

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Final Site

March 2008

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS | Harris County, Texas **Site Location:**

The site is located on the western bank of the San Jacinto River, immediately north of the Interstate Highway 10 bridge. Interstate Highway 10 bounds the site on the south, on the east by the San Jacinto River main channel, and on the north and west by shallow water off the river's main channel.

 Site History:

The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) referred the San Jacinto River Waste Pits site to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on April 14, 2005. The site consists of three former disposal pits located along the San Jacinto River near Houston. The property covers approximately 20 acres and the waste disposal pits are approximately 3.5 acres in total size. These pits historically received wastes from paper mill activities. McGinnis Industrial Maintenance Corp. (MIMC) purchased and used the pits at the site for storage of waste sludge from Champion Paper Co., located in Pasadena, Texas. The property is currently inactive, and portions of the original pits are underwater. In addition, there are contaminated sediments of at least 0.5 miles in length within the San Jacinto River.

 Site Contamination/Contaminants:

The primary hazardous substances documented at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits site are polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and polychlorinated dibenzofurans. Samples collected in the disposal pits and in the San Jacinto River have dioxin concentrations as high as 70,000 parts per trillion. Fish tissue samples were collected by the Texas Department of Fish and Wildlife, and dioxin above a health-based benchmark was found in both fish and crab tissue samples.

 Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

Sediment, water, and tissue samples collected in the vicinity of the impoundments show elevated levels of dioxins. A consumption advisory based on dioxin is in place on this segment of the watershed. The current advisory recommends that adults eat no more than one meal per month caught from the advisory area, and suggests that women of childbearing age and children not consume any blue crabs or fish from the advisory area. Despite the advisory, residents are continuing to consume fish and crabs within this segment of the river.

 Response Activities (to date):

The Texas Department of Health has currently issued a consumption advisory for fish and blue crabs.

 Need for NPL Listing:

The State of Texas referred the site to EPA because of the presence of elevated concentrations of dioxin in fish tissue in the San Jacinto River. TCEQ and EPA evaluated other cleanup programs and no other viable options were available. EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the State of Texas.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination.]

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html> or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.