



California Environmental Protection Agency
Department of Toxic Substances Control

ASCON Site

Fact Sheet #3

August 1996

INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), has signed a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement (VCA) with Savannah Resources Corporation (SRC), a subsidiary of ESE Land Corporation of Fountain Valley. Under this VCA, the DTSC will supervise SRC's efforts to develop a cleanup plan for the eventual cleanup of hazardous wastes and other wastes at the Ascon landfill site in Huntington Beach. Work on the cleanup has been stalled since 1992 because the previous site owner went bankrupt. The VCA covers only the completion of various documents and not the actual cleanup work.

The VCA calls for the completion of a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and Remedial Action Plan (RAP) for the site. An RI is a series of investigations and studies to identify the types and extent of contaminants at a particular site. The RI for Ascon will be done by evaluating existing site investigation reports and other work previously done on the site and, if necessary, performing additional sampling and analysis. The FS provides an evaluation of remedial alternatives for dealing with soil or groundwater contamination at the site. A RAP selects, and allows the public to comment on, a proposed cleanup plan or remedial alternative for dealing with contamination at the site.

A baseline health risk assessment (BHRA) will also be done. The BHRA reviews the level of contamination on the site and attempts to determine what impact the contamination might have on human health.

SITE HISTORY

The Ascon Landfill Site is a vacant 38-acre parcel at the southwest corner of Hamilton Avenue and Magnolia Street in Huntington Beach (see Figure 1). It operated as an active dump from approximately 1938 through

1984. Much of the waste disposed of on the site in its early years came from oil drilling operations, including drilling muds, waste water brines and other drilling wastes. Records indicate that from 1957 to 1971, chromic acid, sulfuric acid, aluminum slag, fuel oils, styrene (a form of plastic) and other wastes were also disposed on the site. From 1971 to 1984, inert solid wastes such as abandoned vehicles, asphalt, concrete, metal, soil and wood were disposed on the site.

PAST CHARACTERIZATION AND REMEDIAL EFFORTS

A number of agencies have been involved with the site, including the California Department of Health Services, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Orange County Health Care Agency and the City of Huntington Beach. However, much of the actual sampling activity, investigative work and site study were done under the direction of the California Toxic Substances Control Program (the predecessor to the DTSC) and by the DTSC.

The site was purchased by Ascon Properties, Inc. in 1984 but the company was unsuccessful in attempts to utilize the property and went bankrupt in 1989. NESI Investment Group obtained ownership through a foreclosure sale. NESI prepared to remove some hazardous liquids from the site in December 1991 but was ordered to halt removal work in March 1992 after being informed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District about the need for proper air quality permits. The air permits were issued in August 1992, but NESI did not re-start the liquid removal plan. NESI filed for bankruptcy in January 1993.

In May, 1993 the property was transferred to Signal Mortgage Company of Long Beach. In November 1995, Signal Mortgage Company entered into an agreement with SRC to work with the DTSC on the

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RI/FS and RAP for the Ascon site. SRC signed a VCA in May 1996 for DTSC oversight, review and approval of the RI/FS and RAP for the site.

VOLUNTARY CLEANUP AGREEMENTS--HOW THEY WORK

The DTSC began using VCAs in 1993. Under a VCA, an outside party signs an agreement with the DTSC to pay for a certain amount of DTSC oversight of investigation or cleanup of a parcel of contaminated land. The VCA contract spells out the scope of work, terms, conditions, and schedule for conducting site investigation or cleanup activities. Either party in a VCA may terminate the contract by giving 30 days written notice. In many cases, VCAs are signed for one step in the site mitigation process. If more work is needed at the end of this step, the initial contract must be amended, or another contract must be signed, for the DTSC to continue supervising work on the site in question.

The DTSC's VCA with SRC calls for DTSC oversight and review of the RI/FS and RAP for the Ascon site. (See "Introduction" for an explanation of an RI/FS and selection of a RAP). The current VCA contract ends with completion of the RI/FS and selection of a RAP. The VCA does not call for the DTSC oversight of actual cleanup or remedial work at the site. The existing VCA contract would have to be amended or a new contract signed, for DTSC to oversee cleanup work at the Ascon site. DTSC oversight of the actual cleanup work would be required to issue a certification that the site has been properly cleaned up and meets State standards.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

When the RI/FS is finished, the DTSC will send out a fact sheet or letter informing the community that the RI/FS is complete, what the conclusions are, and detailing the public's opportunity to participate in the RAP process. It is anticipated that the RI/FS work will be completed in late 1996, with a public meeting and a 30-day public comment period on the RAP being held in early 1997.

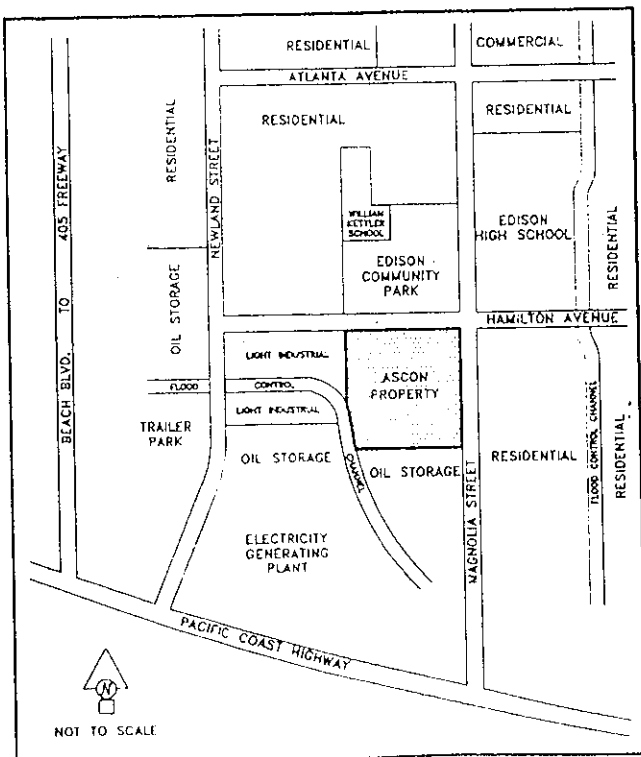


FIGURE 1. VICINITY MAP

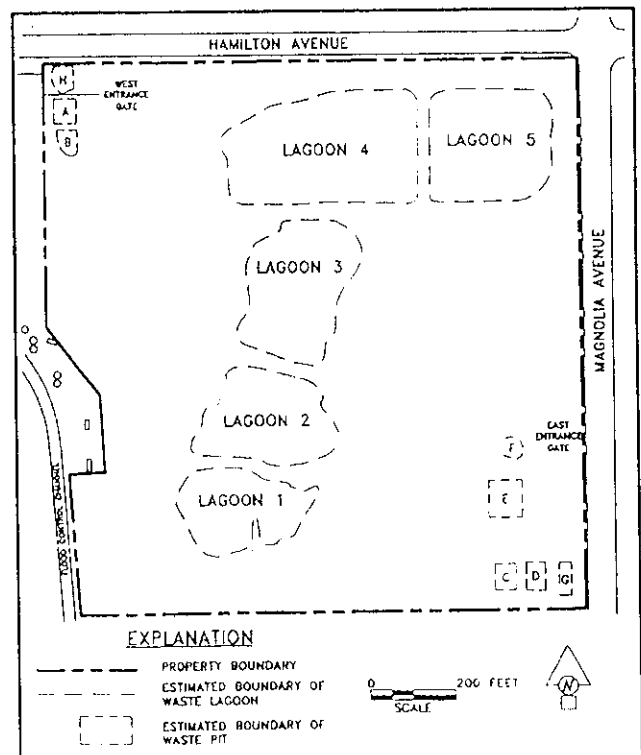


FIGURE 2. SITE MAP

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

DTSC has a Public Participation Policy to ensure effective two-way communication between the public and the DTSC throughout the course of each project. Public participation activities include development and distribution of fact sheets, maintenance of project-related files in a Public Information Repository and, if needed, public meetings. Public Information Repositories and key contacts for this project are listed within this fact sheet.

We encourage you to visit the information repositories or contact one of the project representatives if you would like additional site information or have concerns about the site.

Past public participation activities on the Ascon site have included fact sheets and other mailings; meetings with the public and meetings with a citizens' Ad Hoc Committee that was formed in the mid-1980s. These public outreach activities and others that may be suggested by the public will be considered to interact with the public now that work on the site has started again.

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Huntington Beach Public Library
Cultural and Information Center
Main Street Branch
525 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
(714) 375-5071

Huntington Beach Public Library
Banning Annex
9281 Banning Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92646
(714) 375-5005

PROJECT CONTACTS

Department of Toxic Substances Control
Ed Schumacher, Public Participation
(310) 590-5539

Oussama Issa, Project Manager
(310) 590-4947

Savannah Resources Corporation
Marina Robertson, Project Manager
(714) 964-8722

ASCON - Mailing & Comment Coupon

If you are not currently on the Ascon mailing list and wish to be added, please fill out the attached coupon and mail it to:

Ed Schumacher
245 W. Broadway, Suite 350
Long Beach, CA 90802-4416

- Please place me on the mailing list to receive all future material related to this project.
- Please notify me prior to future Ad Hoc Committee meetings

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____
