

NPL Site Narrative for Delatte Metals

DELATTE METALS Ponchatoula, Louisiana

Conditions at Proposal (July 28, 1998): The Delatte Metals site is an aggregation of the inactive Delatte Metals facility and the inactive Ponchatoula Battery Company. The site is located on Weinberger Road in Ponchatoula, Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana. The 19-acre site is bound by a tributary of Selser's Creek to the north, private residences to the east and west, and Weinberger road to the south. The population within 1 mile is approximately 645. The two sites are aggregated because they are adjacent, performed identical lead salvage operations, and generated the same type of waste material. The only difference in operational procedures was that Delatte Metals operated a lead smelter to recover addition lead material. The facilities shared a common drainage pathway, the northern tributary of Selser's Creek, and they contributed heavy metal contamination to the tributary and Selser's Creek.

The Delatte Metals facility reportedly began operations in 1970 as the Fuscia Battery Company. The Ponchatoula Battery Company moved its operation to the property north of Weinberger Road and adjacent to the Delatte and Fuscia Battery Company between 1972 and 1978. Operations at the two facilities have been described as the following: spent lead-acid batteries were transported to the site by trucks or railroad cars. The batteries were cut open at the battery hammersaw mill and the acid was allowed to drain from them. The waste liquid acid was directed into holding ponds at each site. No containment structures have been observed at the holding ponds. The battery casings were then discarded on site. The lead was recovered from the acid and smelted to form lead ingots, which were sold to lead recycling facilities located throughout the southern United States and other countries.

Drainage from the facilities was channeled to Selser's Creek through various ditches. The northernmost drainage ditch exited the Ponchatoula Battery Company property and immediately entered the Delatte Metals property. Process water from the Ponchatoula Battery Company joined a drainage ditch on the Delatte Metals property. This ditch exited the back portion of the Delatte Metals property through a slough that emptied into Selser's Creek. In addition to investigations by EPA Region 6, Delatte Metals and the Ponchatoula Battery Company have been investigated on several occasions by the Louisiana Stream Commission (LSC), the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission (LWFC), the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). The facility was issued several Notice of Violations and Compliance Orders during its operational life. Discharges from the facilities showed a pH range from 0.55 to 2 during State and EPA inspections.

Nine sources were evaluated at the Delatte Metals site during the HRS investigation: two battery chip piles, two slag piles, a waste pile, a buried/backfilled surface impoundment, tote bags, a contaminated soil area (former removal area), and the settling tank basin. Analytical samples collected from on-site soils, piles, and the tote bags indicated the presence of heavy metals including arsenic, lead, and cadmium. Analytical results obtained from ground water samples collected from monitoring wells around the surface impoundment indicated the presence of arsenic, cadmium, and lead at concentrations that met observed release criteria.

The pathway evaluated for this HRS evaluation was the surface water pathway. Drainage from the Delatte Metals site enters three drainage ditches: the northern portion of the site drains into a tributary of Selser's Creek. This tributary flows westward before it discharges into Selser's Creek. The second drainage is located on the west property boundary and flows to the north before it discharges into the northern tributary of Selser's Creek and then into Selser's Creek. The southern portion of the site drains into a drainage ditch adjacent to Weinberger Road. This ditch flows west and discharges into Selser's Creek approximately 1/4 mile west of the site. An observed release of lead and cadmium to the surface water pathway was documented by the analytical data from the sediment samples collected at the three probable points of entry (PPEs).

Sensitive environments were documented within the 15-mile downstream target distance limit. The Joyce Wildlife Management Area is located 1.4 miles downstream, and the Manchac Wildlife Management Area is located 12.5 miles downstream. Wetlands were also identified in the 15-mile downstream target distance limit.

Status (January 1999): EPA Response and Prevention Branch is currently conducting a removal of onsite sources. EPA is considering various remedial alternatives for this site.

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.