NOAA Coastal Resource Coordination Program

Maine Sites

**CRC PROGRAM MISSION...**

NOAA acts on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce as a Federal trustee, under CERCLA and other laws, for natural resources in coastal and marine areas. NOAA’s mandate is to protect and restore trust resources that are injured by contamination present, list the NOAA resources of concern, and summarize NOAA’s involvement in the cleanup process.

**NOAA CRCs and the Site Cleanup Process...**

NOAA CRCs provide technical expertise to EPA on resources and ecological risk assessment, mitigative measures, and cleanup strategies to ensure protection of NOAA trust resources. Federal and state trustees’ early involvement and coordination in the scoping of ecological risk assessments ensures that assessments and the entire remedial process adequately evaluate the risk to natural resources. Designing a cleanup that protects natural resources as well as human health is a cost-effective and efficient way to address the threat posed by coastal waste sites. Through CRC participation in the cleanup process, the government saves time and money by avoiding duplication of effort and litigation. Responsible parties benefit from an early resolution of natural resource damage liability. Best of all, environmental threats are addressed sooner, increasing the chances for effective protection, recovery and/or restoration of coastal and marine resources.

**Military Sites in Maine...**

Maine is dotted with 177 military installations and formerly used defense areas, comprising 233 DoD sites. The nature of defense-related activities involves chemicals that are highly toxic and persistent in the environment. In Maine, military contaminants of concern include DDT, PCBs, PAHs, VOCs, benzene, xylenes, waste fuels, oils, spent solvents, and heavy metals. The NOAA CRC program has conducted coastal hazardous waste site reviews for Brunswick Naval Air Station, Loring Air Force Base, and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. The program has played an important role in ecological risk assessments for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard site since 1989, providing EPA and the Navy with recommendations and guidance to develop a scientifically defensible Expedited Response Action (ERA). Such comments have been greatly appreciated by the EPA Remedial Project Manager (RPM), the Navy, and the Navy contractors. DoD has 73 installations contemplated for restoration in Maine. NOAA’s input is needed now to ensure that cleanups are protective of coastal natural resources as well as human health. NOAA offers technical expertise and a neutral perspective that is valued by both the military and the local public.

**Areas of Special Concern in Maine...**

The NOAA CRC program works to protect and restore natural resources throughout Maine. However, the Androscoggin and Kennebec Rivers, as well as Merrymeeting Bay where the two rivers meet, are of special concern to NOAA. This is one of the most productive estuaries in Maine, providing important habitat for NOAA trust resources. The shortnose sturgeon, a federally endangered species, uses the Androscoggin River for spawning, nursery, and adult habitat. A health advisory suggested limited consumption of all fish caught in the Androscoggin above Brunswick because of dioxin contamination. However, this advisory has had negligible effect on commercial fishing. Another site of concern is Little Madawaska River, the location of a small Atlantic salmon fishery. Elevated PCB concentrations in fish suggest that the Atlantic salmon population in the river is adversely affected and that restoration results could be limited.

**FYI...**

For more information about NOAA’s CRC program in Maine, please contact:

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