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Rinchem Superfund Site
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Rinchem PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION

August 11, 1997

Proposed Action

Based on several investigations, EPA has determined that the risk from ground water contamination associated with the Rinchem site falls within the acceptable risk range prescribed in the National Contingency Plan. Therefore, the site will not be included on the National Priorities List (NPL). EPA will begin the process to remove the site from the list of sites proposed for inclusion on the NPL.

Site Background

The proposed Rinchem site was operated as a chemical transfer and storage facility at 5001 Edith Boulevard NE, immediately north of Albuquerque city limits. The site was occupied by Rinchem between 1979 and 1983. Prior to 1979 this location was occupied by electronic assembly and hydraulics industrial facilities that possibly used chlorinated solvents and other hazardous materials in their industrial process. Rinchem's operation at this location consisted of transporting hazardous wastes from generators to this site, repackaging or accumulating the waste and transporting it back to either the generator or to an offsite disposal facility. During its operation, the Rinchem facility consisted of two 4000 gallon steel storage tanks used to store ethylene glycol and sodium hydroxide and a 950 gallon fiberglass tank used for collection, repackaging, and shipment of material from the site.

In 1982, Rinchem notified the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that it did not want to obtain an operating permit for the 5001 Edith Blvd. NE location. A closure plan for the facility was submitted to EPA in January 1983. Rinchem moved its operation to 6133 Edith Blvd. NE in 1983 and is currently operating at that location under an EPA permit as a storage facility.

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) conducted an assessment of the proposed Rinchem facility in late 1983 and 1984. The assessment included collection of surface soil samples and water samples from an abandoned well onsite. The

This proposed plan fact sheet will tell you about:

- The background of the Rinchem site;
- The results of the Remedial Investigations (RI) conducted to evaluate hazards associated with site contaminants;
- EPA proposed plan for the site;
- A public meeting and comment period to be held by EPA to discuss the proposed plan;
- How you can obtain more information about the Rinchem site.

chlorinated solvents trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethylene (PCE), acetone, methyl isobutyl ketone (MIBK), and other organic contaminants were found in the soil samples. Chlorinated solvents and ketones were also found in the ground water samples collected from the abandoned well.

NMED conducted a second investigation of the 5001 Edith Blvd. NE location in 1988. To evaluate ground water contamination, 5 monitoring wells were installed to approximately 100 ft. below

the site surface. Water from this depth is not used currently for any supply purposes. However, this ground water is protected as a future water supply under New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) regulations. TCE and PCE concentrations from 2 of the 5 monitoring wells exceeded federal drinking water standards. TCE also exceeded New Mexico WQCC ground water standards.

Based on information collected during the NMED investigations, the old Rinchem property was proposed for inclusion on the NPL in October 1992. Because chemicals associated with the operation at the facility were found in surface soil and groundwater samples, EPA and NMED determined that it would be appropriate to conduct a full remedial investigation and risk assessment to determine whether any contaminated areas onsite or groundwater contamination would pose a risk to public health. EPA and NMED were particularly concerned that highly concentrated contamination may have settled in the ground water as free phase liquid.

Remedial Investigation (RI)

In 1992, Rinchem began an RI at the 5001 Edith Boulevard NE location. This investigation was conducted voluntarily on the part of Rinchem, without direct regulatory oversight. Rinchem drilled several monitor wells to define possible groundwater contamination originating from the site. Ground water sampling conducted between 1992 and 1996 showed that the contaminant concentrations below the site no longer exceeded federal drinking water standards. One monitoring well near the site continued to show contamination slightly above the drinking water standard for TCE in June 1995.

The results of the remedial investigation also indicate that chlorinated solvents are not likely to exist in a pool, or as free phase liquid, in the upper ground water. Samples taken from deeper ground water were not contaminated. Also, chlorinated solvents have not been detected at several municipal water supply wells downgradient from the site. Based on

the current data, there is no imminent danger of contamination of drinking water supplies downgradient from this site.

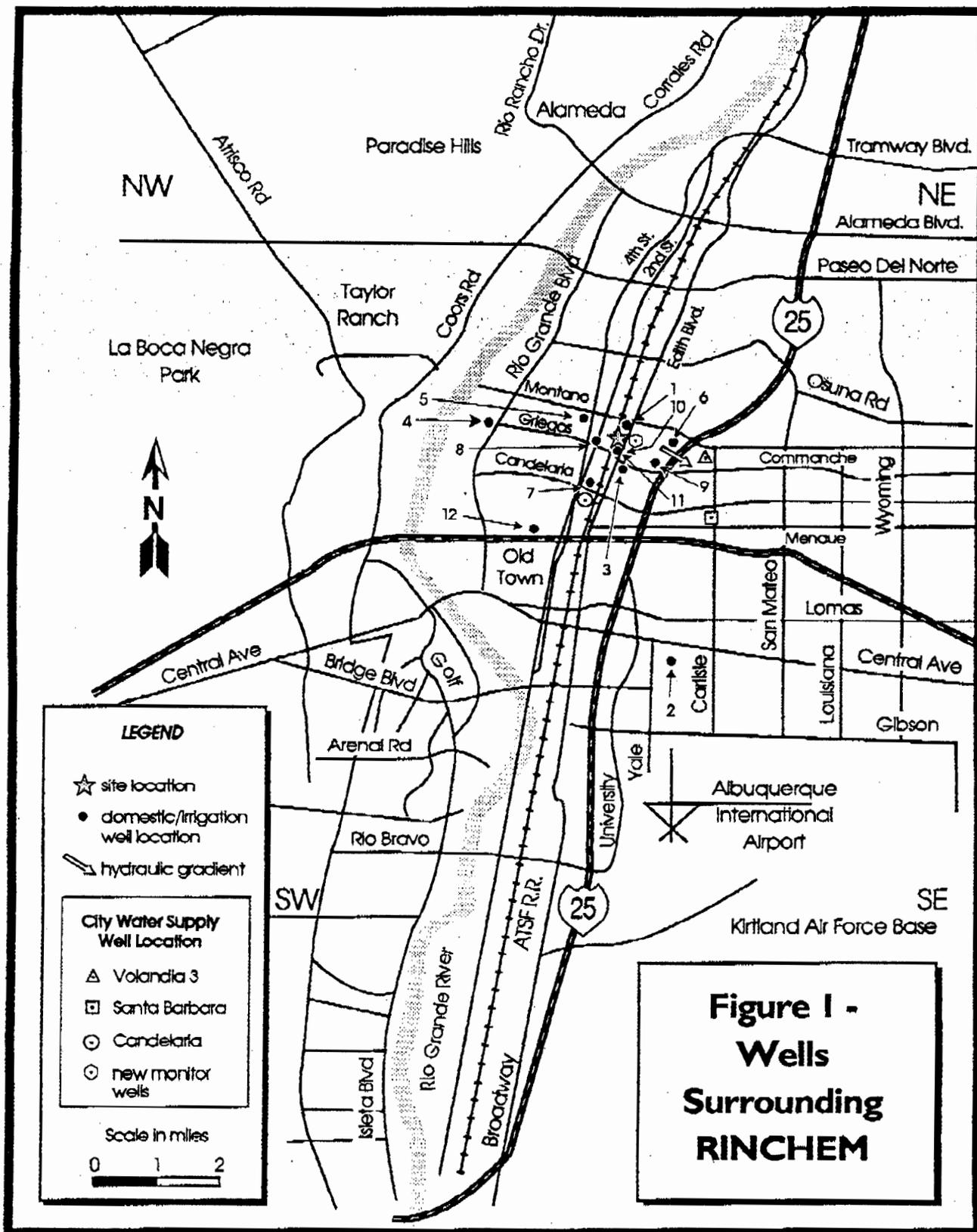
As part of the remedial investigation, EPA re-evaluated the risk from contaminants at the site. As part of this re-evaluation, soil samples were collected from the site. Volatile organic compounds were not detected in surface soil sampled in this effort. Semivolatile organic compounds and metals were detected in these samples at values below EPA soil screening criteria.

Chlorinated solvents were not detected in soil samples taken in the first 27 feet below the surface taken in June 1995. These soil borings were a follow up of a soil gas survey conducted by Rinchem. Based on the above risk assessment the subsurface soil contamination does not exceed the trigger risk levels to continue further Federal action. Also, chlorinated solvents were not detected in two wells drilled downgradient of the site. The detection limit was significantly lower than the Federal drinking water standard of 5 parts per billion TCE.

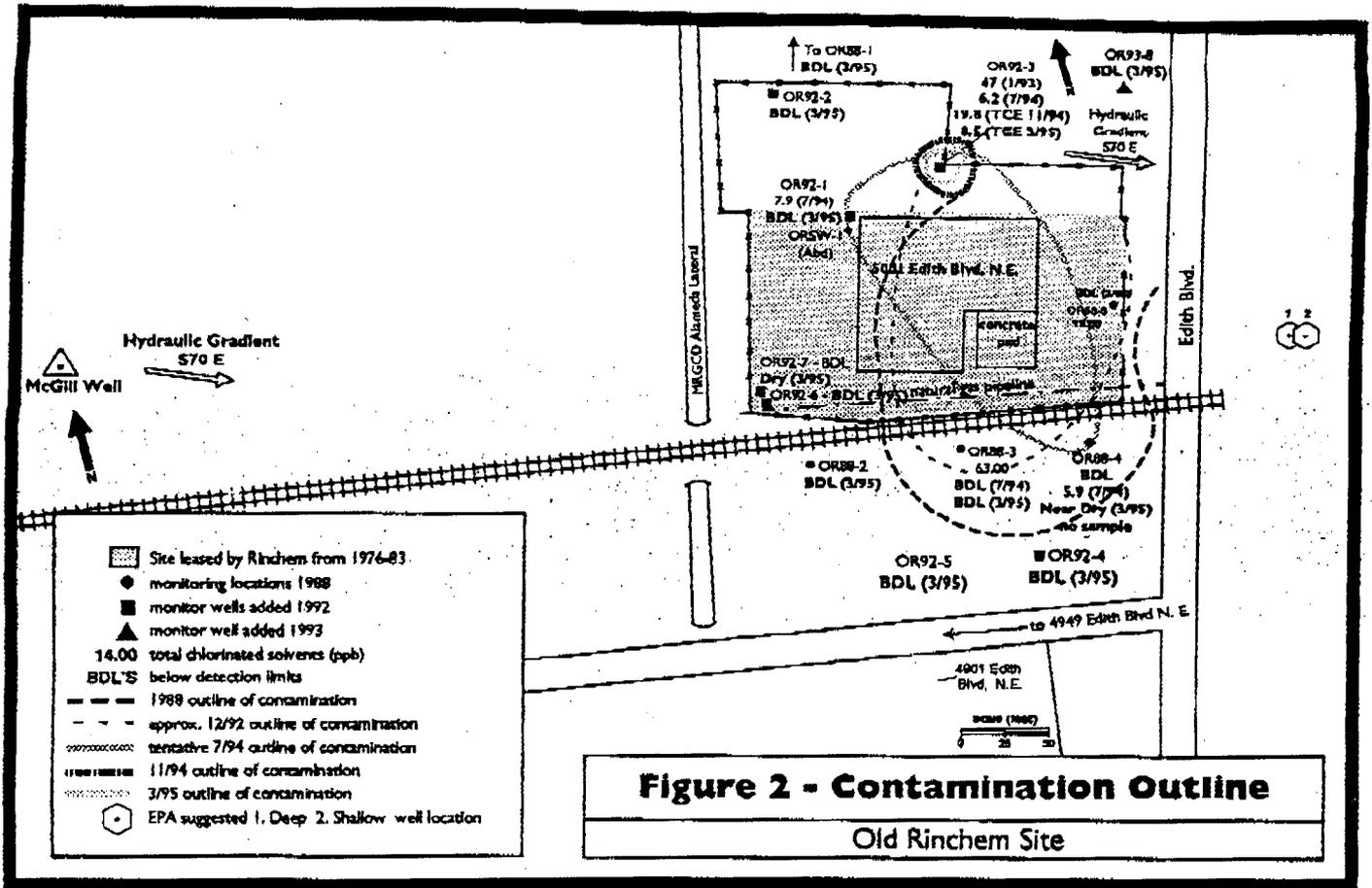
Summary of Site Risks

The Federal government believes that remedial actions are necessary in Superfund when the lifetime excess cancer risk from exposure to contaminants at a site is greater than 1 in 10,000. At a site where an action is needed, EPA has a goal to reduce site the excess cancer risk to between 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 1,000,000.

EPA used the maximum concentrations of PCE and TCE in soil to calculate the excess cancer risk from exposure to contamination at the site. Using the maximum reported value of 131 parts per billion of PCE and 73 parts per billion of TCE in soil borings, the excess cancer risk was calculated to be 9 in 1,000,000, well within risk goals set by Superfund regulation. The model used to assess the risk was based on very conservative assumptions. The above risk was based on the expected concentration in groundwater due to leaching of PCE and TCE from the soil to the groundwater.



**Figure 1 -
Wells
Surrounding
RINCHEM**



Based on the data collected in the RI, chlorinated solvents are not present above drinking water standards in the ground water.

Newly drilled downgradient wells indicate both the shallow and the deeper groundwater to be below drinking water standards for the chlorinated solvents. Other contaminants are below detection limits. The site does not present an imminent risk to potential downgradient targets.

Chlorinated solvents have not been detected in downgradient municipal (within 2 miles) wells. The detection limit used in these analyses was one tenth of the Federal drinking water standards for TCE.

Contaminated surface soil samples obtained in December 1994 contain pollutant concentrations that are below Superfund guideline levels for human exposure to such chemicals. Risks associated with subsurface soil contaminated with chlorinated solvents

were calculated to be in the bottom of the risk range prescribed for Superfund, precluding the need by inclusion of the site on the NPL.

EPA's Proposed Plan of Action

The results of the RI indicate that contaminants associated with the Proposed Rinchem site do not pose a significant risk for inclusion of the site on the NPL. Therefore, EPA will begin the process of removing the site from the list of sites proposed for inclusion on the NPL.

This proposal only applies to future Federal Superfund activity, associated with this site. State and local governments may exercise their authority, as appropriate, to protect the groundwater resources in the area of the site. EPA suggests that the ground water be monitored for two years.

For Additional Information

If you have questions or need further information, please contact:

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733
(214) 665-6782

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1190 St. Francis Drive
P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502
(505) 827-2908

Opportunities for Public Comment

The Superfund law emphasizes the importance of public input. EPA, therefore, will hold a comment period on the results of the RI to provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan of action for the proposed Rinchem site. During this comment period, which begins on August 14, 1997, and ends on September 12, 1997, citizens are encouraged to review the Rinchem RI report and submit comments to EPA. Comments should be addressed to:

Olivia Balandrán (6SF-PO)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733
(214) 665-6584

EPA will also hold a public meeting at 7:00 p.m. on August 21, 1997, to discuss the RI report and EPA's proposal for the site. The meeting will be held at the North Valley Senior Citizen Center, 3825 4th Street, N.W., Albuquerque, N.M.

Based on EPA's evaluation of comments received, EPA will finalize a Record of Decision that will describe the selected plan of action for the proposed Rinchem site and summarize the decision process.

Copies of the Rinchem RI report and other site related documents are available for review at the information repositories listed below:

Albuquerque Public Library
501 Copper Avenue, NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102
(505) 768-5140
Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Friday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

New Mexico Environment Department
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive
P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.