

NPL Site Narrative for Travis Air Force Base

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE Solano County, California

Conditions at proposal (July 14, 1989): Travis Air Force Base covers 5,025 acres in Solano County, California. The base is 3 miles east of the City of Fairfield. The area around the base is primarily agricultural. Established in 1943, the base is near one of the largest and busiest bases in the Military Airlift Command. It consists largely of runways and related installations. Industrial operations include various shops where aircraft components were cleaned with solvents.

Travis Air Force Base is participating in the Installation Restoration Program (IRP), established in 1978. Under this program, the Department of Defense seeks to identify, investigate, and clean up contamination from hazardous materials. As part of IRP, the Air Force has identified a number of potentially contaminated areas, including three landfills used during 1943-77, of which one (Landfill No. 3) was used for disposal of crushed and rinsed pesticide containers, as well as the rinsate; areas where combustible wastes were burned for fire fighting exercises from 1943 to the mid-1970s; a pit where about 250 pounds of cyanide were buried in about 1967; a solvent spill area where methyl ethyl ketone, toluene, and tetraethylene glycol dimethyl ether may have been spilled during paint stripping operations; and the storm sewer system, one of the most contaminated portions of the base, where chemical wastes from the various shops were dumped throughout the history of the base. The old decommissioned sewage treatment plant is also of concern because cracked oxidation ponds may have contaminated the ground water below with pesticides and industrial chemicals.

Endrin, benzene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, tetrachloroethylene, and 1,1-dichloroethane were detected in monitoring wells in different parts of the base, according to a 1986 IRP report. An estimated 400 people obtain drinking water from wells within 3 miles of hazardous substances on the base; the nearest well is 3,400 feet from the base.

1,1,1-trichloroethane, benzene, chlorobenzene, 1,1,2,2-tetrachloroethane, and trans-1,2-dichloroethylene were detected in the storm sewers, according to the 1986 IRP report, and chlorobenzene was detected in Union Creek, which is routed through the base via the storm drain system. A spill of jet fuel in 1978 killed all aquatic wildlife along 2 miles of Union Creek. The creek flows 1.1 miles to Hill Slough, which is a branch of Suisun Marsh, a major coastal wetland. Because Hill Slough is tidally influenced, any contamination can reach San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Suisun Marsh is widely used for various recreational activities and is a major stop for migratory birds on the Pacific Flyway.

The Air Force has completed an initial assessment of the base and is currently working on a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) to determine the type and extent of contamination and identify alternatives for remedial action. The RI/FS report, scheduled to be released in the summer of 1989, was delayed to permit further investigation into the cause of a "swelling affliction" noted in horses and in humans in contact with horses in a grazing area of the base.

Status (November 21, 1989): Work on the RI/FS report continues.

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/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.