central Valley Water Board, as part of an enforcement action against the Calicopia Corporation, placed a mine seal in Walker Mine. The mine seal stopped the discharge of acid mine drainage from within the mine to Little Grizzly Creek. Since that action, the quality of water in Little Grizzly Creek has improved significantly.

However, the Walker Mine has since been abandoned and Calicopia Corporation and any potential successors no longer exist. For the past 20-years, the Central Valley Water Board has incurred considerable obligations for long term operations and maintenance of the mine seal. This is expensive and the liabilities are not insignificant. If the Central Valley Water Board is to reduce its liabilities for Walker Mine, it must determine if a responsible party exists.

Walker Mine was operated by Walker Mining Company (WMC) of Salt Lake City. International Smelting and Refining Company (ISRC) held slightly more than a 50% stock interest in WMC during a majority of the company's period of existence (approximately 1916 to 1941). ISRC is believed to have been a subsidiary to Anaconda Copper Mining Company (Anaconda). Preliminary research by staff indicates that both WMC and ISRC were controlled during that same period by Anaconda. ARCO is successor to Anaconda.

Anaconda's Geological Documents Collection is maintained by the University of Wyoming. The Anaconda Geological Documents Collection is the scientific product of the Anaconda Company's 90-year program of exploration and development work throughout the United States and in 110 foreign countries.

**California Environmental Protection Agency**

A previous search of the Anaconda Geological Documents Collection by Central Valley Water Board staff in the late 1990's provided information that links the operations of WMC to Anaconda. A review of the index of that search indicates that other documents exist which may provide a clearer link between WMC and Anaconda.

Paid Anaconda Collection Memberships are required in order to access the collection. The State agency membership annual fee is \$750.00.

This category is open to any State, County, or City Agency.

- Access by any designated researcher who is a full-time regular employee of the State Agency.
- Materials accessed from the files are limited to the state which the agency represents.
- Unlimited duplication at the rates specified.

#### Duplication Rates

Photocopies (Black/White) or Scans (Color or Black/White) up to 11x17": \$1.00/page. 50% discount offered for self-service black/white photocopies made on-site.

#### Oversize Duplication

Map Photocopies (black/white; up to 36" wide) or Scans (color or black/white, up to 42" wide): \$2.00/per square foot.

Scans burned to CD/DVD and shipped free of charge.

#### Summary

In the past year, staff has made considerable progress in understanding the relationship between WMC, ISRC, and Anaconda. However, if we are to name Anaconda and its successor (ARCO) as a responsible party, we need more detailed information showing that Anaconda directed the operations of WMC. Staff believes this information is in the University of Wyoming's Anaconda Geological Documents Collection.

Therefore, staff recommends that funds from Cleanup and Abatement Account No. 69 should be used to pay the State agency membership, annual fee of \$750.00 and the duplication rates listed above.

Attachment:

Completed Membership Form and information on the University of Wyoming's Anaconda Geological Documents Collection.