



# **Ballard Pits Proposed State Superfund Site Nueces County, Texas**

## **Community Relations Plan**

June 2008

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## Community Relations Plan

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### Appendices

1. Text of public notice announcing the Ballard Pits facility proposal to the State Superfund Registry and land use public meeting; published in the January 13, 2006 editions of the Corpus Christi *Caller-Times* and the *Texas Register*.
2. Site Location Map
3. Text of public notice announcing the removal action proposed for the Ballard Pits state Superfund site; published in the November 9, 2007 edition of the *Texas Register*.
4. December 2007 Site Fact Sheet mailed to community members and other interested parties
5. Display ad placed in the January 3, 2008 edition of the Nueces County *Record Star* announcing the January 8, 2008 community meeting to provide information and answer questions regarding the removal action.
6. March 2008 Site Fact Sheet mailed to community members and other interested parties
7. Display ad placed in the March 13, 2008 edition of the Nueces County *Record Star* announcing the March 27, 2008 community meeting to provide information and answer questions regarding the removal action.
8. April 2008 Site Fact Sheet mailed to community members and other interested parties
9. Assorted media articles related to the Ballard Pits State Superfund Site

## **Overview of Community Relations Plan**

This community relations plan (CRP) identifies issues of community concern regarding the Ballard Pits Proposed State Superfund Site (Ballard Pits), located in Nueces County, Texas. This CRP also outlines the anticipated community relations activities to be conducted during each phase of the cleanup at the Ballard Pits site.

The Ballard Pits CRP has been prepared to aid the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in developing a community relations program tailored to the needs of the community affected by the Ballard Pits site. The TCEQ will conduct community relations activities to ensure that the local public has input to decisions and access to information about Superfund activities at the Ballard Pits site (see page 9).

The TCEQ has the responsibility for managing the cleanup of this site, and the TCEQ Remediation Division will oversee all community relations activities at the site.

*(Note: The state predecessor agencies: Texas Water Quality Board (TWQB), Texas Department of Water Resources (TDWR), Texas Water Commission (TWC), Texas Air Control Board (TACB), and the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), referred to throughout this document are now known as the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The new agency name, TCEQ, became effective September 1, 2002, as mandated under House Bill 2912 of the 77th Regular Legislative Session.)*

## **Ballard Pits Site Profile**

### **A. Site Location**

East Pit: 27.8865° North Latitude, 97.6830° West Longitude  
West Pit: 27.8878° North Latitude, 97.6842° West Longitude

The Ballard Pits site is located in north Nueces County, near the Calallen region annexed by the city of Corpus Christi in 1966, and approximately 5.8 miles north of the city of Robstown. The Ballard properties are located at the end of Ballard Lane, west of its intersection with County Road 73. The pits are located on Lots 2 and 3 in Section 6 of the Wade Riverside Subdivision.

### **B. Site Description**

The Ballard Pits are located on property owned by the C.F. Ballard Residuary Trust and/or Mamie Helen Ballard.

The Ballard Sand and Gravel Company operated on these properties. The properties occupy approximately 296 acres within a rural area of Nueces County, Texas. The nearest residence is approximately 300 feet east of the East Pit. The pits have a combined surface area of approximately 63,000 square feet.

### **C. Site Chronology and Background**

In September, 2002, the Nueces River overflowed its banks, due to a flood, and inundated the pits. The Texas Railroad Commission responded to citizen complaints of contamination by collecting samples from the pits in adjacent residential yards and water wells in October 2002 and from the pits in December 2002.

The TCEQ Region 14 office initiated emergency response actions to contain contaminated surface water runoff from the East pit: deploying sorbent booms in February 2003; installation of a hay fence in March 2003; and additional booms deployed in August 2003.

On December 1, 2003, the Texas Department of Health (TDH) submitted a health consultation for the site to the TCEQ.

Due to citizen complaints, TCEQ contractors worked with Eagle Construction to install several groundwater monitor wells adjacent to the pits. The TCEQ Region 14 office conducted sampling investigations at the site in which monitor wells, adjacent to the pits, were sampled along with nearby residential wells. No attributable hazardous substances were detected above drinking water standards in any wells.

The TCEQ performed Immediate Removal actions at the site from April 2004 through July 2004. These actions consisted of sampling each pit for geotechnical parameters (in anticipation of constructing a compacted soil/clay cover) and repairing a berm to close the easternmost end of the East Pit.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated the site as No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP) under Superfund and referred the site to the state for further evaluation.

A hazard ranking system (HRS) document was prepared for the Ballard Pits site in December 2004. The site received an HRS score of 13.31 making it eligible for listing on the state Superfund registry.

In January 2006 a legal notice was published in the *Texas Register* (31 TexReg 316-317) describing the site and proposing the site for listing on the state Superfund registry. TCEQ is proposed the use of commercial/industrial criteria in setting cleanup levels based on the existing land use of the property, as is prescribed in 30 TAC Chapter 350, Texas Risk Reduction Program, under §350.53.

Between July 2006 and February 2007 a remedial investigation was conducted at the Ballard Pits site. Samples of soil, ground water and sediments were collected from both pits and the adjacent area surrounding both pits. A total of 86 surface soil, subsurface soil, and sediment samples were collected in and around the pits.

In November 2007, a legal notice was published in the *Texas Register* (32 TexReg 8963) of TCEQ's intent to perform a removal action at the Ballard Sand Pits site. The removal action will consist of excavation of contaminated soil and waste material.

Following the construction of onsite roads, the erection of an onsite security fence, and the mobilization of equipment, TCEQ contractors began excavating waste material from the west pit on April 1, 2008.

In April 2008 TCEQ and its contractor discovered that the volume of waste in the west pit was greater than indicated by prior investigation. Additionally, approximately 90% of the waste excavated and disposed of to date has been characterized as hazardous waste and 10% as non-hazardous waste. With the additional volume of waste discovered and higher than anticipated percentage of the total waste in the west pit being hazardous waste, the project costs increased substantially. TCEQ notified area residents that increased project costs would likely result in a temporary suspension of removal actions while additional funding was secured.

## **Community Profile**

Nueces County is located in the coastal region of Texas. The county is named for the Nueces River which flows through the county to Corpus Christi, the county seat. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the population of Nueces County was 313,645 as of 2000. The 2000 ethnicity estimates for Nueces County by the U.S. Census were 72.03% White, 4.24% Black or African American, 0.64% Native American, 1.16% Asian, 0.07% Pacific Islander, 18.74% from other races, and 3.13% from two or more races. 55.78% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Nueces County's economy is supported by petroleum processing and production; deepwater port facilities; agriculture; tourism, conventions; manufacturing and military complex. The economy is also tied to the Port of Corpus Christi which serves Texas and Mexico.

The city of Robstown is a western suburb of Corpus Christi. It was founded in 1906, and was named for Robert Driscoll, a prominent figure from Corpus Christi. Historically, the main industries for the area were vegetable farming and oil and gas production. The current economy also includes petroleum and chemical processing, agribusiness and seafood production, and metal fabrication and processing.

The 2000 U.S. Census estimated the population of the nearest town, Robstown, at 12,727 people, 3,644 households, and 3,039 families residing in the city. The 2000 ethnicity estimates of Robstown by the U.S. Census were: 66.97% White, 1.41% African American, 0.60% Native American, 0.15% Asian, 0.06% Pacific Islander, 27.12% from other races, and 3.69% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 93.09% of the population.

## **Community Involvement and Concerns**

February 23, 2006, approximately 50 interested members of the community attended a public meeting at Calallen High School regarding TCEQ's proposal to list the Ballard Pits on the state Superfund registry. No challenges were received.

January 8, 2008, approximately 33 interested members of the community attended a public meeting held at Calallen High School to provide information on the planned removal action. Members of the community present expressed concern regarding the odor coming from the pits that could be exacerbated by excavation activities and the route that would be taken by trucks transporting waste material from the Ballard Pits to the permitted waste disposal facility in Robstown, Texas.

January 9, 2008, TCEQ staff presented details of the planned removal action to the

Nueces County commissioners.

March 27, 2008, approximately 19 interested members of the community attended a public meeting held at Calallen High School to provide additional information and to answer any remaining questions about the planned removal action. TCEQ provided follow-up information on the odor-control technology that would be implemented to address odors from the pit and the new proposed truck route.

April 2, 2008, TCEQ staff presented the additional information regarding the planned removal action to the Nueces County commissioners.

May 6, 2008, approximately 21 interested members of the community attended a public meeting held at the Johnny Calderon Building. TCEQ staff presented information regarding the new information discovered during excavation of the west pit, why excavation activities would be temporarily suspended, and what actions TCEQ would take to secure the site and monitor during the interim. These include stabilizing the west pit with two feet of sand and fencing, rebuilding berms around both pits to withstand flooding, and continued sampling of onsite monitoring wells and nearby residential wells. Community members present expressed concern about leaving the excavation unfinished, particularly with regards to the possible impacts to groundwater from flooding and the upcoming hurricane season.

May 14, 2008, TCEQ staff presented the information regarding the temporary suspension of the removal action to the Nueces County commissioners.



## **Specific Objectives of the Community Relations Program**

1. Maintain open and ongoing two-way communications between the TCEQ and area residents, as well as City of Robstown, Nueces County, and State officials.
2. Continue to expand the mailing list to include additional agencies, organizations, and residents that are interested in the project.
3. Provide a community relations contact from whom interested parties can receive information on site activities, project status, and study results.
4. Provide citizens, involved agencies, elected officials, civic leaders, and the media with accurate, timely information about site-related activities through fact sheets/newsletters, press releases, and community meetings.
5. Provide for and attend public meetings.
6. Respond to telephone inquiries and written correspondence in a timely, accurate manner.
7. Provide all information, especially technical findings, in language that is understandable to the general public and in a form useful to interested citizens and elected officials through the preparation of fact sheets, newsletters, and news releases when major findings are made available during project phases.
8. Monitor community concerns and information requirements as the project progresses.
9. Modify the community relations plan to address changes in community needs and to maintain accuracy during different project phases.

## Community Relations Techniques & Tools

1. Project mailing list - to provide the means through which press releases, project status reports and other significant communications can be distributed to elected officials, community groups, and citizens.
2. Project status briefing for state and local officials - to periodically inform them of project developments over the course of the project.
3. Project status briefing for community groups and concerned citizens (may include public meetings, if needed) - to periodically inform the community of significant project developments and findings, to respond to inquiries accordingly, and incorporate local concerns into the decision-making process as appropriate.
4. Informal meetings (if needed) with residents - to provide an opportunity for affected residents to express concerns and to make inquiries to ensure effective two-way communication.
5. Brief field team on community relation issues before performing on-site investigation.
6. Program document repository - to maintain an easily accessible repository through which the public may review project outputs.
7. State Superfund Internet Homepage - to provide timely, current information on state Superfund activities on the World Wide Web at the following web address:  
  
<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/remediation/superfund/index.html>
8. Community Relations Plan - to reflect changes in site activities or local concerns. After the Proposed Remedial Action Document has been issued, the CRP will be revised to address implementation of the selected remedial action.

## Area Elected Officials

### State

The Honorable Senator Juan Hinojosa  
Texas Senate  
612 Nolana, Suite 410  
McAllen, Texas 78504  
Telephone: 956/972-1841  
Fax: 956/686-8462

The Honorable Senator Juan Hinojosa  
Texas Senate  
P.O. Box 12068, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711  
Telephone: 512/463-0103  
Fax: 512/463-0229

The Honorable Abel Herrero  
Texas House of Representatives  
606 N. Carancahua, Suite 103A  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78746  
Telephone: 361/882-2277  
Fax: 361/882-6706

The Honorable Abel Herrero  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768-2910  
Telephone 512/463-0462  
Fax: 512/463-1705

### Nueces County

The Honorable Loyd Neal  
Nueces County Judge  
901 Leopold, Rm. 303  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401  
Telephone: 361/888-0444  
Fax: 361/888-0445

The Honorable Peggy Bañales  
Nueces County Commissioner  
901 Leopold, Rm. 303  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401  
Telephone: 361/888-0245  
Fax: 361/888-0284

The Honorable Betty Jean Longoria  
Nueces County Commissioner  
901 Leopold, Rm. 303  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401  
Telephone: 361/888-0296  
Fax: 361/888-0239

The Honorable Oscar O. Ortiz  
Nueces County Commissioner  
901 Leopold, Rm. 303  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401  
Telephone: 361/888-0267  
Fax: 361/888-9868

The Honorable H.C. Cazales  
Nueces County Commissioner  
901 Leopold, Rm. 303  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401  
Telephone: 361/888-0268  
Fax: 361/888-0470

## Area Elected Officials (cont.)

### **City of Robstown**

The Honorable Rodrigo Ramon Jr  
Mayor  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

The Honorable Anissa Zilka  
Council Member  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

The Honorable Elias R. Vasquez  
Mayor Pro Tem  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

The Honorable Arlene Rodriguez  
Council Member  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

The Honorable Abel Tamez  
Council Member  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

The Honorable Sybil D. Tipton  
Council Member  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

The Honorable Amanda Barrera Vasquez  
Council Member  
101 East Main  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
Telephone: 361/ 387-4589  
Fax: 361/ 387-9353

## Area Elected Officials (cont.)

### City of Corpus Christi

The Honorable Henry Garret  
Mayor  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 826-3101  
Fax: 361/ 826-3103

The Honorable John Marez  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 826-3105  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Melody Cooper  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 887-8014  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Nelda Martinez  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 826-3105  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Larry Elizondo  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 826-3105  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Michael McCutchon  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 853-4745  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Mike Hummell  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 698-3142  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Bill Kelly  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 888-6600  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

The Honorable Priscilla Leal  
Council Member  
P.O. Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78476  
Telephone: 361/ 658-1302  
Fax: 361/ 826-3113

## Area News Media

Nueces County Record-Star  
Attention: News Editor  
P. O. Box 1192  
Robstown, Texas 78380-1192  
Telephone: 361/387-4511  
Fax: 361-767-8827  
Email: [news@recordstar.com](mailto:news@recordstar.com)

Corpus Christi Caller-Times  
Attention: News Editor  
P. O. Box 9136  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9136  
Telephone: 361/884-2011  
Fax: 361/888-3732  
Email: [metrodesk@caller.com](mailto:metrodesk@caller.com)

El Tejano Hispanic Community  
Attention: News Editor  
2505 Sarita Street  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405  
Telephone: 361/884-2238  
Fax: 361/888-7703  
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La Onda de Corpus Christi  
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Fax: 361/886-3732

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Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9757  
Telephone: 361/882-7411  
Fax: 361/882-9767

KFTX-FM  
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152 South Port Avenue  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405-2106  
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Fax: 361/883-3648  
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KKBA-FM  
Attention: News Director  
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Fax: 361/882-9767

KNDA-FM  
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2001 Saratoga Boulevard #B  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78417-3404  
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Fax: 361/289-5669  
Email: [lilricharddabomb@aol.com](mailto:lilricharddabomb@aol.com)

KKTX-AM  
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501 Tupper Lane  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78417-9736  
Telephone: 361/289-0111  
Fax: 361/289-5035  
Email: [www.1360online.com](http://www.1360online.com)

KSIX-AM  
Attention: News Director  
P. O. Box TV-10  
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Telephone: 361/883-7070  
Fax: 361/882-8553

## **Key Project Personnel**

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Staff Attorney  
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Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
MC -168  
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Austin, Texas 78711-3087  
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jhaney@tceq.state.tx.us

## **Program Document Repositories**

Corpus Christi Public Library  
Northwest Branch  
3202 McKinzie Road  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78410  
Telephone: 361/241-9329

*(Physical Address)*

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
Record Management  
Building E, North Entrance, First Floor  
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Austin, Texas 78753  
Telephone: 512/239-2920

*(Mailing Address)*

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Records Management  
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