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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Harvey-Induced Damage to the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Cap was Foreseeable

Houston, TX – September 29, 2017 – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced last night that the temporary cap on the 14-acre San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site at I-10 in Channelview was once again damaged, this time by floods generated by Hurricane Harvey. The damage left dioxin-laden waste exposed to the waters of the San Jacinto River yet again. This is just the latest problem in a series of failures of the cap, a layer of liner and rock on top of paper mill wastes containing extremely high concentrations of cancer-causing dioxins, one of the worst toxic chemicals known to man.

The EPA should call for immediate removal of the waste and make this determination final. The agency previously called for removal of the waste from the site in their September 2016 draft final proposed plan for cleanup. It is important to fully remove the waste from the site to avoid further releases of toxic dioxin-laden sediment into the San Jacinto River and the Galveston Bay system, as it cannot be stored safely onsite in a location that is subject to repeated high water and flooding.

The EPA found concentrations of dioxins in these pits of up to 70,000 parts per trillion, which are 2,333 times the sediment standard considered safe for recreational fishing. The toxins present a danger to human health because they are bioaccumulated by fish in the area which can then impact humans who consume those fish. It is past time for the EPA to ensure this waste is removed from the site and disposed of in an off-site location that is permitted to dispose of such waste.

About the Galveston Bay Foundation

Established in 1987, the Galveston Bay Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its mission is to preserve and enhance Galveston Bay as a healthy and productive place for generations to come. It implements diverse programs in land preservation, habitat restoration, water quality and quantity, youth education, and advocacy. For further information, contact the Foundation at (281) 332-3381, visit www.galvbay.org, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on twitter @GBayFoundation.

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