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### U.S. EPA to spend more than \$50 Million to address DDT, PCBs off Southern California Coast

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Contact Information:

#### U.S. EPA to spend more than \$50 Million to address DDT, PCBs off Southern California Coast

(SAN FRANCISCO) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has selected a cleanup strategy for the Palos Verdes Shelf Superfund Site, where a large area on the ocean floor off the Palos Verdes peninsula is contaminated with DDT and PCBs.

The site, off the coast of Los Angeles, stretches from Point Fermin in the southeast to Redondo Canyon in the northwest, a distance of about 9 miles.

"Signing this interim cleanup plan is a major milestone that puts the Palos Verdes Shelf Superfund Site on the road to remediation," said Keith Takata, Superfund director for the EPA's Pacific Southwest region. "The EPA will spend more than \$50 million to cap the most contaminated sediment on the shelf, as well as continue the highly effective public outreach program to protect at-risk populations from consuming contaminated fish."

The EPA plans to cover the most contaminated sediment with a layer of clean material and strengthen the existing public outreach and education program, monitoring, and enforcement. Further site studies will also be done to determine if additional cleanup is needed in the future.

The contaminated sediment at the site is too deep for direct human contact, but fish in the area contain levels of DDT and PCBs that pose risks to people and wildlife. The cleanup strategy is expected to reduce DDT and PCB concentrations in fish by reducing the concentration of chemicals in the sediment.

The EPA has established a Fish Contamination Education Collaborative, which includes community-based organizations, to reach out to the public and educate anglers and ethnic communities about the potential dangers in consuming contaminated fish, and how to minimize the danger. The collaborative also carries out enforcement at fish markets, particularly in ethnic neighborhoods.

From the 1950's through 1971, waste from the Montrose Chemical Corp. and PCBs from other industrial sources were discharged into the Los Angeles sanitation system and onto the Palos Verdes Shelf. Montrose Chemical Corp. was the world's largest manufacturer of DDT and it is estimated that the Palos Verdes Shelf contains 110 tons of DDT and 10 tons of PCBs.

In 1989, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act natural resource trustees determined that DDT and PCB contamination of the marine environment off the southern California coast, including the Palos Verdes Shelf, could result in significant damage to natural resources. In June 1990, the United States and the state of California filed suit on behalf of federal and state natural resource trustees as well as EPA and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Litigation concluded in 2000, with \$136,000,000 from the settlements being set aside to pay for restoration and remediation.

For more information, please visit: [www.epa.gov/region09/superfund/pvshelf](http://www.epa.gov/region09/superfund/pvshelf).

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