



News from the Field, Spring 2006

The next several issues of the Pines Update will focus on information about the Field Investigation...

This *Pines Update* #12 provides the Pines Community with information on the status of the Field Investigation in the Pines Area of Investigation. As outlined in the Work Plan for the Field Investigation, the field investigation will take approximately two years to complete. The next several *Pines Updates* are designed to provide a snapshot of the progress of the Field Investigation.

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Field Investigation Update

The Field Investigation for the Pines Area of Investigation is underway. As you may recall, the Work Plan for the Field Investigation was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in September 2005. Since then, much work has been done to begin the field investigation. The Work Plan is available for viewing at <http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/pines>.

To date, two specific soil sampling programs have been completed. In the first program, sampling of materials encountered during construction of the municipal water service extension was completed. For the second program, sampling and analysis of materials in Yard 520 was completed. The results from these sampling programs will be used to guide the Field Investigation that will be completed in areas outside of Yard 520.

Inspections of roadways in the Pines Area of Investigation are underway, and are almost complete. You may have seen ENSR’s field staff working along town and county roads, and wondering about them. They have been investigating if non-native materials are present along roadways. These observations will be used to guide additional sampling in the Area of Investigation.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has been evaluating the observed levels of boron in drinking water wells in the Beverly Shores area and around the Pines Elementary School. The USGS and USEPA held a public meeting to discuss the results of this study. As presented in that meeting, the levels of boron observed in these areas are naturally-occurring.

An evaluation of the ecological habitat in the Area of Investigation is underway. This evaluation will involve several steps, the first of which is to visit the area to make observations and classify the habitat.

An important next step of the Field Investigation is to obtain permission from owners to access properties where additional samples will be collected. The status of these access agreements is the focus of this *Pines Update* (see page 3).

Field Investigation Update – Next Steps

Several field investigation activities are planned for the second quarter of 2006, including:

- Completing the investigation of materials along roadways in the Area of Investigation,
- Continuing to evaluate the ecological habitat in the Area of Investigation,
- Completing all necessary access agreements for private and public properties,
- Beginning the groundwater sampling investigation, by completing the groundwater screening and installing monitoring wells, and
- Beginning the surface water investigation, by installing surface water flow measurement devices.



Safety Corner

The field investigation will require the use of heavy equipment (for example, a drill rig). Barricades and signs will be provided at designated work locations throughout the course of the field investigation. **All community members**

should observe and adhere to these site control measures.

These measures are being taken to protect YOUR safety and the safety of our field staff. While we understand the public's interest in this project, **for your safety we must request that all warnings and**

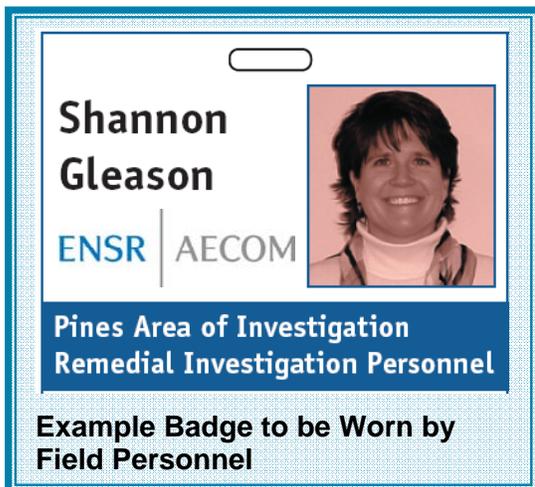
directions given by the on-site staff are followed. Community members will not be allowed inside these exclusion

zones. Also, be sure to maintain a safe distance and remain clear of all field equipment.

As a reminder, employees of ENSR Corporation and their subcontractors will be conducting the Field Investigation. The ENSR field team will be identifiable by photo identification badges and hard hats. The hard hats will be green, and will have the labels "ENSR" and "Pines Area of Investigation, Remedial Investigation Personnel" affixed to the hard hats.

Safety is our #1 Concern!

Safety is the number one priority during the field investigation. If you have questions or concerns about the field work, please contact the communications coordinator at the address provided on the back page of this Pines Update.



Focus On....Access Agreements

The next step in the field investigation is identifying the actual locations within the Area of Investigation where additional samples will be collected, and securing permission from property owners to access these locations. The actual sampling locations will be based on the Work Plan approved by the USEPA, and specific locations will be worked out with the individual property owners.

Letters have been sent to private property owners, and to town, county and state property authorities, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and the National Park Service (for property within the Indian Dunes National Lakeshore where samples will be collected). The letters request permission for ENSR and its subcontractors (acting for NIPSCO and Brown) to access the respective properties for sampling purposes. **Access agreements are needed from all property owners before the field work can continue.**

Letters have been sent to property owners for all sample locations. We have obtained access agreements from about one-half of the owners. We are following up by telephone with owners who have not returned their agreements. If you have received a letter and have any questions about the agreements, please let us know.

Additionally, we have been in contact with town, county and state officials about access to sampling locations within rights-of-ways along town/county/state roads and highways.

The field investigation and sampling work cannot continue until all access agreements are in! If you have any questions or concerns, please call our contacts (see text box).

Did you know...

☞ All hook-ups to public water are completed! Municipal water service has now been extended to 270 homes. This work was a significant effort undertaken by NIPSCO and Brown, and represents a significant improvement to the infrastructure in the Town of Pines.

☞ The USGS has completed its study of levels of boron in drinking water wells in the Beverly Shores area and around the Pines Elementary School. Their study has shown that the levels of boron present in these areas are naturally-occurring.



Access Agreements Needed!

The proposed sampling locations within the Pines Area of Investigation have been approved by the USEPA. Authorization from property owners is needed to enter their property to collect the sample(s).

NIPSCO and Brown have sent letters to these property owners. If you have any questions or concerns about these letters or access in general, please contact Dr. Lisa Bradley or Ms. Elizabeth Perry at 800-722-2440.

Our Commitment....

NIPSCO and Brown are committed to keeping you informed on the progress of the municipal water service extension and the investigation of the Pines Area of Investigation. Look for future *Pines Updates* to update you to our progress. We have also created a website to provide continual updates on the project:

www.pinesupdate.com

Please contact the Communications Coordinator at the address listed below to be placed on the mailing list.

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Communications Coordinator

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