



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency

# Site Update

## San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site

Harris County, Texas

November 2016

### This fact sheet will tell you about:

- **Current site activities**
- **What happens next?**
- **Site background**
- **For more information**

### Current site activities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in consultation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and federal, state and local officials announced a Proposed Plan and public comment period for cleanup of the site; the cleanup proposed included, among other things, removal and offsite disposal for both the northern and southern impoundments. The public comment period, originally planned to end on November 28, 2016, has been extended until January 12, 2017, in response to several requests to allow additional time to review the site documents.

The Record of Decision, which will select the final remedy for the site, will be issued in 2017 by EPA in consultation with TCEQ following the close of the public comment period and consideration of the comments received.

### What happens next?

Areas of riverbed scour up to approximately 8 feet deep have been identified adjacent to the eastern side of the temporary armored cap. This scouring occurred after April 2016 following the spring flooding. Although the cap has not been damaged, to insure continued protective-ness the EPA has directed the Potentially Responsible Parties (International Paper and McGinnis) to place additional armor rock in the scour area that is approximately 160-feet long and up to 45-feet wide.

The armor rock will have a median diameter of 8-inches placed in a cover thickness of 3-feet over a geotextile underlayment. An estimated 800 cubic yards of armor stone will be placed to cover an area of 5,800 square feet. The work will begin during the week of November 28, 2016, and will take about two weeks to complete, weather and tide permitting.

### Site background

The site consists of a set of impoundments built in the mid-1960s for the disposal of solid and liquid pulp and paper mill wastes, and the surrounding areas containing sediments and soils impacted by waste materials disposed in the impoundments. The northern impoundments and sand separation area, which are partially submerged in the San Jacinto River, are approximately 14 acres in size. The northern impoundments are located on the western bank of the river, north of the Interstate-10 (I-10) Bridge and the sand separation area is located to the northwest of the northern impoundments. The southern impoundment, less than 20 acres in size, is located on a small peninsula that extends south of I-10. The wastes that were deposited in the impoundments are contaminated with polychlorinated dibenzo p dioxins (dioxins) and polychlorinated dibenzofurans (furans).

The site was placed on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) on March 19, 2008. The NPL is the EPA's list of uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for long term cleanup under the federal Superfund program.

A temporary armored cap was installed over the northern impoundments in 2011 to prevent direct contact with the paper mill waste material and to prevent further releases to the San Jacinto River until a permanent remedy is implemented.

### For more information

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**Site Repository**

**Harris County Public Library**  
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**Highlands, Texas 77562**  
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**All inquiries from the news media should be directed to the Region 6 Press Office at (214) 665-2200.**

**San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site on the internet**

**<https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp>**

To receive a Spanish translation of this fact sheet call U.S. EPA at 1 (800) 533-3508 (toll-free).

Para recibir una traducción en español de esta hoja de datos, comunicarse con la Agencia de Protección del Medio Ambiente de los EEUU (la EPA) al número de teléfono 1 (800) 533-3508 (llamada gratis).