

NOAA Hazardous Waste Site Report

Roebbing Steel Company (II-15)
Burlington County, New Jersey
April 13, 1984

Location and Nature of Site:

The Roebbing Steel Company site, presently closed, is located adjacent to the Delaware River (Figure 1). The Federal Economic Development Authority (EDA) is a creditor presently in possession of this site.

There are two on-site surface impoundments, evidence of dumping and spillage, and alleged buried drums. The unlined lagoons are estimated to be three feet deep, and analysis shows the presence of heavy metals.

Proximity of Chemical Hazard to Marine Resources:

Due to the close proximity of the Delaware River and the evidence of spillage, possible surface runoff to the river is of concern. Contamination of the Delaware River by high concentration levels, however, would not be a common occurrence. Groundwater in the area is approximately ten feet below the surface. There is concern that the groundwater may be contaminated, affecting homes in the surrounding area that rely on the groundwater as their potable source.

Marine Resources at Risk:

The Delaware River and its tributaries provide significant habitat for a variety of finfish resources (see Table 1). Anadromous fish migrate through the Delaware Bay estuarine system during the early spring on their way to freshwater spawning grounds. For most of the anadromous fish of the Delaware Bay this occurs upstream of Burlington, New Jersey, although some spawning does occur in freshwater tributaries (4). The adults return to the lower parts of Delaware Bay. Juvenile fish, hatched in the spring, remain in the upper parts of Delaware Bay until the late summer and early fall when they also migrate back into the lower parts of the Bay (3).

This region of the Delaware River is the most important nursery and spawning area for anadromous fish in the Delaware River system. Most of the anadromous fish spawning takes place between Burlington, New Jersey and Trenton, New Jersey. Among the species spawning here are the Atlantic sturgeon, a species of special state concern, and the Shortnose sturgeon, a species of special Federal concern. Some species of fish may be harvested by recreational and commercial fishermen in the Delaware River adjacent to this site.

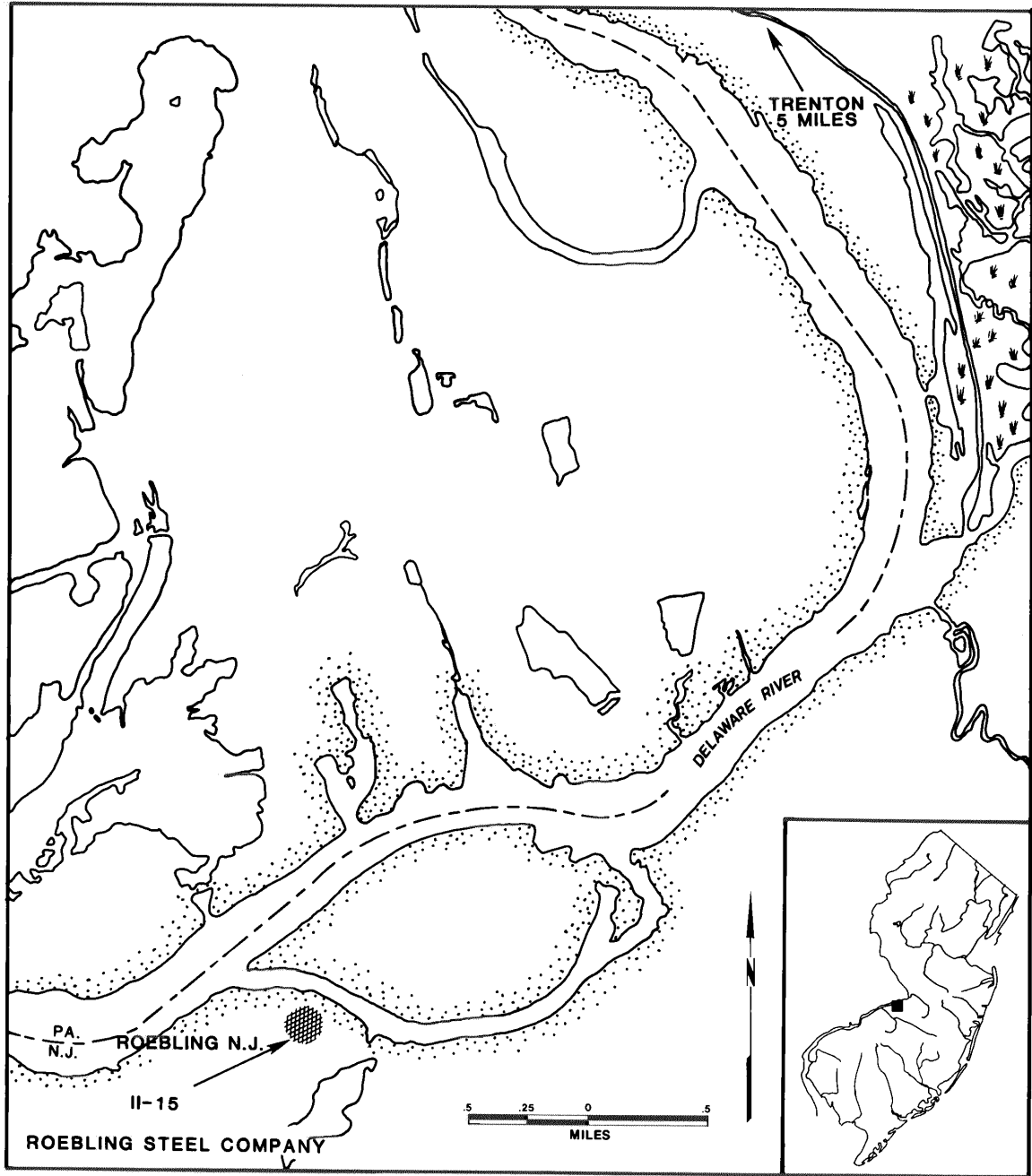


FIGURE 1. Site location.

Table 1. Fishery Resources of the Tidally Influenced Regions of the Delaware River Near Trenton (1,2,5)

Finfish Species	Adult Habitat	Spawning Area	Nursery Area	Comm. Fish.	Rec. Fish.	Migr. Route
<u>Anadromous</u>						
Alewife		x	x		x	x
Blueback herring		x	x		x	x
American shad		x	x		x	x
Shortnose sturgeon	x	x	x			x
Atlantic sturgeon		x	x			x
Striped bass		x	x		x	x
Gizzard shad		x	x			
<u>Non-anadromous</u>						
Atlantic menhaden			x			
White perch			x		x	x
Flounder						
Bluefish			x			
Atlantic croaker			x			
Channel catfish	x					
White catfish					x	
Brown bullhead					x	
Bluegill	x				x	
Black crappie	x				x	

The Delaware Bay estuarine system is an important wintering area for many waterfowl and seabirds, particularly loons, grebes, and gannet. They tend to concentrate in coastal bays and wetland areas. Bald eagles nest at Augustine Wildlife Area and Appoquinimink Wildlife Area.

Summary of Site-Related Actions:

A site inspection was made by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Waste Management, and samples have been taken. Further investigation is needed to determine if ground and surface water contamination exists. A Notice of Prosecution was sent in May 1983, directing the company to remove the approximately 600 55-gallon drums and one rail car filled with waste oil and the contaminated soil.

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References:

1. National Marine Fisheries Service, 1974. Anglers Guide to the United States Atlantic Coast.
2. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1980. Atlantic Coast Ecological Inventory.

References, cont.

3. Breder, C.M. and D.E. Rosen, 1966. Modes of Reproduction in Fishes. TFH Publications.
4. Byrne, D. Personal communication. Delaware River Anadromous Fishery Project, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
5. Research Planning Institute. Environmental Sensitivity Atlas - Pennsylvania. Unpublished.