United States Environmental Protection Agency

## Share your opinions

EPA invites your comments on this proposed cleanup plan from July 13, 2020 – August 21, 2020. You can submit your comments on the internet at: https://www.epa.gov/in/cline-avenue-ditch-site

### Guidelines for Commenting:

- Explain your views.
- Tell us if you support or disagree with the Proposed Remedy. Please be specific.
- Provide potential alternatives to the Proposed Remedy.

Individuals may request to join a mailing list to receive any updated information throughout the remediation process. Send requests to contacts below.

### Contact information

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You may call EPA toll-free at 800-621-8431, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., weekdays

Information repository Site documents can be viewed at the Gary Public Library and Cultural Center, 220 W 5th Ave Broadway, Gary, Indiana

# Public Comment for Proposed Cleanup

## Cline Avenue Ditch Site

Gary, Indiana July 2020

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 invites the public to comment on the proposed cleanup measures for the Cline Avenue Ditch site in Gary, Ind. The proposed cleanup measures include excavation of contaminated soil, installation of a storm sewer/culvert along the alignment of the Cline Avenue Ditch (connecting it to existing storm sewers located at both ends of the ditch), installation of bulkheads along the culvert, and long-term maintenance and monitoring of the site to ensure there is no off-site migration of contaminants at levels presenting an unacceptable risk. These cleanup measures are detailed in the Focused Feasibility Study Report, dated May 21, 2020.

### Background

The site is located near the northeast corner of the intersection of Gary Ave. and Cline Ave. (Indiana Route 912) in Gary, Lake County, Ind.. The site is bordered by a rail line and the airport property to the north and east, Gary Ave. to the south, and Cline Ave. to the west. The site lies within the larger, heavily industrialized area to the west of the airport, and contains a former dumping area for wastes from the former Cities Service Refinery located across Cline Ave. (to the west).

The Cline Avenue Ditch (Ditch) is located along the east side of Cline Ave. and oil sheens have periodically been observed on water in the Ditch. The Ditch flows to the south and into a subterranean pipe/culvert for approximately ½ mile and discharges into the Grand Calumet River.

In January 2011, EPA was notified of the presence of an oil sheen within the Cline Avenue Ditch, north of the intersection of Cline and Gary Ave. EPA began installing and maintaining absorbent booms to capture floating product and prevent it from migrating to the Grand Calumet River. EPA also placed additional booms along the eastern embankment of the Ditch near five identified oil seeps. EPA continued to conduct boom maintenance and bird hazing operations until 2017. In March 2017, after a public comment period, EPA entered a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) 7003 Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with Oxy USA, Inc. (OXY). Under the AOC, Oxy took over maintaining the absorbent boom materials controlling the sheen impacts in the ditch and conducted investigations necessary to develop a feasibility study to evaluate potential final cleanup measures. The final cleanup measures identified by the feasibility study are to permanently control and mitigate the releases of oil or petroleum wastes and waste constituents. The final cleanup measures are also designed to assure that contamination does not migrate off-site via groundwater at levels that present unacceptable risks.

On April 20, 2017, EPA transitioned the control of the oil accumulation in the ditch to Glenn Springs Holding (GSH), a subsidiary of Oxy USA, in accordance with the AOC.

GSH has evaluated the conditions for potential cleanup options, and to prepare a proposed cleanup plan that eliminates the release of oil into the Cline Ave Ditch. The investigation was conducted in multiple phases in order to develop information on physical, geological, and hydrogeological conditions at the site, including data on soil, surface water, and ground water contamination.

A conceptual site model (CSM) of the Light Nonaqueous Phase Liquids (LNAPL) was developed based on the nature and extent of the contamination and investigation data. The CSM evaluated the conditions creating potential for release of oil and petroleum wastes laterally from the sidewalls and upward from the bottom of the ditch.

The AOC requires Oxy to use the information from the investigation to develop a remedy that will prevent the release of oil into the Cline Avenue Ditch and will prevent off-site migration that would pose an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment.

### Investigation Summary

The design investigation indicated the presence of oil across most of the site east of the ditch. However, most of the oil is below the water table, which means that it has the ability to move. The area along the eastern edge of the ditch where oil discharges into the ditch is a result of pooled oil nearby that lacks the resistance from saturated soils and has found a pathway to the surface. The oil is not moving in bulk from the site, but from isolated pockets near the surface of the embankments. Supplemental investigations also indicated that there is minimal oil on the western edge of the ditch, indicating that the source of the oil is along the eastern embankment and underneath the ditch.

### Groundwater Study

Ten water-table monitoring wells were installed both on and off-site in the immediate area of the Cline Avenue Ditch to determine if any contaminants have moved off-site. Groundwater sampling indicated that petroleum-related groundwater impacts were limited to the on-site monitoring wells, with no detectable volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) in wells off-site to the west and southwest.

### Feasibility Study

Using historical site data and information collected from the design investigation as well as the groundwater monitoring study; several remedies were evaluated for their effectiveness and ability to meet the cleanup goals. The May 21, 2020 Focused Feasibility Study Report identifies the proposed remedy, comparing it against other options based on effectiveness, implementability, cost, and protectiveness.

### Cleanup Goals

The goal of the cleanup is to prevent the release of oil and petroleum wastes from the site into the Cline Avenue Ditch and ultimately the Grand Calumet River. Long-term groundwater monitoring at the site will also ensure that contaminants that remain on-site are not migrating away at levels that create an unacceptable risk for neighboring properties.

### Contaminant Risks

Results from the investigation show that oil is discharging from seeps along the eastern edge of the Ditch. The proposal is designed to prevent oil from entering the ditch and eliminate contaminants from moving off-site at unacceptable levels.

### Proposed Cleanup Measures

- Installation of a storm sewer pipe to replace the open channel ditch with bulkheads for support.
- Removal and proper off-site disposal of oil impacted material above the paver stones within the ditch and in construction areas where impacted soils are identified and accessible.
- Installation of low permeability collars (or engineered equivalents) on the pipe to limit flow of oil.
- Sealed pipe joints.
- Installation of soil/bentonite cut off wall east of the downstream culvert to prevent leakage.
- Regrading to enhance drainage.
- Long-term monitoring and reporting.

### For More Information

The public is encouraged to review the Administrative Record and comment on the Proposed Remedy, as detailed in the Focused Feasibility Study Report, dated May 21, 2020. This Report and Administrative Record are available for review during normal business hours at the Gary Public Library and Cultural Center, 220 W 5th Ave., Gary, Ind., and at https://www.epa.gov/in/cline-avenue-ditch-site.

### Next steps

Before EPA makes a final decision, the agency will consult with Indiana Department of Environmental Management and review public comments received during EPA's 30-day public comment period. (See Page 1 for the dates of the public comment period.)

EPA encourages you to review and comment on the proposed cleanup plan. More detail on the cleanup alternatives is available in the official documents on file at the information repository or EPA's website at https://www.epa.gov/in/cline-avenue-ditch-site. EPA will respond to the comments in a document called a "responsiveness summary," a part of the record of decision that describes the final cleanup plan. The agency will announce the selected cleanup plan in a local newspaper and will place a copy in the information repositories and post it on EPA's website. EPA will make a Final Decision on the Proposed Remedy after the public comment period ends and all comments are reviewed.