

## NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

\*\*\*Final Site\*\*\*

September 2009

### SOUTHWEST JEFFERSON COUNTY MINING | Jefferson County, Missouri

#### **Site Location:**

The Southwest Jefferson County Mining site is located in the southeastern portion of Missouri. It is bordered on the north by St. Louis County and the Meramec River, on the east by the Mississippi River, on the south by St. Genevieve and St. Francis Counties, and on the west by Washington County and Franklin Counties.

#### **Site History:**

Site activities began in the early 1800s. Two mines were in operation as early as 1818, and many other mines were opened in the 1830s and 1840s to produce lead, zinc, and barium. By 1855, three smelters were operating in Jefferson County. Historical records indicate more than three million pounds of lead was shipped out of Jefferson County annually during this time period, making it one of the largest lead producers in the country. EPA has also discovered that in addition to mine waste, contaminated soil has been hauled and delivered to properties throughout Jefferson County.

#### **Site Contamination/Contaminants:**

Sources of site contamination include tailing piles and ponds, which have resulted in area-wide soil contamination. Sampling data indicated elevated levels of lead, cadmium, barium, and arsenic in soil, surface water, and ground water. The piles primarily consist of overburden tailings from mineral mining and processing.

#### **Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:**

Soil and ground water lead contamination are present at elevated levels at a number of residential properties in Jefferson County. Ground water serves as the source of drinking water for numerous private residences and businesses.

#### **Response Activities (to date):**

EPA has sampled more than 1,000 residences located on or near mining or mine waste disposal areas and more than 500 private water wells in Jefferson County. EPA has provided bottled water to more than 30 residences and excavated over 20 residential yards in Jefferson County. EPA continues to provide response actions to further characterize contamination and identify contaminated drinking water wells and surface water bodies.

#### **Need for NPL Listing:**

The State of Missouri referred the site to EPA because it lacked the resources to clean up the site. Other cleanup alternatives were evaluated, but are not viable at this time. EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the State.

*[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.]*