

Members of the taskforce include the Torres Martinez Tribe, Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, Coachella Valley Association of Governments, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, Riverside County Code Enforcement & Community Improvement Department, Riverside County Fire Department, and EPA.



Trashbusters community wide cleanup event.

## INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Infrastructure Development Taskforce made great strides in 2007. The Torres Martinez Tribe launched the Torres Martinez Collaborative Web site in the Fall, [www.torresmartinez.org/collaborative](http://www.torresmartinez.org/collaborative), to keep the community up-to-date on the collaborative's activities. The Web site serves two purposes: 1) to act as a central clearinghouse for tracking open and closed dump sites on the reservation; and 2) to exhibit the outreach materials created by collaborative members.

The tribe applied for and received EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment funding to inventory, characterize and assess the Mt. San Diego and Fillmore Street sites for redevelopment. The tribe is working closely with EPA to conduct Brownfields assessments and to return former dump sites to productive reuse. Beneficial reuse of the land will not only prevent future illegal dumping, but will create economic opportunities. The tribe also released a request for proposals in August 2007 to update its integrated solid waste management plan and conduct a waste stream analysis, both important to improving waste management on the reservation and planning for the future.

On December 11, 2007 the Torres Martinez Tribal Government sent a letter to the Riverside County Deputy District Attorney's office reaffirming the tribe's desire for enforcement assistance on tribal land to investigate and take action against violators of the tribe's illegal dumping ordinance.

EPA recently awarded the Environmental Finance Center, Region 9 and Dominican University a grant to conduct a feasibility study on locating green businesses on former dumpsites. The project will improve waste management on the Torres Martinez Reservation by identifying redevelopment options for cleaned-up dumpsites and preventing future illegal dumping.

## COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS

### TRIBE

Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians Tribal Council, Tribal Administrator, Environmental Department and Planning Department.

### FEDERAL

EPA, BIA, Indian Health Service, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, USDA Rural Development, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Bureau of Land Management.

### STATE

California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), California Air Resources Board, California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) and California Highway Patrol.

### LOCAL

Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, City of Coachella, City of Indio, Coachella Valley Association of Governments, Desert Alliance for Community Empowerment, Desert Mirage High School, Mecca Community Council, Oasis Community Council, Riverside County Code Enforcement and Community Improvement Department, Riverside County, Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, Riverside County Department of Waste Management, Riverside County District Attorney's Office, Riverside County Fire Department/California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Riverside County Sheriff, and Southern Coachella Valley Service District.

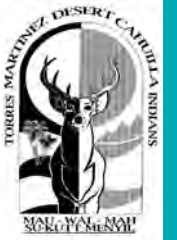
*The mission of the collaborative is to clean up and prevent illegal dumping on the Torres Martinez Reservation. This status report is published to update all stakeholders and community members on the progress of this multi-agency effort. If you would like to be involved in the collaborative or request additional copies of this report, please contact Erica Yelensky (yelensky.eric@epa.gov; tel: (415) 972-3021 or Willard Chin (chin.willard@epa.gov; tel: (415) 972-3797 of EPA's Pacific Southwest Regional Office. For additional information on the collaborative, please visit [www.torresmartinez.org/collaborative](http://www.torresmartinez.org/collaborative) or [www.epa.gov/region09/indian/torresmartinez](http://www.epa.gov/region09/indian/torresmartinez).*



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# Torres Martinez Solid Waste Collaborative

*A Partnership of Tribal, Federal, State and Local Agencies to Stop Illegal Dumping on the Reservation*



*Allotment #114 after cleanup.*

The Torres Martinez Solid Waste Collaborative is comprised of 25 federal, state, and local agencies, the Torres Martinez Tribal Government, and non-profit organizations working to prevent illegal dumping on the Torres Martinez Reservation. Since its inception in April 2006, the collaborative has closed all major dumps and successfully prevented the creation of new dumps on the reservation; significantly reduced dump fires; cleaned up over 20 dump sites; put access controls in place to prevent future dumping; and initiated Targeted Brownfields Assessments to facilitate productive reuse of former dump sites.

**February 2008 Status Report**

## PROGRESS TO DATE

### DUMP CLEANUP AND ACCESS CONTROL

#### Fillmore Street Dumpsite

In February 2007 EPA completed a hazardous waste cleanup of the 25-acre Fillmore Street Dumpsite. EPA removed approximately 100 cubic yards of unburned wood stakes treated with toxic Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA), 1,600 pounds of waste oil and sludge, 1,400 tons of burnt ash materials and 400 pounds of asbestos-cement piping from the site for proper disposal. EPA also installed access controls and signage.

In May 2007, California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) removed the remaining solid waste from the site, including 1,700 tons of trash/debris, 65 tons of waste tires, 35 tons of metal debris, 22 units of lead-acid batteries, and 4 gallons of motor oil. The Torres Martinez Tribe, EPA and BIA began assessing the site in December 2007 to determine possible redevelopment uses such as growing sod or food crops.



Fillmore Street dump site before EPA and CIWMB cleanups, and after cleanup with mulch from Torlaw site.

#### Torlaw Dumpsite

The Torlaw Dumpsite was closed in August 2006. To reduce the fire risk at the site, the Riverside County Fire Department and CIWMB, contracting with a private ven-

dor, chipped and mulched approximately 17,000 cubic yards of green waste. Half of the mulch was mixed with site soil to reduce future fire risk and for dust suppression. The remaining mulch was used for dust suppression at the Fillmore Street dumpsite cleanup.

#### Mt. San Diego Dumpsite

CIWMB completed its cleanup of the Mt. San Diego Dumpsite in April 2007. Waste removed includes approximately 1,600 cubic yards of construction/demolition debris and 600 cubic yards of metal items and inert debris that were taken for proper disposal and/or recycling. A large pile of non-hazardous, inert dredged material and biosolids remains at the site. The Torres Martinez Tribe applied for and received a Targeted Brownfields Assessment grant to analyze potential future uses for the remaining inert material. EPA's Brownfields Program is working with the Army Corps of Engineers to test options including growing different types of sod or food crops, or providing fill for future home sites.

#### Small Dumpsites

At EPA's request, a private company spent \$150,000 to chip and remove 870 illegally dumped date palm trees. The company consulted with the Riverside County Agriculture Commissioner to make sure the chips were beneficially reused as mulch at a local agricultural facility. The tribal environmental department also cleaned up three sites in Fall 2007. In all, 20 of the original 27 dumpsites have been closed and cleaned up.

#### Grape Stake Cleanup

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) worked with tribal officials and the Riverside County Waste Management Division to remove 100 tons of CCA-treated grape stakes that had been dumped 200 yards from the kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Mega School in Thermal. In addition, DTSC successfully worked with a Coachella Valley grower and their contractors to forge a cooperative agreement with Colmax Energy to utilize the untreated cross-members of grape stakes as bio-fuel for energy production. By removing the non-hazardous cross-members prior to disposal, the growers will help reduce the volume of hazardous treated-wood waste (TWW) that is placed in permitted landfills, while at the same time reducing disposal costs to growers and health risks to the community. DTSC is planning enforcement training for Riverside County Code Enforcement staff for Spring 2008, and now has a fact sheet available online ([http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/Treated\\_Wood\\_Waste.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/Treated_Wood_Waste.cfm)).

Members of the Dump Cleanup and Access Control Taskforce include the Torres Martinez Tribe, U.S. EPA, BIA, DTSC, and the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

## MONITORING COMPLIANCE

In summer 2007, EPA completed enforcement agreements with two trailer park operators for solid waste violations. The operator of the Oasis Mobile Home Park resolved federal waste violations with an agreement to pay an \$11,000 civil penalty. The operators of the Desert Mobile Home Park also resolved federal waste violations with an agreement to pay a \$1,525 penalty and conduct a community-wide cleanup event. Both agreements require that the operators properly dispose of all waste; institute a weekly waste pick-up and solid waste management program; and distribute a fact sheet to all households in the trailer park informing them how and where to properly dispose of special types of waste.



Trailer park waste management, before and after EPA enforcement.

The Desert Mobile Home Park held a community-wide household hazardous waste collection event on October 20, 2007, where community members could bring lead-acid batteries, washers and dryers, refrigerators, condensers and scrap metal; computer hard drives, keyboards, mattresses, microwaves, TVs, computer monitors, and used oil. These materials were then taken to the appropriate recycling and disposal facilities.

EPA is continuing to investigate illegal dumpsites and reports of people generating and transporting waste onto the Torres Martinez Reservation. The Oasis Community Illegal Fires Task Force is working with the Torres Martinez Tribal Environmental Protection Department to monitor illegal fires on land adjacent to the reservation and on fee land within the reservation boundary.

Members of the Monitoring Compliance Taskforce include the Torres Martinez Tribe, Riverside County Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol, South Coast Air Quality Management District, and EPA.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Outreach Taskforce distributed over 500 posters and flyers promoting proper recycling and waste disposal habits to cities, stores, growers, haulers, and landscapers in the Coachella Valley. Members of the taskforce also participated in a Trashbusters community-wide cleanup event on October 6, 2007 ([www.trashbuster.org](http://www.trashbuster.org)). In addition, the taskforce worked with the Hi-Lo Golf Course Association to include information in its October newsletter on appropriate golf course green waste disposal.

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) is working with its member cities to effectively manage its construction and debris waste and to assess green waste disposal options. EPA and the Torres Martinez Environmental Director are working with members of CVAG's Solid Waste Technical Working Group to explore the Waste-Wise and Greenscapes partnership programs. WasteWise is a free, voluntary, EPA program that helps organizations save money and reduce environmental impacts by eliminating costly municipal solid waste and select industrial wastes (<http://www.epa.gov/wastewise/>). The Greenscapes program provides cost-efficient and environmentally friendly solutions for landscaping, to help preserve natural resources and prevent waste and pollution (<http://www.epa.gov/greenscapes/>).

In December 2007, taskforce members led outreach activities for Thermal, Calif. residents on the dangers of burning CCA-treated wood. The Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice visited homes to distribute fact sheets, and EPA released a news advisory on the health consequences of burning CCA-treated wood.

