

West Florida Scrap Metal (Former)
Hi-Tech Lane
Fort Walton Beach, Florida
County: Okaloosa
District: Northwest
Site Lead: Waste Cleanup Program
Accepted for Cleanup: December 1, 2009
ERIC ID # 3942

Site Description and History

The site comprises four contiguous parcels of property; a 6.66-acre parcel, a 0.77-acre parcel, a 4.48-acre parcel and a 1.05-acre parcel; located at the northern terminus of Hi-Tech Lane (1530 North Beal Extension), in an industrial complex on the north side of Ft. Walton Beach, in Township 01S, Range 24W, Section 27 at 30° 28' 08.8607" N, 86° 38' 10.0893" W. During the 1970's until 1995, West Florida Scrap Metal, Inc. operated an automotive salvaging business that extended from the western to the eastern boundaries of the subject site. By 1990, West Florida Scrap Metal, Inc. had acquired ownership of the entire site and began to use a 20 to 25 foot deep borrow pit in the eastern portion of the site for the disposal of land-clearing and construction/demolition (C&D) disposal. During 1995, Danny and Susan Fowler purchased the 1.05-acre parcel of property located near the center of the site for use as a welding facility (ABC Welding & Railing). The northwest parcel was subsequently sold to Chauhan Pravin, but that parcel is currently vacant and available for sale.

Properties immediately surrounding the subject site include a county-operated landfill northwest of the site, ABC Welding & Railing and vacant property formerly owned by West Florida Auto Parts, Inc. (January 18, 2000 – October 2, 2003) on the west, Fleischman's Landscaping and Hauling (a landscaping/hauling business at 15619 E. Ponderosa) on the south and Eglin Air Base on the east. Other occupants of the industrial complex include warehousing facilities located at 1532 and 1536 N. Beal Extension.

The northern boundary of the industrial complex abuts a municipal wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) owned and operated by the City of Fort Walton Beach. Under an agreement with Eglin Air Force Base, the WWTP currently discharges treated effluent to a spray field located on approximately 670 acres of Eglin AFB property. The east, west and south boundaries of the industrial complex abut Federal land associated with the air base. The northwest corner of a residential neighborhood (Northern Pines Subdivision) abuts the southeast corner of that industrial complex.

To comply with new rules promulgated in 1997, the company submitted an application for a C&D operation permit, along with a hydrogeological report and proposed monitoring plan dated 2001, but the permit was not issued because financial assurance was lacking. The facility also reportedly operated as a transfer station until a fire occurred during 1996. No disposal is currently permitted, yet visible evidence of onsite disposal is apparent and landfill leachate currently discharges overland from the waste disposal area. In addition, storm water runoff from the site periodically discharges via sheet flow down Ponderosa West, a street in a nearby residential neighborhood. This is a low-lying area located down-gradient of the municipal wastewater spray fields.

Threat

A site inspection, conducted during 2008, documented widespread contamination by arsenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), lead and cadmium in onsite surface soils at concentrations exceeding SCTLs for direct contact. However, soil samples collected adjacent to the only residence in the industrial park and from an offsite property subject to flooding by site runoff were uncontaminated. Also, no significant contamination was detected in onsite ground water samples or in a sediment sample collected from the nearest down-gradient stream.

Response Strategy and Status (December 2020)

The site was evaluated for cleanup under the Federal Superfund Program (CERCLA) in 2008 but the HRS score (13.2) did not exceed the threshold to be accepted in the Federal cleanup program. The site was accepted for State-funded cleanup by the DEP Waste Cleanup Program on December 1, 2009. Subsequently, DEP was informed that the site was being considered for a removal action by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, in the summer of 2012, DEP was informed that the EPA had decided not to perform a removal action at this site.

After delays in obtaining site access from one of the parcel owners, Tetra Tech EC, Inc. began site assessment activities in May 2014. The site assessment has now been completed. An inspection was requested of the Northwest District Office of the DEP to determine the status of the C&D disposal landfill. The August 7, 2014 District report declared that the landfill was “closed in substantial compliance with Rule 62-701.803(10), F.A.C. (May 19, 1994).” Field data indicates some small areas of soil contamination with arsenic and PAHs. The groundwater contains metals ubiquitous to C&D disposal facilities (aluminum, iron & manganese). DEP is reviewing the data to determine what, if any, additional remedial measures are needed at this site.

Schedule

DEP is performing groundwater monitoring at this site on an annual basis. Exceedances for iron and manganese have been noted. The contractor recommended continued monitoring of manganese. DEP agrees with this recommendation. Recent sampling has detected exceedances of the health advisory levels for PFOS/PFOA onsite. Tetra Tech completed sampling, including installation of additional wells to evaluate the contamination.