

# Fact Sheet #10

## Nevada Environmental Response Trust Site

### December 2020

HENDERSON, NEVADA

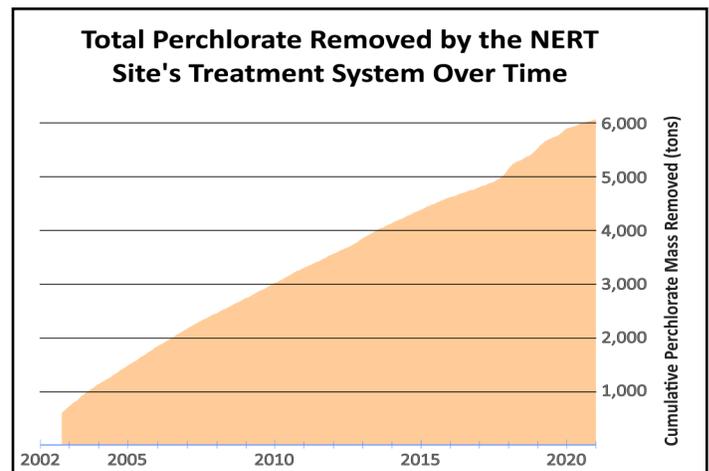
Una versión en español de este documento también está disponible en el sitio web [www.NERT-Trust.com](http://www.NERT-Trust.com) o al contactar a James Dotchin (JD) por teléfono (702-668-3914) o por correo electrónico ([jdotchin@ndep.nv.gov](mailto:jdotchin@ndep.nv.gov)).

**Overview** — The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) oversee all cleanup activities at the Nevada Environmental Response Trust (NERT) Site. The NERT Site is part of the Black Mountain Industrial (BMI) Complex in Henderson, Nevada. The NERT, also called the Trust, was created in 2011 as part of Tronox Inc.'s bankruptcy and the NERT Site was conveyed to the Trust at that time. The Trust does not conduct any business at the NERT Site; its sole purpose is to address contamination from historic operations at the NERT Site that occurred prior to the Trust's formation. Environmental cleanup at nearby properties in the BMI Complex are also overseen by NDEP, but these are not the responsibility of NERT and therefore not discussed in this fact sheet.

#### Key Facts:

- Groundwater is not a source of drinking water in the City of Henderson.
- NDEP has been sharing its progress on the cleanup with the community since 2007; this fact sheet gives the community an update on activities performed in 2020.
- The cleanup of groundwater contaminated by former operations at the NERT Site began in 1987 and continues today. Additional investigations are still being performed.
- Since operation of a treatment system began at the NERT Site, the amount of perchlorate contamination from the NERT Site that has entered the Las Vegas Wash has been reduced by more than 90%.
- 2020 also marked the 21st year of near-continuous operation of that treatment system. Approximately 330,000 pounds of perchlorate were removed from the environment in the last year; since treatment began, the total amount of perchlorate removed is approximately 12.13 million pounds.
- Various groundwater treatment options are currently being tested to determine the best long-term solutions; the results, along with NDEP's selected final remedy, will be available to the public for review during the public comment period.

**Cleanup at the NERT Site** — Historical operations at the NERT Site contaminated the soil and underlying groundwater with four primary chemicals. Perchlorate and chlorate – the most widespread of the four – were historically manufactured at the NERT Site. These chemicals are often used to produce rocket fuel, missiles, fireworks, flares, and explosives. Two additional chemicals – hexavalent chromium and chloroform – have been detected in lesser quantities at the NERT Site. Since industrial operations began at the NERT Site in the 1940s, some of this contamination moved in the groundwater, going as far north as the Las Vegas Wash. The Trust continues to operate a groundwater capture and treatment system which has reduced contamination to the Las Vegas Wash from the NERT Site by more than 90%.



NERT is investigating the contamination in an established area called the NERT Remedial Investigation Study Area (Study Area). This Study Area includes the NERT Site and areas to the north, east, and northeast of the NERT Site. The Study Area is divided into three areas termed "operable units" or OUs. Each of the three OUs has its own set of cleanup goals, with the ultimate goal being to mitigate or minimize the movement of contaminated groundwater from the NERT Site to the Las Vegas Wash to be protective of Lake Mead, the Colorado River, and all downstream interests.



Installation of monitoring wells near the Las Vegas Wash, April 2020

**Progress Towards Meeting Clean-up Goals** — Cleanup at the NERT Site follows the environmental rules of the USEPA and the State of Nevada. NERT is progressing through the cleanup process using the requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, commonly known as CERCLA or Superfund. It is designed to identify, investigate, and clean up sites to protect the public and the environment. In order to meet cleanup goals, the contamination in all three of NERT's OUs first needs to be defined through an investigation; then, engineering evaluations of cleanup options will be completed. Final cleanup efforts can only be determined after all investigations and engineering evaluations are completed.

NERT achieved two important milestones in 2020:

**1** Completion of the soil and groundwater investigation in OU-1 and OU-2. Through this six-year program, more than 45,000 analyses were performed on over 6,000 samples, ensuring NERT has a complete understanding of the environmental conditions. NERT's investigation of OU-3 is approximately 85% complete and is expected to be completed by August 2021.

**2** Began an environmental study to evaluate in-situ (i.e. in the ground) treatment of perchlorate in an area adjacent to the Las Vegas Wash. This critical study will provide invaluable information on how to remove as much perchlorate in groundwater as possible before it reaches the Las Vegas Wash.

**Investigation Findings** — The investigation of the Study Area focuses on contamination in groundwater that has moved from the NERT Site toward and into the Las Vegas Wash. A report detailing the findings of the OU-1 and OU-2 investigation will be completed in early 2021. That report will be called the Remedial Investigation Report for OU-1 and OU-2. The primary purpose

of this report is to define the nature (i.e. what chemicals) and extent (i.e. where the chemicals are) of the contamination from the NERT Site within the boundaries of OU-1 and OU-2. The NERT has accomplished this objective, and also confirmed that the existing groundwater treatment system captures virtually all of the contamination currently moving away from OU-1 toward the Las Vegas Wash. However, groundwater contamination present in the eastern portions of OU-2 and OU-3 continues to flow towards the Las Vegas Wash and will be addressed in the future as part of the final cleanup plan.

### Planned Activities for 2021

- Submit the Remedial Investigation Report for OU-1 & OU-2
- Complete the OU-3 investigation
- Continue operating the groundwater treatment system
- Continue testing and evaluating treatment technologies
- Perform an evaluation of risks to human health and ecological receptors (such as birds, mammals, and plants) for all three OUs



Ecological sampling in the Las Vegas Wash, June 2020

### Where can I find more information about the NERT Site?

A summary of important information and milestone documents can be found at [www.NERT-Trust.com](http://www.NERT-Trust.com) and <http://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/site-cleanup-program/active-cleanup-sites/bmi-complex/nevada-environmental-response-trust-nert>.

If you have questions, please contact the Community Involvement Coordinator at NDEP:

**James (JD) Dotchin**  
Chief Environmental Programs  
Bureau of Industrial Site Cleanup  
Nevada Division of Environmental Protection  
375 E. Warm Springs Road, Suite 200  
Las Vegas, NV 89119  
702-668-3914  
[jdotchin@ndep.nv.gov](mailto:jdotchin@ndep.nv.gov)

### Where can I find more information about other investigations in the Black Mountain Industrial (BMI) Complex?

NDEP is overseeing additional cleanup programs in other parts of the NERT Study Area, as well as other areas of Henderson. Some of these programs are being implemented by the Basic Remediation Company; TIMET; Olin Chlor Alkali Products (Olin), Stauffer & Montrose; and Endeavour, LLC (PEPCON/AMPAC).

Background information and key documents are available on NDEP's website at <https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/black-mountain-industrial-bmi-complex/>.

### Where can I find more information about my drinking water?

Drinking water provided by the City of Henderson (and throughout the Las Vegas area) is safe to drink. Water supplied to the City of Henderson comes from Lake Mead via the Colorado River. You can learn more about the quality of your water in the City of Henderson 2020 Water Quality Report: <https://www.cityofhenderson.com/home/showpublisheddocument?id=2654>

# Nevada Environmental Response Trust (NERT) Remedial Investigation (RI) Study Area 2020 Fact Sheet Distribution Area

