

Contracts awarded to clean up Meyers Landfill

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has awarded two contracts for work to be done at the toxic Meyers Landfill on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe.

However, the decades-old lawsuit brought by the U.S. Forest Service against a slew of defendants must be resolved before work can begin. The feds own the land that the county used as a dump until the early 1970s.

The federal government filed a lawsuit almost 20 years ago when vinyl chloride was found seeping into the groundwater.

“They are working really diligently to settle it,” said Gerri Silva, director of the county’s Environmental Management Department, said of the lawsuit.

With the rule of no dirt being able to be moved until May 1 in the Lake Tahoe Basin, officials have their fingers crossed a settlement will be reached by then so the contractor can begin work on the cap. The cap on the old dump off Pioneer Trail could take all summer to construct.

Sukut Construction of Southern California was awarded the \$2.6 million contract. This is much less than the more than \$5 million the U.S. Forest Service had projected.

Sukut has worked on a number of landfill projects up and down California, with Jamestown the nearest site. Its website says, “Sukut is one of the nation’s top landfill constructor. We provide a full range of construction for all elements for private and public landfills through landfill expansion, landfill repair and landfill closures.”

The company is familiar with the South Shore, having been a subcontractor on work contracted by the county after the 2007 Angora Fire.

El Dorado also awarded a nearly \$240,000 contract to Geosyntec Consultants to oversee quality control. The company is headquartered in Georgia, but has offices in the Bay Area.

This oversight is required for Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) projects. Geosyntec has done work in the basin before for the Forest Service.

The case needs to be settled to have work begin because money is not in hand to honor the bids. A \$750,000 grant from the California Integrated Waste Management Board is all that's secured. Much of what is being discussed by attorneys is who will pay what amount.