



Ibanez dump site cleanup.



The mission of the collaborative is to clean up and prevent illegal dumping on the Torres Martinez Reservation. This status report is published to update all stakeholders and community members on the progress of this multi-agency effort. If you would like to be involved in the collaborative, contribute to the next status report or request additional copies of this one, please contact Erica Yelensky (yelensky.eric@epa.gov; tel: (415) 972-3021) or Willard Chin (chin.willard@epa.gov; tel: (415) 972-3797) of EPA's Pacific Southwest Regional Office.



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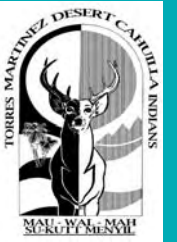


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# Torres Martinez Solid Waste Collaborative

*A Partnership of Tribal, Federal, State and Local Agencies  
to Stop Illegal Dumping on the Reservation*



**STOP ILLEGAL DUMPING**  
**Keep our Reservation Beautiful**

**Report Violators (760) 341 STOP**

**\$\$\$ REWARD \$\$\$**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is pleased to present the third edition of the Torres Martinez Solid Waste Collaborative Status Report. Since the collaborative was formed in April 2006, it has closed the three largest dumps on the reservation and cleaned up and installed access controls for half of the 20 smaller dumps. In addition, we have conducted emergency response actions to eliminate imminent health risks, set up check-points for trucks headed to the reservation, conducted aerial monitoring, erected billboards offering rewards for reporting violators, conducted an aggressive outreach campaign in English and Spanish, reaching from Palm Springs to the Salton Sea, and EPA has initiated four enforcement actions against dump operators.

**March 2007 Status Report**

EPA-909-F-06-003



## PROGRESS TO DATE

### DUMP CLEANUP AND ACCESS CONTROL

Through the efforts of the collaborative, 10 of the 20 known illegal waste sites have been cleaned up and have access control. The Torres Martinez Tribe has cleaned up five dumpsites since the last collaborative meeting in October 2006. The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) approved \$1.75 million to fund the cleanup of the Ibanez illegal dump site (Mt. San Diego) site – three 40-acre allotments covered with more than 400,000 cubic yards of sewage sludge, landscaping/green waste, gypsum wallboard, and ash. Phase I of the cleanup is nearly complete, and when CIWMB completes phase II in fall 2007/winter 2008 the majority of the property will be restored for potential agricultural use.



Auclair dump site during cleanup.

On October 18, 2006, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (Superfund Law) to George S. Auclair, Jr., for removal of hazardous substances at the Auclair dump site. Because Mr. Auclair failed to respond to the order, EPA began removing hazardous waste from the Auclair facility and

secured the site with a berm and partial trench in February 2007. To date, approximately 100 cubic yards of unburned CCA-treated wood stakes, 1,600 pounds of waste oil and sludge, 1,400 tons of burn ash materials and 400 pounds of asbestos-cement piping have been transported off the site for disposal. Lastly, a berm and trench-barrier have been constructed around the property perimeter. The cleanup has cost over \$300,000. On March 13, the California Integrated Waste Management Board approved \$1 million in additional funding to remove the solid waste from the Auclair site.

On February 27, a group of landfill and fire experts assessed the Lawson dump site to evaluate its imminent risk. This group, including representatives from BIA, CIWMB, the Riverside County Fire Department, the Riverside County Environmental Health Department, the Torres Martinez Tribe, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), evaluated actions needed to reduce the risk of fires at the Lawson site. EPA's contractor is preparing a treatment options report for the site. BIA and other collaborative agencies will carry out this solution as soon as possible.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Outreach Taskforce has been actively engaging waste generators in the Coachella Valley area to inform them of legal waste disposal options and to warn them that there are no approved waste disposal sites or recycling facilities within the Torres Martinez Reservation. The taskforce sent over 500 "no-dumping" flyers to waste haulers, builders, golf course operators and growers. The tribe built seven billboards on the reservation with the message "Stop Illegal Dumping. Keep our Reservation Beautiful. Report Violators (760) 341-STOP." Taskforce leaders also played a visible role at the annual date festival, handing out flyers and talking to Coachella Valley residents about the importance of reducing waste and recycling.

The Coachella Valley was hit hard by the cold spell this past winter. To stay warm some residents burned grape stakes treated with chromated copper arsenate (CCA), which look similar to firewood. However, when burned or cut, CCA-treated wood becomes extremely hazardous and can cause nausea, sore throat, dizziness and headaches. Further, arsenic is also a known carcinogen. Members of the collaborative including the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Department of Toxic Substance Control, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Torres Martinez Tribe and EPA mobilized quickly to produce Spanish and English public service announcements and fact sheets, and met with growers to inform them of best practices for managing CCA-treated grape stakes.



Handout distributed by the Outreach Taskforce at the 2007 Riverside County Fair and Date Festival.

The Outreach Taskforce holds bi-weekly conference calls to plan outreach opportunities. Members of the taskforce include the Torres Martinez Tribe, Riverside County Code Enforcement & Community Improvement Department, Riverside County Fire Department, and EPA.

### MONITORING COMPLIANCE

Since the collaborative's last meeting in October 2006, the group has been conducting surveillance, inspections and road-side stops that have resulted in three arrests and the initiation of four enforcement actions. The Riverside County Sheriff's Office and California Highway Patrol (CHP) issued nine citations for vehicle code violations, stopped at least one waste hauler from dumping on the reservation and apprehended a state prison escapee in November 2006. Riverside County Sheriff Deputies arrested three people and impounded a vehicle for illegal dumping 100 yards from the Torres Martinez Reservation on March 3. The CHP and Riverside County Sheriff's Office also conducted aerial monitoring of the reservation to track existing and new illegal dumpsites.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District installed a temporary 24-hour PM-10 air monitor at the K-12 Education Park in Thermal. The school has been concerned about air pollution from nearby dump fires. The results of the data will help the air district determine if the results are similar to their monitoring station in Indio.

BIA ordered George Auclair and Tony Santillanes, who had been operating a towing yard adjacent to the Auclair facility, to cease and desist all activities on the allotments in and around the Auclair dump site and to immediately refrain from operating any business on the land without a lease approved by the Secretary of the Interior. EPA has also issued compliance orders assessing penalties against Mr. Auclair and Mr. Santillanes for violations of hazardous and solid waste laws at their facilities. In addition, EPA has notified two trailer park owners of pending enforcement actions for improper waste management.

Members of the Monitoring Compliance Taskforce include the Torres Martinez Tribe, Riverside County Sheriff's Office, CHP, SCAQMD and EPA.

### INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Torres Martinez Tribe is developing a Web site to better inform the community of the collaborative's activities. The Web site serves two purposes: 1) to act as a central clearing house for tracking open and closed dump sites on the reservation and 2) to exhibit the outreach materials created by collaborative members.

The Torres Martinez Tribe and EPA are working to improve the tribe's solid waste management infrastructure. In 2007 the tribe will update its integrated solid waste management plan and conduct a waste stream analysis. These two planning activities will be essential to ensure proper waste disposal on the reservation.

Members participating in the Infrastructure Development Taskforce include the Torres

## COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS

### TRIBE

Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians Tribal Council, Tribal Administrator, Tribal Resource Manager, Planning Department and Environmental Department.

### FEDERAL

U.S. EPA, BIA, Indian Health Service, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, USDA Rural Development, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

### STATE

California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), South Coast Air Quality Management District, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, California Air Resources Board, California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) and California Highway Patrol.

### LOCAL

City of Coachella, City of Indio, Coachella Valley Association of Governments, Desert Alliance for Community Empowerment, Desert Mirage High School, Mecca Community Council, Oasis Community Council, Riverside County Code Enforcement and Community Improvement Department, Riverside County, Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, Riverside County Department of Waste Management, Riverside County District Attorney's Office, Riverside County Fire Department/California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Riverside County Sheriff, and Southern Coachella Valley Service District.

