



The RACER Trust: Empowering America's Auto Communities



Van Buren Township, MI RACER Site 11070

Van Buren Landfill Land
Michigan Avenue & Ecorse Road
Van Buren Township, MI 48111

Site Description

At approximately 68 acres, this vacant parcel is filled with brush and heavily wooded areas. The property is zoned industrial, and operated as a landfill in the 1960s. The Willow Run airport sits to the south of the property, and Route 12 lies to the west, with railroad tracks to the north. Industrial property abuts the land on the east side.

The property was cultivated for agricultural use as early as 1940 and until approximately 1966. Van Buren Development Company occupied the site from approximately 1966 to 1969, first operating as a sand quarry and subsequently a landfill. The site has been vacant since the closure of the landfill in approximately 1969, when GM purchased the site.

Cleanup activities are performed by the RACER Trust, with the approval and oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Settlement Agreement that established the RACER Trust set aside approximately \$3.2 million for cleanup work at this property.

Environmental History

When the site was operated as a landfill by Van Buren Development Company (prior to GM's ownership), wastes disposed at the site included general refuse, demolition waste, domestic refuse and incinerator ash from the City of Detroit, and paper waste from Ford Motor Company. Liquid wastes inside 55-gallon drums and crankcase oil from Dearborn Refinery also may have been disposed of at the site. Landfilling of wastes ceased in 1969.

In late 2003, a pathway was cleared and a perimeter fence was installed to prevent unauthorized entry and use of the site by all-terrain vehicles, disposal of household and building materials waste, and hunting.

Continued

Planning began and investigation has been ongoing since late 2011. Approximately 25 test pits, 13 soil borings, 12 monitoring wells, and three surface water samples have been completed to characterize the quality and extent of waste materials, the geology, soil type and quality, groundwater quality and flow, and surface water quality. Waste was primarily general refuse and construction debris but some chemicals including, volatile organic compounds, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, metals, and dioxin were detected in the waste. Minimal impacts to soil and surface water were identified. Groundwater impacts were primarily by iron and manganese but benzene was also detected in one well.

Additional Investigation

Additional groundwater investigations have been conducted in order to obtain a better understanding of the extent of impacts, with the primary objective of delineating off-site impacts to groundwater. Approximately 15 additional monitoring wells and 40 soil borings were completed in order to achieve delineation objectives, as well as delineate benzene in groundwater detected in one well along the northern perimeter of the site. Of the 15 monitoring wells that were installed, 4 were placed within the landfill in order to further refine hydrologic characteristics and groundwater flow direction.

Sampling of the off-site monitoring wells identified metals (primarily iron) in groundwater above applicable criteria (Michigan Part 201 Residential Health-Based Drinking Water and/or Ground Water Surface Water Interface Criteria) at certain locations. As a continuation of groundwater investigation activities, investigation is currently underway to further delineate off-site groundwater impacts by installing monitoring wells further off-site. In addition to investigation, semi-annual groundwater monitoring has been conducted and is on-going in order to monitor plume stability and/or contaminant concentration trends. and an Ecological Risk Assessment is in progress to allow for evaluation of possible future site use.

Next Steps

Alternatives to stabilizing and managing potential exposure pathways and risks at and off site will be identified and evaluated with an alternative recommended to EPA. It is anticipated that use of the property will be restricted to non-residential, use of groundwater will be prohibited, if excavated contaminated soil will have to managed properly, and any excavations will need to be completed in accordance with applicable health and safety and environmental regulations.

More detailed information on the site can be viewed at the RACER website at www.racertrust.org.