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Agency: Environmental Quality

Dow to Begin Cleanup Work in Tittabawassee River

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The Dow Chemical Company will begin work next week to remove a historic deposit of contaminated sediments in the Tittabawassee River, just upstream of the Dow Dam in Midland. The sediments are contaminated with high levels of dioxins and furans, chlorobenzenes, metals, and other materials.

A coffer dam will be constructed in the river to contain the materials and facilitate its removal, and boaters and fishermen are advised to maintain a safe distance from construction activities.

The Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a revised permit for Dow to construct the steel dam structure as a component of an Interim Response Activity that requires Dow to remove the contaminated material from the river. The permit was revised to address contamination that was found outside of the footprint of the original project area. In addition, Dow has also been constructing a mile and a half long pipeline and a sediment dewatering facility on the Dow plant site over the past several months. After dewatering, the sediments will be disposed of in the Dow Salzburg Road Landfill. The coffer dam will be removed at the end of the project.

The "Reach D" deposit of highly contaminated sediments was identified during the implementation of the corrective action sampling plan for the upper six miles of the Tittabawassee River during 2006, and the cleanup process was agreed upon prior to EPA's recent order. An additional eleven miles of the river, to the State Road Bridge in Saginaw County, is scheduled for sampling in 2007.

Editor's note: DEQ news releases are available on the department's Internet home page at www.michigan.gov/deq.

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