



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Investigation of the Additional and Uncharacterized Sites Operable Unit Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge Marion, Illinois *Fact Sheet*

Introduction

This fact sheet presents information regarding the investigation of 32 sites comprising the Additional and Uncharacterized Sites Operable Unit (AUS OU) at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). This investigation is being conducted by General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems subject to the oversight of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems entered into an Administrative Order on Consent with the agencies to perform the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. The work plan and sampling and analysis plan describing the methods for collection and testing of soil, sediment, surface water, and groundwater for the first phase were completed in April 2006.

AUS OU

The AUS OU is one of several at the Refuge that make up the Refuge's National Priority List Site (commonly referred to as a "Superfund" site).

The 32 sites are located within the closed portion of the Refuge. Many of the sites are located within existing and former industrial areas. Contamination at these 32 sites is the result of industrial waste disposal practices that were common prior to enactment of modern environmental laws. The 32 sites cover about 2,500 acres and include buildings and adjacent ground and drainage channels.

What Type of Contamination Exists?

The FWS conducted a preliminary assessment and site inspection to evaluate whether there may have been releases of hazardous substances at 83 sites. Sampling was conducted at 59 sites. The results of this testing identified sites with elevated levels of heavy metals, volatile organics, pesticides, and explosives.

What Is A Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study?

A remedial investigation is conducted to obtain data to define areas where hazardous substances may have polluted soils, sediment, surface water, groundwater, and air. As part of the investigation, a baseline risk assessment is completed to determine whether, or to what extent, the contamination poses a threat to human health or the environment.

If the remedial investigation determines there is contamination that poses a threat to human health or the environment, a feasibility study is conducted to develop and evaluate various cleanup methods. This evaluation will serve as the basis for recommending a technically feasible and cost-effective cleanup that is protective of human health and the environment.

Investigation to Begin Late Spring 2006

General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems' consultants mobilized to the Refuge in June, 2006. Phase I field activities for collection of samples from various media (soil, sediment, groundwater, and surface water) are expected to continue through May, 2007. Phase II sampling is planned to determine to what extent hazardous chemicals have polluted underground water supplies and to what extent vapors are escaping from the volatile organic chemicals present in the ground and groundwater.

Refuge Background Information

In 1947 Congress established the Refuge, with a mission to support wildlife, recreation, agriculture, and industry. Prior to modern environmental laws, it was common practice for industrial facilities, including those on the Refuge, to use unlined landfills and dumps to dispose of the waste generated by their operations. As a result, a number of locations on the Refuge became contaminated. The CERCLA¹ cleanup

¹ Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act

at the Refuge has been divided into seven Operable Units based on types of contamination. These OUs are in different phases of investigation, cleanup, and long term monitoring and include the following:

- Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) OU
- Metals Areas (Metals) OU
- Explosives/Munitions Manufacturing Areas (EMMA) OU
- Miscellaneous Areas (MISCA) OU
- Water Tower Areas (WT) OU
- Lake Monitoring (LM) OU
- Additional and Uncharacterized Sites (AUS) OU.

FWS' Mission

Among the major responsibilities of the FWS are serving the public and conserving and enhancing populations of trust fish and wildlife resources and the habitats upon which they depend. Trust resources include migratory birds, endangered species, and nationally significant fish.

Technical Assistance Grants

USEPA offers Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs) to community groups who wish to obtain qualified technical support in reviewing technical study documents prepared for a Superfund Site. Information about TAGs is available in the Information Repositories or through the TAG Coordinator, USEPA Region 5, at (800) 621-8431 or on the web at <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/tools/tag>.

More Information

The FWS is committed to its ongoing public involvement program. If you have questions regarding the investigation of the AUS OU, please contact Leanne Moore, the AUS OU Coordinator, at (618) 998-5907 or leanne_moore@fws.gov. The Administrative Record that contains documents detailing information regarding the 32 sites is available at the following locations.

Southern Illinois University (618) 453-2818
McLafferty Annex
1830 University Press Drive
Carbondale, Illinois 62901
Hours : Monday – Friday 9 :00 a.m. – 5 :00 p.m.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (618) 997-3344
Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge
6987 Headquarters Road
Marion, Illinois 62959
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.