

Site Fact Sheet
Little Elk Creek
Area-Wide One Cleanup Program Pilot Project
W.L. Gore (Left Bank) Site
Junction of 279 and 545
Elkton, MD 21921

Property Description

This property consists of approximately seven acres located in the Trinco Industrial Park, near the junction of Routes 279 and 545 in Elkton, Maryland. Situated north of the confluence of Dogwood Run and Little Elk Creek, the property includes a warehouse, a paved parking area, lawn areas and a wooded area. Directly adjacent to Little Elk Creek, the majority of the wooded area, which is topographically lower than the rest of the site (about 10 to 20 feet), lies within the Little Elk Creek floodplain. The former industrial dumpsite, covering approximately two acres, is located within the wooded area on the north bank of Little Elk Creek (also referred to as the "left bank"). Other commercial and industrial properties surround the site.

An underutilized industrial park located along the Little Elk Creek in Cecil County, Maryland has been selected as an Area-Wide Pilot Project under U.S. EPA's One Cleanup Program and Land Revitalization initiatives. The goals of the Little Elk Creek Pilot Project is to address a widespread groundwater contamination problem stemming from multiple industrial sources within a geographic area and support development and reuse needs of the surrounding community.

Property History

The Trinco Industrial Park property has been used for industrial operations since the 1940s. Through 1947, the property was used, owned and operated by Triumph Explosives for the manufacture of military ordnance. After World War II, the old munitions plant was demolished and the materials from the plant were deposited as fill in the area along the Little Elk Creek. In 1947, the property was purchased by The Elkton Company (later known as Trinco Industrial Park) who used property for light industry and warehousing. Historical records indicated that in 1968 and 1969, waste from Galaxy Chemical was disposed of at the property. In addition to the chemical waste, other waste and construction debris were disposed in the area along Little Elk Creek. In 1972, the property was sold to General Tire and Rubber Company, and in 1983, W.L. Gore purchased the property.

Environmental Investigations

The former dumpsite was first identified in 1983 by a Department of Health and Mental Hygiene inspector who was investigating another site within the Trinco Industrial Park. Samples

collected from a small spring during the initial visit revealed elevated levels of potentially carcinogenic Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). As a result, the site was listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS). However, since other adjacent sites were under investigation at the time and there was no residential use of groundwater in the area, the site was not further investigated until the late 1980s.

In 1988, W.L. Gore conducted a preliminary assessment of the property. Trenches dug near the waste disposal area revealed dark stained soils and tar materials. Laboratory analysis indicated elevated levels of VOCs. During 1989 and 1990, additional investigations were conducted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). It was concluded that the disposal area is a source of groundwater contamination in the area and that contaminants may bio-accumulate in fish and wildlife that inhabit the creeks and rivers in the vicinity and through direct exposure. In October 1991, during removal of scrap tires from the property, workers uncovered seven 55_gallon drums. MDE personnel conducted a limited removal action of the drums located on the surface. Beneath the drums, MDE discovered solid and liquid substances emitting solvent odors in the soils. Laboratory analysis of the soil indicated high concentrations of volatile hydrocarbons. A work plan was developed and a Removal Action (RA) of the source material was completed at the property in 1997.

Contaminants

VOCs were found in groundwater and soils including 1,1,2,2 - tetrachloroethane, tetrachloroethene, trichloroethene, and 1,2- dichloroethene. The inorganics chromium, manganese, and nickel were also found in groundwater. Low levels of perchlorate were also detected in the groundwater.

Cleanup and Next Steps

In November 2003, MDE conducted a Brownfields investigation at the property at the request of a prospective purchaser. Inorganics and VOCs were found in surface and subsurface soils and groundwater. Low levels of perchlorate were also detected in the groundwater. MDE recommended that further investigation be undertaken and that any potential buyer enter the State Voluntary Cleanup Program prior to taking possession of the property.

There are currently no plans to conduct further investigation at this property.

Lead Agency and Contacts

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