

# NPL Site Narrative for Torch Lake

## TORCH LAKE

### Houghton County, Michigan

**Conditions at proposal (October 15, 1984):** Torch Lake is in Houghton County in the upper peninsula of Michigan. Copper mining companies dumped tailings into the 2,660-acre lake from the 1890s to as recently as 1969. About 20 percent of the original lake volume has been filled with wastes, contaminating the lake sediments with copper. In 1972, cupric ammonium carbonate spilled into the lake from storage vats.

Cancerous growth has been documented in two fish species. The public health department has issued a health advisory on fish consumption.

**Status (June 10, 1986):** This mining site is being placed on the NPL at this time because the State of Michigan does not have an approved program under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) and so is not eligible for SMCRA reclamation funds.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.