NOAA Hazardous Waste Site Report

Del Norte County Pesticide Storage Area (IX-4)
Crescent City, California
April 13, 1984

Location and Nature of Site:

The County of Del Norte established a small (150 ft. by 200 ft.) area to serve as a collection site for empty pesticide containers. About 1200 drums were accumulated between 1976 when the county began operations and 1981, when the Regional Water Quality Control Board ordered the county to remove all the drums from the site. Complete removal of the drums was accomplished during 1982.

The Del Norte site is located one mile north of Crescent City, adjacent to the county airport (Figure 1).

Proximity of Chemical Hazard to Marine Resources:

The Del Norte storage area is about 2000 feet from Pebble Beach, a public area on the Pacific Ocean. The site is about 45 feet above sealevel, with a very gently sloping surface. The aquifer below the sites rises to within one foot of the surface during winter months.

Soil at the site is contaminated by Silvex (5,300 ppm), 2,4,5-T (3,100 ppm), 2,4-D (2,600 ppm), PCP (48 ppm) and DDE/DDD (31 ppm). Groundwater contamination by 3-chloro-allyl alcohol (1.3 ppm), 1,2-dichloropropane (1.2 ppm) and 2,4,5-T (.60 ppm) has also been found.

There has been no evidence of offsite migration of contaminants to date. Surface runoff or ground water migration could make its way to the Pacific Ocean.

Marine Resources at Risk:

The nearshore marine environment adjacent to this site supports breeding colonies of seabirds and marine mammals, and commercial and recreational fisheries for salmon and other finfish, and shellfish.

Less than one mile from Pebble Beach are areas used as a rookery for California sea lions, Steller sea lions and harbor seals. The northern razor clam is found in intertidal areas just south of the site. Rockfish, Pacific halibut, lingcod, and cabezon are found in nearshore waters (1).

The endangered Aleutian Canadian goose uses the area surrounding the site and the airport. Castle Rock, about one mile offshore, is a

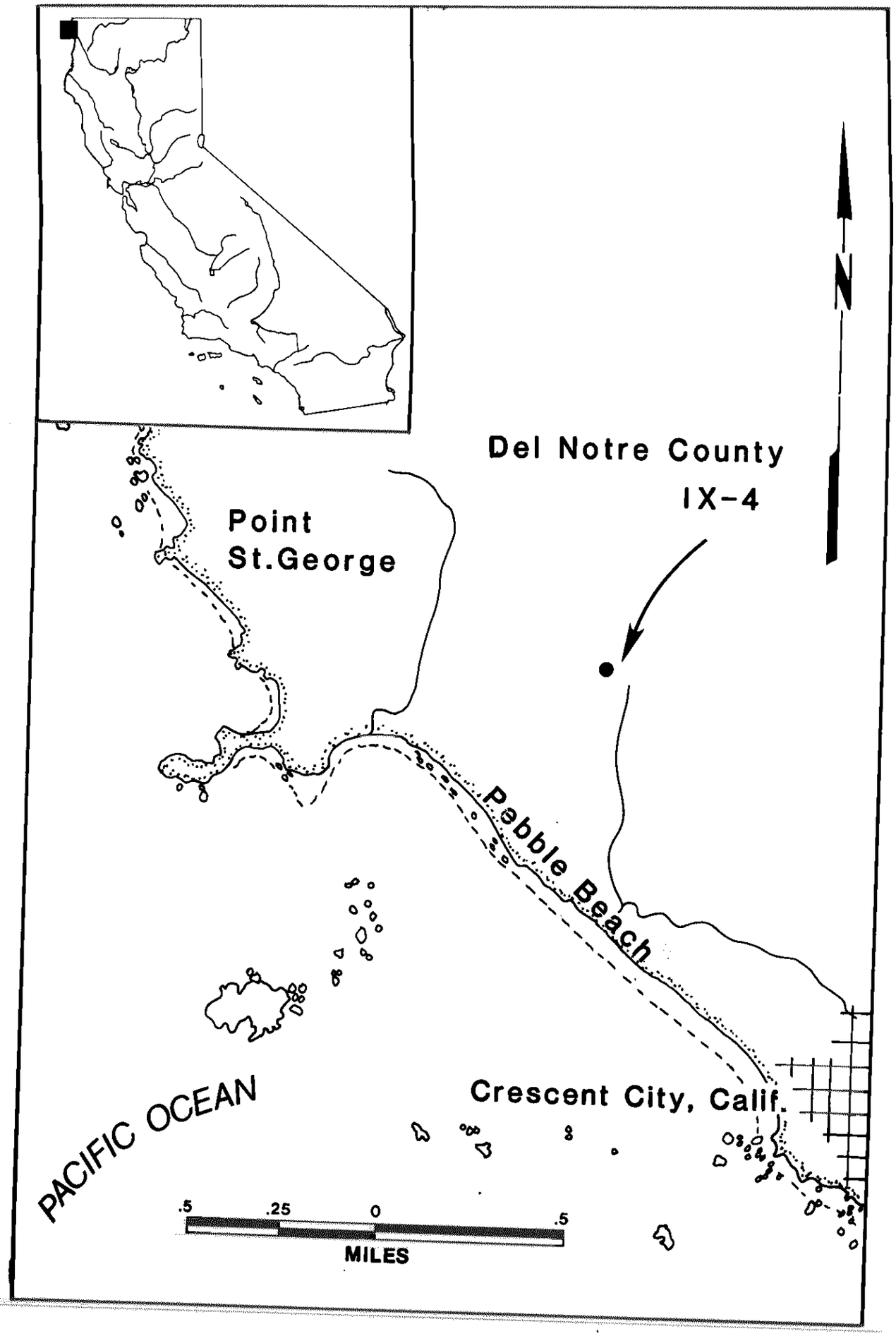

FIGURE 1. Site location.

rookery for eleven species of birds. Shoreline areas immediately west of the site are used by black oystercatchers, western gulls, pelagic cormorants, and pigeon guillemot (4).

Table 1. Fishery Resources of St. George Channel (2-4)

Finfish Species	Adult Habitat	Spawning Area	Nursery Area	Comm. Fish.	Rec. Fish.	Migr. Route
Non-anadromous						
Salmonids	x			x	x	
Rockfish	x				x	
Pacific halibut	x				x	
Lingcod	x				x	
Cabezon	x				x	
Shellfish						
Dungeness crab	x			x	x	

Gray whales and humpback whales migrate past this site to and from the calving grounds in southern California.

Summary of Site-Related Actions:

Removal of contaminated soil from the site has been delayed by the inability of Del Norte County to fund removal actions. The Regional Water Quality Control Board has conducted a number of site investigations and has issued two Cleanup and Abatement Orders to the county. There has been no formal federal action taken at the site. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Region IX has requested assistance from EPA Headquarters in identifying responsible parties and their ability to finance response actions.

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References:

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2. National marine Fisheries, 1977. Anglers Guide to the United States Pacific Coast.

3. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, 1976. Assessment of Estuarine and Nearshore Environments.

4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1981. Pacific Coast Ecological Inventory.