

REM III PROGRAM

REMEDIAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES  
AT SELECTED UNCONTROLLED HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE DISPOSAL SITES  
WITHIN EPA REGIONS I - IV

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FINAL REVISED COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN  
PINETTE'S SALVAGE YARD SITE  
WASHBURN, MAINE

JUNE 1988

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**PINETTE'S SALVAGE YARD SITE**

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**OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN**

This revised Community Relations Plan (CRP) prepared for the Pinette's Salvage Yard site updates information included in the CRP prepared by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1983; presents additional information not discussed in the 1983 CRP; and outlines a plan for suggested community relations activities to be conducted during the upcoming phases of the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study at the site. Specific objectives of this revised CRP are to:

- 1) Verify information contained in the 1983 CRP prepared by EPA for the Pinette's Salvage Yard site;
- 2) Assess current community perceptions, expectations, and concerns regarding EPA activities at the site; and
- 3) Recommend a community relations effort designed to address the current informational needs and concerns of the community, and prepare the community for EPA's planned activities during the remainder of the RI/FS.

EPA Region I Community Relations Coordinator will manage community relations activities at the site jointly with the EPA Remedial Project Manager for the Pinette's Salvage Yard site. EPA is also managing technical activities that include a two-phased Remedial Investigation, followed by a Feasibility Study of options for remediating the contamination at the site. The first phase of the Remedial Investigation was completed in early 1988.

The information presented in this plan is based primarily on interviews conducted in Aroostook County, Maine with local and regional officials, residents living near the site, and other interested Washburn residents. These interviews were conducted on September 24 and 25, 1987.

This draft revised Community Relations Plan is divided into the following sections:

- A. Site Background;
- B. Community Background;
- C. Key Community Concerns;
- D. Objectives of the Revised Community Relations Program for the Pinette's Salvage Site; and
- E. Community Relations Activities.

Also included in this plan are two appendices. Appendix A provides suggested locations for information repositories and public meetings; and Appendix B is a list of key officials, news media representatives, and interested and affected residents.

## A. SITE BACKGROUND

### 1. Location of the Site

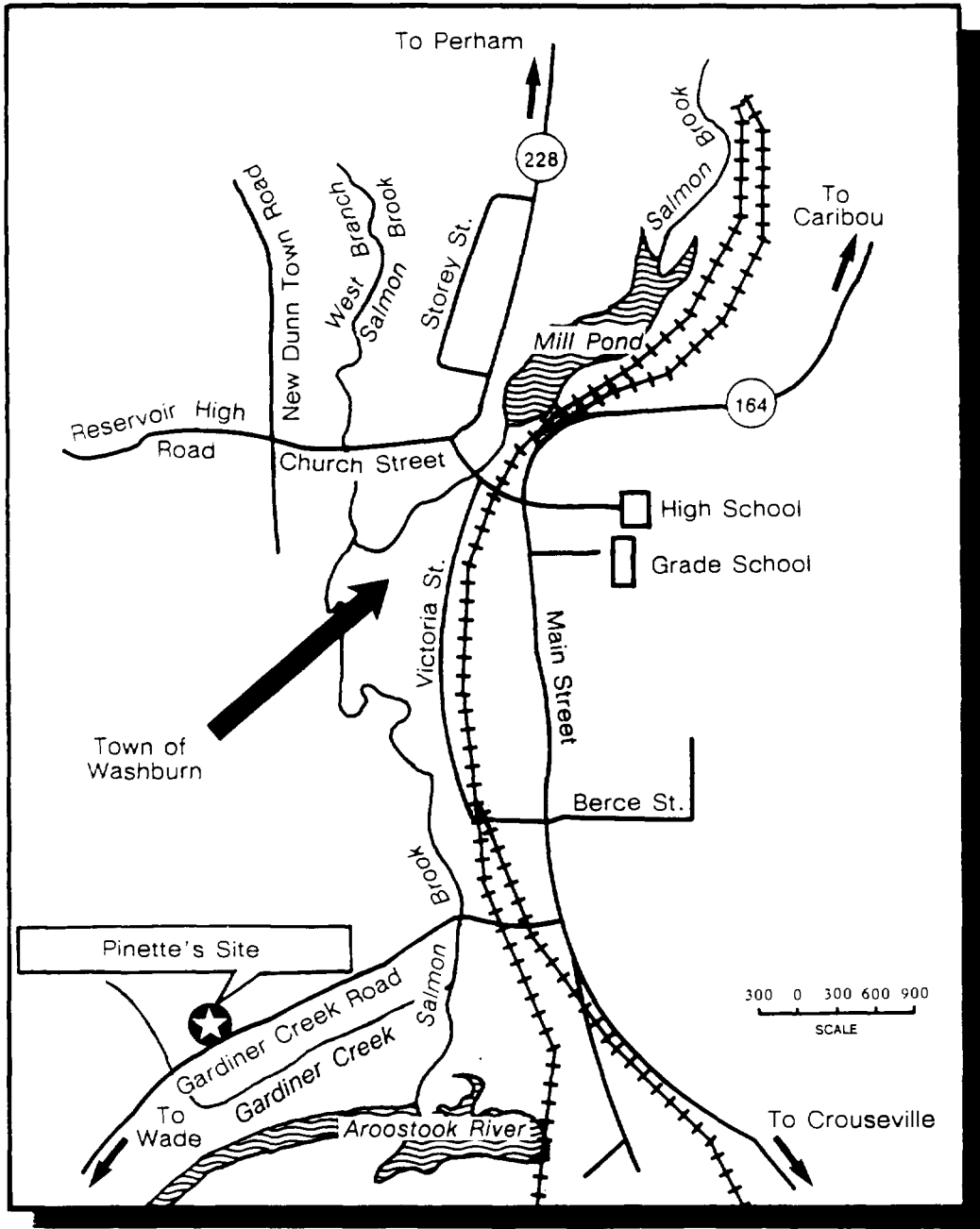
The Pinette's Salvage Yard site is located in the Town of Washburn in northern Maine. Washburn is part of Aroostook County, which is bordered by Canada on the north, east, and west. (See Exhibit 1 for a location map).

The site is situated in a rural area approximately one mile southwest of the Washburn town center. The 0.7 acre site is part of a privately owned property along Gardiner Creek Road (also known as Wade Road), near the town line between Washburn and Wade. In addition to the salvage yard, a residence owned and occupied by the Roger Pinette family is located on the same property as the site. The site is bounded by private property and residences to the west, north, and east. Southwest of the site, across Gardiner Creek Road, is an abandoned gravel pit. To the south of the site, across Gardiner Creek Road, is a fallow field owned by Albert Farms, a private, out-of-state company. The Aroostook River, flowing from east to west, is situated to the south of the fallow field and passes within one-quarter mile of the site. (See Exhibit 2 for a site area map.)

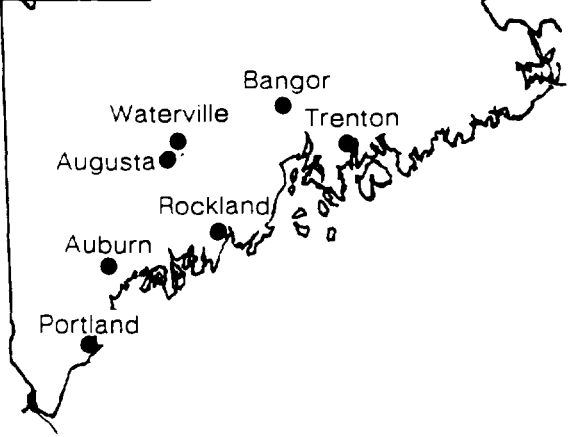
### 2. History of the Site

The Pinette's Salvage Yard site is currently operated as a salvage yard where wrecked and old automobiles are brought for dismantling and salvage, and from which recovered parts are sold. (See Exhibit 3 for key site features.) On June 21, 1979, three large, 1940s vintage transformers were brought to the

Exhibit 1  
**Site Location Map**  
**Pinette's Salvage Yard Site**  
**Washburn, ME**

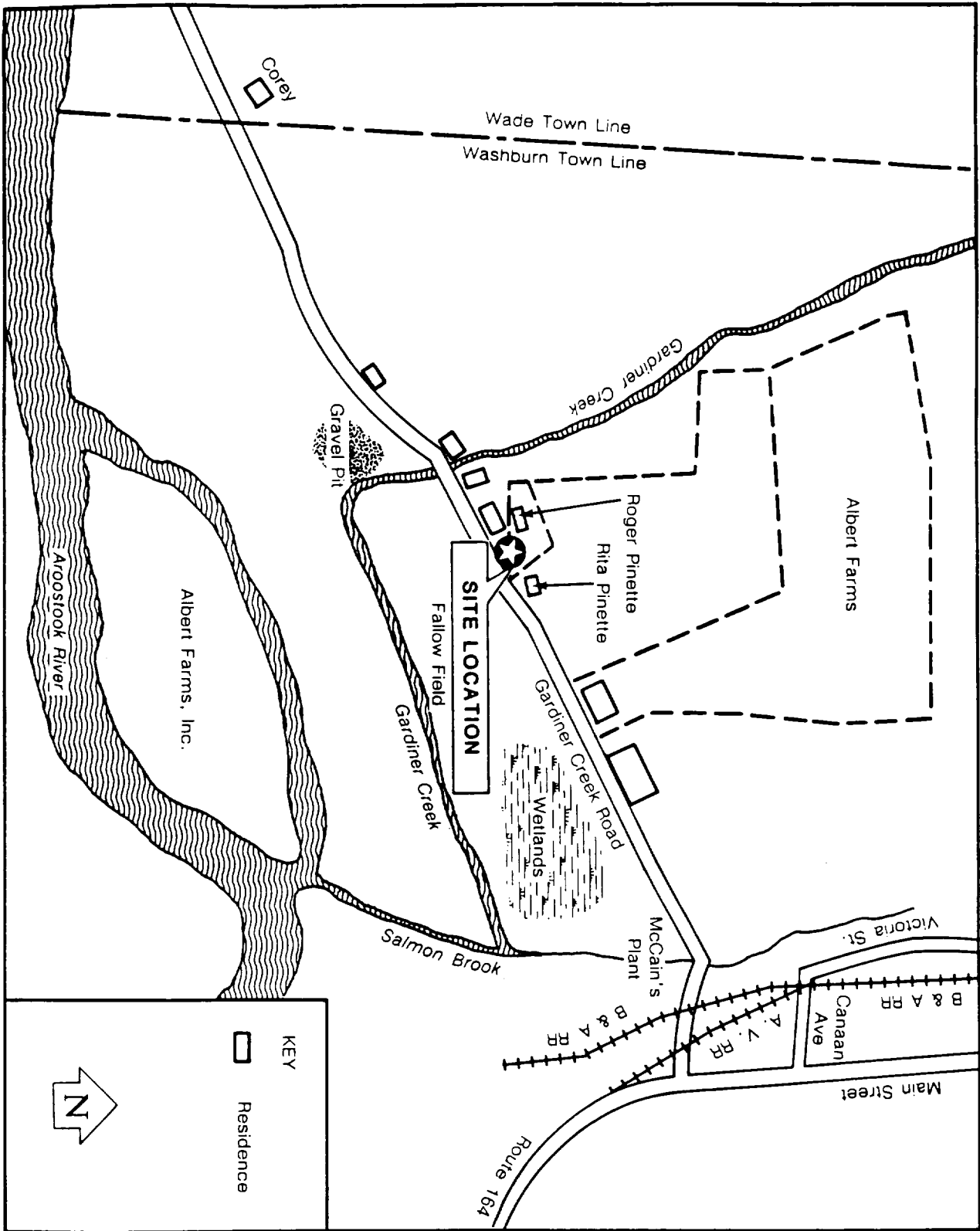


**MAINE**



# Pinette's Salvage Yard Site Gardiner Creek Road

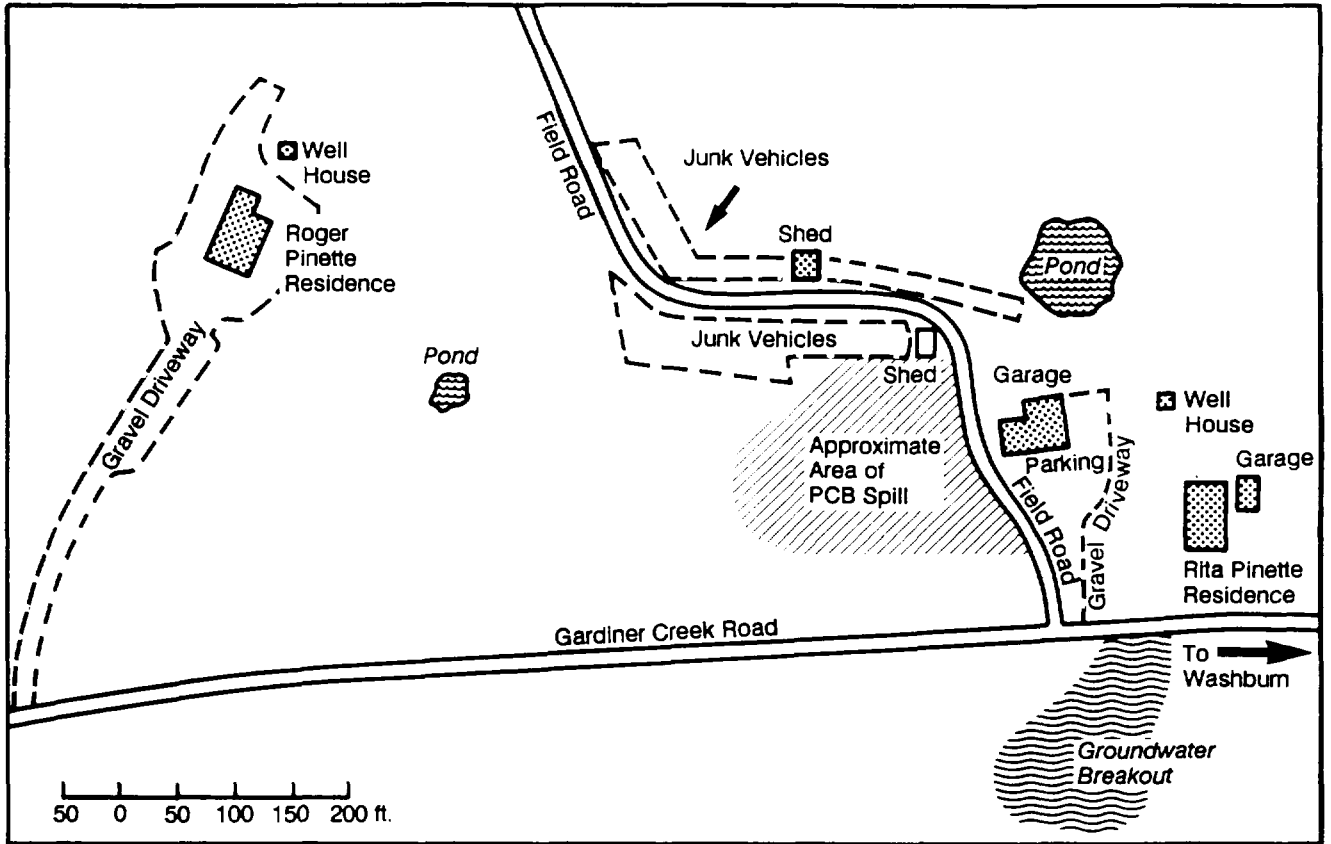
Exhibit 2



KEY	
	Residence

Exhibit 3

# Pinette's Salvage Yard KEY SITE FEATURES



Pinette's salvage yard from the Loring Air Force Base located near Limestone, Maine. According to one local official, the transformers allegedly were pushed from a truck onto the ground at the site and then dismantled, allegedly releasing an estimated total of 800 gallons of dielectric fluid containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to the surficial soils. The metal from the transformers is believed to have been sold for scrap.

In November 1979, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) first learned that a release of transformer fluids, possibly containing PCBs, had occurred. Between 1979 and 1983, EPA and DEP conducted joint investigations at the site. These preliminary investigations showed that a specific PCB, Aroclor 1260, was detected in site soil in concentrations up to 22,900,000 parts per billion (ppb). Hazardous volatile organic compounds (VOCs), often found in dielectric fluid in combination with PCBs used in transformers built in the 1940s, also were detected on site.

In December 1981, the State of Maine nominated the site for the EPA National Priorities List of hazardous waste sites eligible for cleanup funds under the federal Superfund program. In 1982 DEP covered the site temporarily with sheets of polyethylene to minimize the spread of contaminants through the soil. Shortly thereafter, in October 1983, EPA excavated approximately 800 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated soil and assorted debris that was then transported to a licensed disposal facility in Model City, New York. The excavated area was backfilled with soil and seeded to provide a vegetative cover.



In August 1985, EPA began a field investigation to determine whether the 1983 removal of contaminated soil and debris had cleaned up the site sufficiently such that it could be deleted from the National Priorities List. Soil, surface water, sediment, and tap water samples from the site and surrounding areas were analyzed for the presence of residual PCBs, volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds, pesticides, and inorganics.

EPA released the final report on these field investigations in October 1987. The results of the field investigation suggested that, although EPA's 1983 removal action was successful in removing the majority of the soils heavily contaminated with PCBs, residual PCB contamination remains in site soil, ground water, and sediments, and residual VOC contamination remains in site soils and ground water. The highest residual concentration of PCBs detected in site soil samples taken during the 1985 field investigation was 1,400,000 parts per billion. Chemical analyses also detected low levels of pesticides in site soils and ground water. The presence of these pesticides may be attributable to pesticide use in the area to improve agricultural productivity. No PCBs or VOCs were detected in tap water samples collected from selected domestic wells in the vicinity of the site.

Based on the results of the field investigation, in September 1987 EPA initiated a two-phased Remedial Investigation (RI) to define further the nature and extent of residual contamination at the site. During the RI, EPA will gather data on the geology and hydrology beneath the site, including

information about the depth to bedrock, direction and flow of ground water, and extent of a clay layer beneath the site. EPA anticipates releasing a Feasibility Study (FS) presenting cleanup options for the site at the end of 1988.

## B. COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

### 1. Community Profile

Washburn, located in northern Maine's Aroostook County, is a rural community with a population of approximately 2,500. Washburn is a close-knit community where everyone knows everyone else and news travels swiftly among residents. It is a small town of modest homes, old New England farm houses, potato fields, and family-owned and operated stores including the Washburn Hardware Store, Washburn Coffee Shop, and Washburn Food Mart.

Residents nearest the site on Gardiner Creek Road live in small homes or rambling old New England farmhouses. At least one family living near the site has neither a well nor other piped-in drinking water supply. Family members bring bottles of tap water from a relative's house for drinking and use water from Gardiner Creek next to their house for other household purposes.

Gardiner Creek, a tributary of the Aroostook River, flows a few hundred feet to the west of the Pinette's Salvage Yard site, under Gardiner Creek Road, and then bends to the northwest.

According to town officials, although the population has been declining in neighboring towns, Washburn has experienced slow but steady population growth during the past few years. The growth is attributed to Washburn's attractiveness as an affordable, friendly, "bedroom community" for those working in the nearby cities of Presque Isle and Caribou. Newcomers join the solid base of families who have been residents of the town for generations. Local officials who were interviewed in September 1987 stressed that residents are employed in diverse occupations, ranging from farming to engineering.

## 2. The Local Economy

Once primarily a town of potato farms, Washburn has become more residential since small independent farmers experienced economic hard times in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Though the number of residents maintaining their own farms has declined from approximately 70 in 1972 to six in 1987, the acreage devoted to potato farming has not declined proportionally and the potato industry is still a mainstay of the local economy. Each fall, potatoes dominate the landscape and lifestyle of people in Aroostook County, as even the school calendar is adjusted to accommodate the harvest of 75,000 to 80,000 acres of potatoes. Local and regional officials estimate that roughly 30 percent of Washburn residents are employed by the potato farming industry for at least part of the year.

In addition to potato farming, the only other large employer in town is the McCain's food plant. The plant, which sits about a quarter of a mile east of the Pinette's Salvage Yard site, currently has 30 year-round employees, and

131 seasonal employees who pack peas each summer. McCain's is an international company with two other larger plants in the nearby towns of Easton and Presque Isle. The McCain's plant was once a potato processing plant, which, according to town and regional officials, suspended potato operations in Washburn in the early 1980s to consolidate operations in two of its other plants in the area. Another potato processing plant, the R.T. French plant, also closed its doors due to economic difficulties in the early 1980s. The McCain's plant has since been used to package vegetables for part of each year. Town officials say that McCain's expects to increase utilization of the facility in the future.

Hunting and tourism are also important to the regional economy. Regional and local planning officials point with great pride to the recent successful completion of a \$60 million effort to clean up the Aroostook River, which now can be stocked with Atlantic Salmon for the first time since 1927. The return of the Atlantic Salmon is expected to boost the economy by attracting sport fishermen to the area. The Aroostook River, which became heavily polluted from decades of discharge from potato and paper processing plants, is now swimmable and potable.

### 3. Local Government

Washburn has a representative town manager form of government. The town manager is appointed by the Town Council. The five member town council, eleven member planning board, and the zoning board of appeals are elected every three years, and meet infrequently on an as-needed basis. Several

residents and local officials noted that though town meetings are periodically held, it traditionally has been a problem to gather the 25-person quorum necessary to conduct business.

The Washburn town government jurisdiction extends to Crouseville, a section of Washburn that is its own postal district. The local school system is administered by a regional school board that includes representatives from Washburn and the neighboring small towns of Perham and Wade. In addition to local officials, the Northern Maine Regional Planning Commission also works with the town of Washburn on issues pertaining to regional commerce, residential growth, and development.

#### 4. History of Community Involvement at the Site

Residents first became aware of possible contamination problems at the Pinette's salvage yard shortly after the spill occurred. A local official interviewed for this plan reported visiting the site within days of the transformers being taken to the salvage yard, to investigate what he had heard was a small spill of toxic material. He recalls "the distinctive odor of PCBs" and saw sections of cut up metal, presumably pieces of the transformers, stacked against a salvage yard building. Upon closer inspection of the metal pieces, he says he discovered that warning placards, identifying the transformer contents as hazardous, remained affixed to the scrap metal, but were turned toward the building and thus were not easily visible.

Preliminary DEP investigations revealed that hundreds of gallons of PCBs might

have been spilled at the site, rather than a small amount as was initially reported by the local news media. As word spread through the town of the possible extent of the contamination, the perception among many residents interviewed was that Loring Air Force Base had rid itself of a toxic hazard by giving the PCB-containing transformers to the unsuspecting Roger Pinette, the owner and operator of the salvage yard. Several residents interviewed said that at the time, they had heard that the transformers had been transported to the Pinette's Yard before dawn, reinforcing the impression that the individuals from Loring Air Force Base involved in the decision to dispose of the transformers knew the potential hazard of selling the transformers for scrap and did not want attention called to the transaction. According to several local officials, residents' anger directed against the government and the Air Force Base increased as Loring officials apparently refused to acknowledge any responsibility for the spill or take any part in cleanup efforts. The Presque Isle Star Herald reported that one of Maine's U.S. Senators, William Cohen, a member of the Armed Services Committee, received no substantive reply to his letters to Loring Air Force Base seeking information about the disposal of the obsolete transformers and the spill of PCBs.

EPA and DEP attempts to include Loring Air Force Base in plans for the investigation and cleanup of the spill delayed any significant action at the site until, in 1982, pressure from federal and state elected officials helped initiate preliminary site investigations by DEP and EPA. Residents say they hold the government responsible for the spill and have expressed frustration with what they perceive to be the government's slow progress toward cleanup,

and apparent disregard for the community's health and welfare.

Although town officials reported that residents were angered by the situation at the site prior to EPA's removal action in 1983, residents did not organize formally to force EPA to take action. According to regional and local officials and citizens, there are no major civic or environmental organizations that are particularly visible or active in the Aroostook region, so little or no grassroots pressure was exerted to initiate cleanup. Although local residents were displeased by what they perceived as the inaction of government agencies and elected representatives, the general perception was that the PCB spill was contained on the Pinette property and therefore was not an immediate threat to public health.

Between the time that EPA completed the removal action in late 1983 and the present, the site has generated little interest or comment among residents. This lack of interest likely can be attributed to the perception that the site no longer represents a threat to public health or the environment.

Rita Pinette, former owner of the 12.6 acre salvage yard property, lives in a house immediately adjacent to the 0.7 acre site. According to one local official, the town advised Rita Pinette not to drink well water from her property as a precautionary measure pending the results of ground-water investigations. Rita Pinette declined the town's offer of a bottled water supply, and has since sold the salvage yard property to her son Roger, who runs the yard. Pinette's Salvage Yard is still operating, though there is

little business activity on the site. Since the 1983 removal action, the site has become heavily revegetated and is not fenced. According to neighbors, a teenage daughter of Roger Pinette is seen frequently on the site tending to a family pony that grazes on the site. The Pinette family dog and salvage yard employees are also often seen walking over the area of the spill.

### C. KEY COMMUNITY CONCERNS

This section reviews community concerns outlined in the 1983 Community Relations Plan, updates these concerns, and adds additional concerns that were raised during the interviews conducted in September 1987.

#### 1. Issues Cited in the 1983 CRP

The Community Relations Plan prepared for the site by EPA in 1983 identified the following three issues as key concerns at that time:

- a. Residents believed that Loring Air Force Base should be held accountable for its part in the spill of PCBs at the site and for the costs incurred for cleanup.
- b. Residents perceived that the presence of PCBs at the site contributed to the closing of the potato processing operations at the McCain's and R.T. French plants in town, and to taking farmland near the site out of production. According to the 1983 CRP, these developments placed severe economic stress on the town.



c. Residents were concerned that the spill could lead to contamination of the Aroostook River, a potable water supply and attraction for sport fishermen.

## 2. Update of Community Concerns and Opinions about the Site

Interviews with residents and local officials conducted in September 1987 elicited perceptions and concerns about the Pinette's Salvage Yard site that differ from those recorded in the 1983 CRP. Although the Washburn residents, neighbors to the site, and officials interviewed in 1987 agreed that Loring Air Force Base should be held responsible for Washburn's Superfund site, those interviewed did not link the site to economic setbacks or contamination of the Aroostook River.

Most residents interviewed in 1987 cited general economic difficulties suffered by the entire region as the major factor in the closing of the McCain's and R.T. French food processing plants in the early 1980s. Most residents said that the proximity of the McCain's plant to the site was only a minor contributing factor in the decision to suspend Washburn operations. Those interviewed noted that farming communities throughout the region and the country suffered a downturn in farming and farm-dependent industries in the late 1970s and early 1980s and that local problems were part of that nationwide downturn.

Several residents interviewed in 1987 believed that no farmland has been taken out of production because of the site. Neighbors of the site noted that land

across Gardiner Creek Road from the site remains fallow because it has never been rich farmland and is not worth bringing into production in a declining farm economy. The land was purchased by a private company before the spill and at least one resident believes it is held for investment purposes.

The nearest farmland currently cultivated near the site is upgradient of the spill area. Residents interviewed, including a local farmer, said that the nearest farmland to the site is too far away and too far uphill from the spill area to be affected by the site.

Those interviewed in 1987 indicated that they perceive the spill to be contained on the Pinette's property and to present no immediate threat to the Aroostook River. Several residents noted that the river is currently cleaner than it has been since the early part of this century, and spoke enthusiastically about what the return of Atlantic Salmon to the river will mean to the economy of the region. None of those interviewed appear to believe that the proximity of the site to the Aroostook River will discourage business or sportsmen from coming to Washburn, unless the site is left unremediated over a long time period, or the site is highly publicized.

### 3. 1987: Community Concerns and Key Issues

The general perception shared by residents interviewed in September 1987, one week after EPA reported that residual contamination remained at the site, was that the residual contamination is contained on the Salvage Yard property and presents no immediate threat to the community at large. Most residents expressed some surprise that EPA is still working at the site and that the

1983 removal action did not resolve contamination problems at the site. The majority of those interviewed, however, believe that EPA is acting in the best interest of the town and will be successful in addressing the remaining contamination at the site.

Although residents interviewed for this revised CRP did not appear alarmed by the thought that PCBs remained on site, many voiced concerns about the site, particularly about the long-range implications if EPA does not act swiftly to clean up the site permanently. The specific categories of concerns are summarized in the following paragraphs.

o Concern that EPA move quickly to clean up the remaining contamination.

Many of those interviewed had only one concern about the site: that EPA clean up the residual site contamination swiftly and permanently.

Residents expressed satisfaction with EPA's removal action in 1983 and trust that government agencies, including EPA, will do whatever is necessary to address the current situation. Residents did remember, however, that action had been delayed between discovery of the spill in 1979 and the removal action in 1983, and warned that they will be wary and watchful for any apparent needless delay in addressing the residual contamination at the site.

o Contamination of the ground water and drinking water. Most residents interviewed wanted to know whether ground water and drinking water sources had been tested for contamination. Although most residents

interviewed did not say they suspect contamination has spread, all wanted EPA to test the water near the site and report results fully to the community as soon as possible to prevent any public health problems. One resident who gets his household water from Gardiner Creek asked that EPA test the Gardiner Creek water so he could be certain of the quality of the water he and his family are using.

One resident reported that her husband believed that contamination in the drinking water had caused the cancer from which he eventually died. The resident added, however, that she too had cancer in 1975, before the spill, and did not believe that the water had contributed to either her condition or her husband's. As the neighbor closest to the site, she wants her drinking water tested by EPA to be sure there are no contaminants that may aggravate her health problems. Although she indicated during the interview for this report that she did not believe the site contamination had caused her husband's cancer, she reportedly has since filed a law suit against the Pinette family contending that contamination at the site contributed to her husband's illness and death.

- o Contamination of the Aroostook River. A number of residents interviewed expressed concern that contamination from the site could migrate eventually to the Aroostook River, south of the site. Residents worry that if EPA finds that contamination is migrating from the Pinette's site it could threaten the use of the river as a drinking water supply for the town of Caribou, and hinder efforts to attract sport fishermen back to

the region. Residents want EPA to test the Aroostook River and investigate possible paths of contaminant migration to the Aroostook River.

- o Extent and nature of residual contamination and possible cleanup options. Based on resident interviews, Washburn citizens had been under the impression that the hazard presented by the site was removed in 1983 and were disconcerted in September 1987 to learn that residual contamination remains on the site. Residents said they are anxious to understand exactly what level of hazard the site now represents and whether there are precautions they or the town should take to protect their health.

Residents also want to know the alternatives for site cleanup and the potential environmental and economic impacts of these alternatives on the town of Washburn. One of the residents interviewed noted that the spill area is zoned for agricultural use, although it has not been used as farmland since the 1940s, and wanted to know if future land use restrictions should be considered to protect residents.

- o Existence of additional hazardous waste at the Pinette's Salvage Yard. Several of those interviewed expressed the fear that the Pinette's salvage yard operation may have accepted other hazardous materials for disposal in addition to the transformers from Loring Air Force Base. Residents want the site investigated thoroughly for other hazardous

wastes during the current field investigation.

o Excessive cleanup costs. Several of those interviewed appeared not to understand why the 1983 removal action cost as much as it did in proportion to the size of the spill. One person interviewed said that an early newspaper story on the spill reported that only a few gallons of hazardous fluid had been released, rather than the 800 gallons EPA estimates actually were spilled on the site. Another resident said he believed that the transformers involved in the spill were like those visible on neighborhood power lines and was surprised to learn that the transformers brought to the Pinette's Salvage Yard in 1979 weighed 7,000 lbs. each. Even after learning that the 1979 spill resulted in the saturation of more than 1000 tons (800 cubic yards) of site soil with PCBs and other toxic substances, residents interviewed still question the cost of the Superfund removal action. Some residents also appeared worried that cleanup costs will affect their tax rates, which are presently lower than in the neighboring cities of Presque Isle and Caribou.

o Effects on property value. Residents nearest the site are concerned that proximity to the site will lower the resale value of their property. Officials also expressed mild concern that if too much attention is called to the site (i.e., through heavy news media coverage), residents will panic and potential home buyers will be frightened away.

**D. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVISED COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM**

One resident characterized fellow Washburn residents as keen observers who want to know what is going on but do not feel they have to get personally involved to assure the desired outcome. The fact that residents have not been active or vocal about the site to date should not be taken to indicate a lack of interest. Based on the concerns and comments expressed during interviews with residents, the following objectives should be addressed through community relations activities at the Pinette's Salvage Yard site.

1. The primary objective of the community relations program for this site should be to provide accurate, understandable, up-to-date information during the investigation and remediation of the Pinette's site. Throughout the implementation of community relations activities for the site, EPA should address the need to provide information on and clarification of the following specific issues that were raised during interviews with residents:
  - o Schedule of RI/FS activities and any delays. Site information should keep residents up to date on the schedule for EPA activities and findings so that unrealistic expectations regarding the date for final site cleanup are not developed.
  - o Water quality testing. EPA information to residents should let residents know when drinking water and ground water is to be tested and when they can expect results of those tests. The quality of

drinking water and ground water remains a major concern among Washburn residents, and those who were interviewed said they expect that EPA will test and provide data on water quality near the spill site.

- o Purpose of the RI/FS. EPA should clarify items such as whether the RI/FS will include monitoring of water quality in the Aroostook River and whether EPA is testing for the presence of additional hazardous wastes.
  - o The extent of the site contamination. EPA site information should reiterate the extent of the spill to dispel the impression that EPA is expending excessive time and money to clean up a few gallons of hazardous fluid. This information should also help residents understand the nature, purpose, and costs of remedial alternatives suggested in the FS report.
2. The community relations program also should address how to maintain the cooperative working relationship that exists between EPA and Washburn local officials and residents. Residents and local officials were emphatic that they will continue to cooperate as long as EPA communicates honestly with the town and takes all actions necessary to protect public health and safety in Washburn. EPA should continue to foster a positive working relationship with the town manager, the primary local official, to enhance efforts to provide information to the town of Washburn.



Residents interviewed asked that EPA provide a steady flow of information about the site and let them know when there will be more information, even during lulls in technical site activity.

3. The community relations program should include techniques to encourage citizen participation in any public meetings related to the site. Residents agreed that Washburn citizens are unlikely to attend public meetings; however, the Superfund law requires that a public meeting be held upon completion of the draft Feasibility Study. In order to make any meeting a meaningful exercise in public participation, EPA will need to promote attendance actively several weeks prior to any scheduled meeting. Whenever possible, however, EPA should use means other than public meetings to fulfill the objective of distributing information to residents.

#### E. COMMUNITY RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

The following specific activities are suggested to achieve the community relations objectives outlined above for the Pinette's Salvage Yard site.

1. Activity: Establish and maintain information repositories.  
Purpose: To ensure that site-related information is easily available to interested citizens and officials in the site community, and to reinforce the positive working relationship between local officials and residents and EPA.

Technique: Site-specific fact sheets, technical reports, and community relations documents such as the Community Relations Plan and Responsiveness Summary will be placed in the repository. To ensure that information is easily accessible to anyone interested in the site, a repository will be maintained at the Washburn Town Hall. Outside of Washburn it may be advisable to maintain a repository at the Northern Maine Regional Planning Commission Library, which serves as a resource for local officials throughout the region and for those interested in regional development, economic, and environmental issues affecting Aroostook County.

2. Activity: Establish information contacts.

Purpose: To provide accurate and prompt responses to questions and comments from residents, local and state officials, and news media representatives throughout the RI/FS, and to facilitate a two-way information exchange between EPA and Washburn residents and officials.

Technique: Two EPA personnel, a technical Remedial Project Manager and a Community Relations Coordinator, have been designated as information contacts to respond directly to public inquiries regarding site activities. The name and phone number of the contact persons will be distributed widely to encourage citizens, officials, and reporters to

ask questions of EPA directly. If the Remedial Project Manager (RPM) is contacted, the RPM should relay significant or new community concerns to the Community Relations Coordinator (CRC) to ensure that community relations activities are tailored to specific information needs of the community. The name, address, and phone number of both contacts should be listed on documents distributed to increase resident access to information directly from an EPA official.

3. Activity: Prepare fact sheets, information updates, and other site-related material for distribution to interested and affected parties.
- Purpose: To inform the site community of the schedule, purpose, and results of Superfund activities during the RI/FS, to clarify issues of concern, and to solicit public input to the RI/FS process.
- Technique: EPA should prepare concise, thorough fact sheets and information updates as necessary to present information to the public about EPA activities and the results of EPA studies. These written materials should be drafted so that they are understandable and answer the questions of the layperson as well as those individuals with more technical knowledge among the Washburn population. Fact sheets and/or public notices should be prepared to

coincide with the following technical milestones:

- 1) Completion of the Work Plans for each phase of the RI;
- 2) Completion of the RI and Risk Assessment;
- 3) Completion of the FS; and
- 4) After the Record of Decision is signed.

Through fact sheets discussing the above technical milestones EPA also can present such information as whether hazards not related to the 1979 spill are being investigated by EPA, or whether further study is necessary to characterize the extent of site contamination fully. EPA also may wish to prepare additional fact sheets or information updates if the community seems interested in receiving more information about a particular site issue, or to inform residents of planned activities if there is an extended time period between technical milestones. For example, EPA may wish to issue a fact sheet during the RI if data such as the results of water quality testing are validated before completion of the RI report. Such information updates should include information about the schedule and purpose of upcoming EPA activities.

Because citizens have said they are not inclined to attend public meetings, fact sheets also should encourage citizens to offer comment or input directly to the EPA

contacts by phone or in person, or by leaving a message with the town manager. There does not seem to be a sufficiently high level of interest in the site to prompt Washburn residents to seek out information about the site by attending public meetings or visiting the information repositories. Several residents interviewed said, however, that they have questions about EPA activities at the site and would read a fact sheet if one were mailed to them. Since EPA fact sheets and updates likely will contain the only information about site activities to reach the majority of Washburn residents, EPA will mail fact sheets to every interested party included on the site mailing list and send copies to the Washburn Food Mart, the Town Hall, and the Fire Station, where they will be left for interested residents. Gerry Buschard, proprietor of the Food Mart; Sheldon Richardson, Town Manager; and Daryl Sperrey, Assistant Fire Chief; have expressed willingness to help EPA distribute information from each of these locations.

4. Activity: Develop and maintain a site public information mailing list.

Purpose: To ensure that EPA mailings of fact sheets, information updates, and press releases reach the individuals who are interested in or affected by the site.

Technique: A mailing list will be developed that includes not only residents who live near the site, but also local and regional news media representatives; key elected and agency contacts at the local, state, and federal level; and individuals who have expressed an interest in the site. The mailing list will contain names and addresses and will be computerized for easy and rapid EPA access. The list will be updated periodically with new names, generated when individuals sign-in at EPA meetings or when they complete and return the form on the back of fact sheets to request inclusion on the mailing list.

5. Activity: Conduct periodic meetings and telephone updates with local officials.

Purpose: To inform local officials of the schedule and purpose of site activities, RI/FS findings, new site developments, and community relations activities; to maintain the current cooperative working relationship with town officials; and to monitor the level and nature of community concern to ensure that EPA is responsive to the concerns and information needs of the community and local officials.

Technique: Because the organization of Washburn town government centralizes authority in the town manager, it is appropriate for EPA to work closely with the town manager

to communicate with Washburn residents. From community interviews, it appears that residents have confidence in the current town manager, Sheldon Richardson, who has held the position of town manager for the past 15 years, and who has followed developments at the site since the spill was first discovered. Residents interviewed reported that Mr. Richardson takes a personal approach to town administration and has knocked on their doors to provide them with site information, rather than sending notice through the mail or the news media.

At least one of the two EPA information contacts should provide periodic phone updates to the town manager to relay information regarding site activities and receive information regarding community concerns. The town manager's office should be notified by phone prior to the general distribution of EPA fact sheets and news releases so that he is prepared for any inquiries received from residents or the news media. EPA also may wish to offer to meet with local officials, such as Town Council members, Planning Board members, and the Executive Director of the Northern Maine Regional Planning Commission in Caribou, prior to public meetings, press briefings, and major technical milestones to ensure that officials are thoroughly informed and that their questions

are answered.

6. Activity: Provide news releases to local newspapers, television, and radio news outlets.

Purpose: To utilize the local news media to present up-to-date and accurate information about site activities, RI/FS findings, and public meetings; and, where possible, to work with reporters who may cover the site over an extended period of time, so that their cumulative knowledge of developments at the site may result in more accurate and thorough reporting of site activities.

Technique: Prepared, written statements should be released to local and regional newspapers and television and radio stations to notify the community of public meetings and announce significant findings and activities during the RI/FS. In addition, news releases or paid announcements will be placed in a major local newspaper to announce the public comment period on the FS, the selection of a remedial alternative, and availability of EPA's Administrative Record for the site. Press releases mailed to the news media also should be mailed to all parties on the site public information mailing list. Major local newspapers are The Star Herald (Presque Isle), The Bangor Daily News, and The Aroostook Republican and News. Addresses, phone numbers and publication deadlines for these newspapers are



included in Appendix B of this document.

Because covering a Superfund site involves presenting complex technical and legal issues in a column of print or two minutes of air time, news coverage can be inaccurate or misleading. In Washburn, residents interviewed said they depend on the six o'clock news and the local daily Presque Isle Star Herald for information. To promote more informed and even-handed coverage of EPA activities at the site, the EPA contact person could call a few local reporters, including someone at the Star Herald and WAGM-TV 6 p.m. news team, after distribution of a press release to offer to answer questions and provide more detailed information on EPA activities at the site. Building a positive rapport with reporters by being accessible can discourage the misinformation in news coverage that results when reporters only have part of the story.

7. Activity: Hold periodic public meetings.
- Purpose: To communicate site-related information to the interested public, to facilitate community input to the RI/FS process, and to respond to questions and comments from interested parties.
- Technique: EPA will hold a public meeting upon release of the draft FS report. An optional public meeting also may be held to

coincide with the release of the RI and Risk Assessment reports. EPA may wish to combine an informational public meeting to explain the results of the FS with an informal public hearing to obtain public comments on the FS report and EPA's Proposed Plan.

Public meetings can be held in the Town Office building and should include presentations by technical staff regarding the status of site activities, as well as an informal question and answer period. All public meetings should be coordinated with local and state officials, and should be publicized through press releases, notification of local officials, and mailings to residents. Efforts to encourage attendance may include posting meeting notices in the two Washburn food stores (the Washburn Food Mart and Sperrey's Superette), and in other retail businesses on Main Street. Press releases announcing the meeting should be followed by a call from EPA to the three major newspapers, and the news desks at local radio and television stations to verify that the information was received and to determine whether it will be printed. (Addresses and phone numbers for local news media are included in Appendix B.) The scheduling of public meetings also will affect attendance. For instance, meetings should not be scheduled during the fall harvest,

when a fair percentage of the population is working 12-hour days for four or five weeks.

8. Activity: Provide a 30-day public comment period on the FS and Proposed Plan.
- Purpose: To receive citizen input regarding the cleanup alternatives under consideration for the site so that public comments can be considered as part of EPA's remedy selection process.
- Technique: A two-week period for public review of the FS is required, followed by a 30-day period during which citizens may submit formal oral and/or written comments. EPA must consider these comments in the remedy selection process. A public meeting must be held during the 30-day public comment period and a transcript of this meeting must be made available to the public.
9. Activity: Prepare a Responsiveness Summary following completion of the FS public comment period.
- Purpose: To ensure that public comments and concerns are incorporated into the process for selecting a remedial alternative for the site.
- Technique: A Responsiveness Summary is required as part of the Record of Decision, which documents the remedial alternative selected by EPA. The Responsiveness Summary summarizes

public comments and concerns raised during the public comment period on the proposed remedial alternatives, and provides EPA responses to these comments. The document also summarizes community concerns raised throughout the site RI/FS, and the remaining concerns that EPA should address during design and construction of the selected remedial alternative.

10. Activity: Revise the Community Relations Plan for the Pinette's Salvage site following the selection of a remedial alternative.
- Purpose: To provide a suggested program of community relations activities appropriate to the remedial design and remedial action (RD/RA) phase.
- Technique: A revised Community Relations Plan should assess the community relations program conducted at the site to date, identify any new concerns that have arisen since the beginning of the RI/FS, and develop a program of community relations activities to keep the public informed of and involved in EPA activities during the RD/RA phase.

**APPENDIX A**

**SUGGESTED LOCATIONS FOR SITE INFORMATION REPOSITORIES  
AND PUBLIC MEETING LOCATIONS**

**1. Information Repositories**

- a. Washburn Town Office  
Main Street  
P.O. Box 504  
Washburn, ME 04786

Contact: Sheldon Richardson, Town Manager  
(207) 455-8485

Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Copy machine is available to the public.

- b. Northern Maine Regional Planning Commission Library  
MacWlain House  
2 South Maine Street  
P.O. Box 779  
Caribou, ME 04736

Contact: James Barressi, Executive Director  
(207) 498-8736

Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**2. Public Meeting Location**

Civic Center (capacity - 75 people)  
Washburn Town Offices  
Main Street  
Washburn, ME 04786

(207) 455-8485

Contact: Sheldon Richardson, Town Manager

**APPENDIX B****KEY CONTACTS****A. Federal Elected Officials**

1. Senator William Cohen (207) 764-3266  
523 Main Street  
Presque Isle, ME 04769  
  
Attn: Ms. Dale Aspee
2. Senator George Mitchell (207) 764-5601  
6 Church Street  
Presque Isle, ME 04769
3. Representative Olympia Snowe (207) 945-0432  
202 Harlow Street  
Margaret Chase Smith Federal Bldg.  
Room 209  
Bangor, ME 04401-4960

**B. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

EPA Region I  
J.F.K Federal Building  
Boston, MA 02203

Michael Jasinski (617) 573-5786  
Remedial Project Manager

Paul Knittel (617) 565-1473  
Superfund Community Relations  
Coordinator

**C. State Elected Officials**

1. Senator Donald F. Collins (207) 498-8579  
4 Dorcas Avenue  
Caribou, ME 04736
2. Representative Malachi Anderson (207) 492-1771  
Route 1  
Caribou, ME 04736

D. **Maine Department of Environmental Protection**

Ms. Rebecca Hewett (207) 289-2651  
 Maine Department of Environmental  
 Protection  
 State House Station 17  
 Augusta, ME 04333

or

Carl Allen (207) 764-2044  
 Maine Department of Environmental  
 Protection  
 528 Central Drive  
 Skywalk Park  
 Presque Isle, ME 04769

E. **Local Officials**

1. Sheldon Richardson (207) 455-8485  
 Town Manager  
 Washburn Town Offices  
 P.O. Box 504  
 Washburn, ME 04786
2. Roger Crouse (207) 455-8126  
 Chairman  
 Washburn Planning Board  
 P.O. Box 403  
 Crouseville, ME 04738
3. Jasper Umphrey (207) 455-4758  
 Chief  
 Washburn Fire Department  
 Farm Cross Road  
 Washburn, ME 04786
4. Milford Libby (207) 455-8376  
 Chairman, Town Council  
 Crouseville, ME 04738
5. James Barressi (207) 498-8736  
 Executive Director  
 Northern Maine Regional Planning  
 Commission  
 P.O. Box 779  
 Caribou, ME 04786

6. Charles Hobbs (207) 455-4736  
 Town of Wade, 1st Selectmen  
 RFD #1  
 Washburn, ME 04786

F. News Media

1. Print News Outlets

Presque Isle Star Herald (207) 768-5431  
 News Desk  
 P.O. Box 510  
 Presque Isle, ME 04769

Weekly: Wednesday publication  
 Deadline for press releases is Friday  
 at 5 p.m.

Circulation: 8,075

Bangor Daily News (207) 768-5681  
 Presque Isle Bureau  
 P.O. Box 248  
 495 Main Street  
 Presque Isle, ME 04769  
 Attn: Dean Rhodes (Environmental  
 Debra Sund Reporters)

Circulation: 80,000 weekdays  
 100,000+ weekends

Aroostook Republican and News (207) 496-3251  
 News Desk  
 P.O. Box 608  
 Caribou, ME 04736

Weekly: Wednesday publication  
 Deadline for press releases  
 is Friday at 5 p.m.

Circulation: 5,800



## 2. Television

WAGM-TV (207) 764-4461  
News Editor  
Box 1149  
Presque Isle, ME 04769

## 3. Radio

WEGP (207) 768-5141  
News Editor  
489 Main Street  
P.O. Box 1177  
Presque Isle, ME 04769

WKZX (207) 764-1950  
News Editor  
P.O. Box 1251  
Presque Isle, ME 04769

WPEN (207) 941-1010  
News Editor (Maine Public Broadcasting)  
65 Texas Avenue  
Bangor, ME 04401