Record of Decision Encyclopedia Article

Record of Decision

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Record of Decision

A Record of Decision (ROD) is a public document that explains which remedial alternatives will be used to clean up a Superfund site. A Superfund site is a site listed on the **National Priorities List** (NPL), which identifies sites in the United States that pose the greatest long term threat to human health and the **environment**. Placement on the NPL means that clean up of the site must follow the requirements of the **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act**, which outlines the process for completing site clean up.

The first step in the process is to conduct a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS). During the RI, data are collected to characterize site conditions, determine the nature of the wastes, assess risk to human health and the environment, and conduct treatability studies to evaluate the potential performance and cost of treatment technologies being considered. The FS is the mechanism used to develop, screen and evaluate alternative remedial actions. A result of the RI/FS is the development of the Proposed Plan, which is the identification of a recommended remedy. The preferred remedy is one that will be effective over both the short and long-term, reduce toxicity, mobility and/or volume of contamination, be technically and economically feasible to implement, and be acceptable to the state and the community. After a period for public comment on the RI/FS and the Proposed Plan, the ROD is prepared. The ROD has three basic components: (1) the Declaration, which is an abstract and data certification sheet for the key information in the ROD and is the formal authorizing signature page; (2) the Decision Summary, which provides an overview of site characteristics, alternatives evaluated, and the analysis of those options; it also identifies the selected remedy and explains how the remedy fulfills statutory and regulatory requirements; and (3) the Responsiveness Summary, which presents stakeholder concerns that were obtained during the public comment period about the site and preferences regarding the remedial alternatives. The Summary also explains how those concerns were addressed and how the preferences were factored into the remedy selection process.

Resources

Books

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *A Guide to Preparing Superfund Proposed Plans, Records of Decision, and other Remedy Selection Decision Documents. EPA 540-R-98-031.* Washington, DC: Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1999.

Other

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Superfund Cleanup Process.* March 28, 2001 [cited June 2002]. <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/ac tion/process/sfproces.htm>.