

NOAA Hazardous Waste Site Report

Koppers Company (II-42)
Metuchen, Middlesex County, New Jersey
April 13, 1984

Location and Nature of Site:

The site is on the Hackensack River and is bounded by the Allied Chemical Corp. and railroad tracks (Figure 1). The Muller Machinery Company, a sheet metal fabrication facility, currently owns the 300 acre site. Access to the site is through a railroad track underpass. This entrance is closed and locked. The site was previously owned by Koppers Company and prior to that by U.S. Plastics Corporation. U.S. Plastics made acrylic resins and disposed of plastic wastes on the site from 1950-1972. Portions of the site have also been contaminated with oil, tars and coal by-products. Until 1982, waste material in tanks had been processed into usable fuel and sold. Remaining waste products were removed off-site in 1983 and disposed of. The site is now razed, with the exception of one large tank. Seven monitoring wells belonging to the Allied Corporation exist on the site.

Proximity of Chemical Hazard to Marine Resources:

The Hackensack River borders the site on the northern and eastern sides. To the south, the site is bordered by elevated (approximately 50 feet) railroad tracks. Leachate from the site is able to enter the Hackensack river on a continuous basis. Although oil has been observed seeping from the site into the river, there has been no known analysis of this leachate to assess the level of contamination. Groundwater contamination may have occurred, thus posing another possible source of contamination to the river. Groundwater is not presently used in this area.

Marine Resources at Risk:

The Hackensack River supports small runs of several anadromous fish species, but is not a primary spawning or nursery area (Table 1).

The Newark Bay area is very heavily developed and does not serve as primary spawning or nursery habitat for anadromous fish. Adult fish may enter this area during spawning runs in the Hackensack River, and some species are present year round as adults or larvae (2).

There has been a long history of declining anadromous fish runs in New Jersey, dating back to the late 1800's. The Hackensack River has confirmed runs of herring, but shad spawning does not occur there now (6).

There is an area in the southwest corner of the bay that is used as an overwintering area for waterfowl and shorebirds, and there is a rookery for wading birds located on Shooters Island (2).

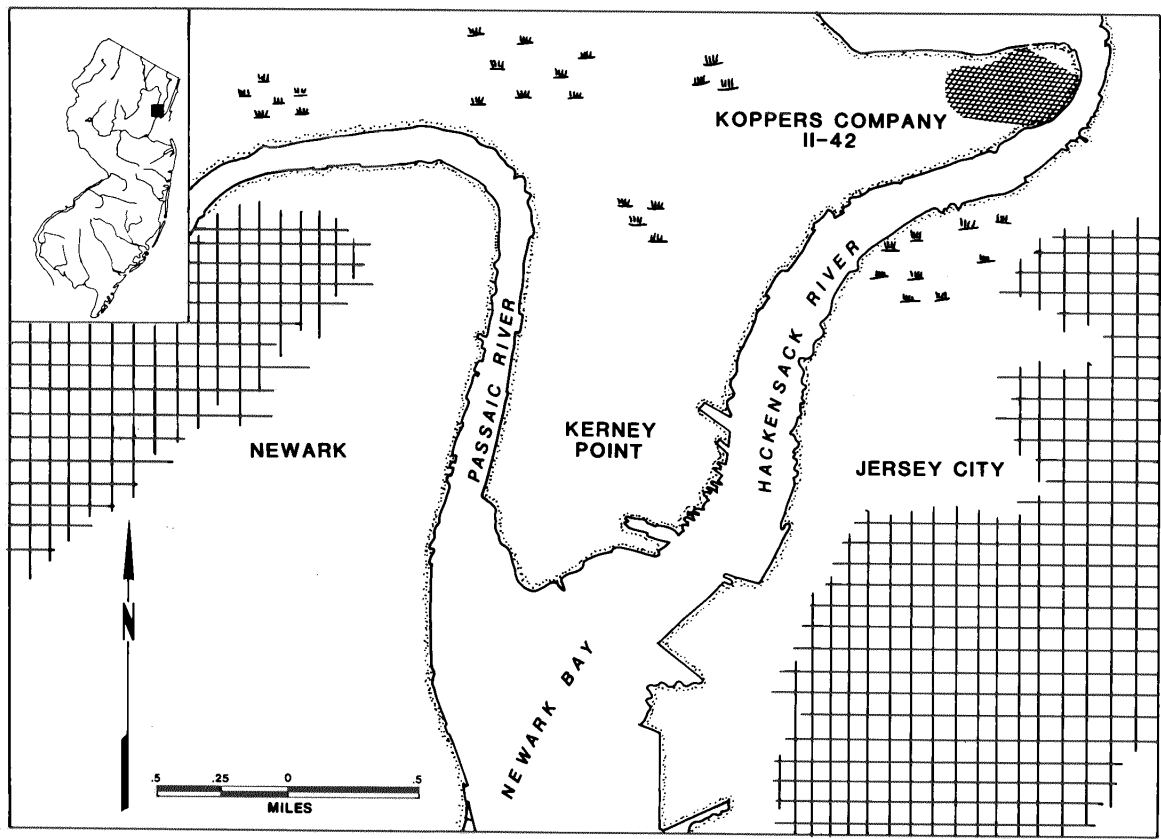


FIGURE 1. Site location.

Table 1. Fishery Resources of the Hackensack River and Newark Bay (1,2,3,4).

Finfish Species	Adult Habitat	Spawning Area	Nursery Area	Comm. Fish.	Rec. Fish.	Migr. Route
<u>Anadromous</u>						
Alewife						X
Blueback herring						X
Tomcod			X			X
Striped bass			X			X
<u>Non-anadromous</u>						
White perch	X					
Flounder	X					
Bluefish	X		X			
Spot	X		X			
Northern kingfish	X					
<u>Shellfish</u>						
Blue crab	X		X		X	

Summary of Site-Related Actions:

As of August 1983, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Koppers were negotiating to develop a comprehensive plan to evaluate site soil, ground, and surface waters, for contamination at the site.

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212-668-7152

References:

1. National Marine Fisheries Service, 1974. Anglers Guide to the United States Atlantic Coast.
2. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1982. Assessment of resources of Newark Bay.
3. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1980. Atlantic Coast Ecological Inventory.
4. Breder, C.M. and D.E. Rosen, 1966. Modes of Reproduction in Fishes. TFH Publications.
5. Research Planning Institute. Environmental Sensitivity Index - New Jersey. Unpublished.
6. Zich, H.E., 1977. The collection of existing information and field investigation of anadromous clupeid spawning in New Jersey. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Misc. Report No. 41.
7. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1983. Site Inspection Report. August 1983.