TRI-STATE MINING DISTRICT SUPERFUND SITE

The TSMD INVOLVES PARTS OF THREE STATES

Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma Several distinct sites within each state: Whole area encompasses 2500 sq. miles, 1,600,000 acres.

Four "sub-sites"

Kansas: (1) Cherokee County Site

Missouri: (2) Jasper County Site and (3) Newton County Site

Oklahoma: (4) Tar Creek Site; mining field proper covers about 40 sq. miles or 25600 acres.

Tribal Trusteeship is Impacted by the Whole of the Tri-State Mining District !!!

- Eight separate Indian Tribes with traditional reservation boundaries are downstream, and suffer the effects of toxic releases and natural resource injury caused by the whole of the Tri-State Mining District.
- Two major rivers (Spring River and Neosho River) and their watersheds combine to form Grand River, and <u>drain the</u> <u>whole of the TSMD</u> into the Grand Lake O' the Cherokees, some miles below the TSMD and the sub-parts.
- Tar Creek is a subsidiary creek starting in Kansas and flows through the middle of the Picher mining field in Oklahoma, finally emptying into the Neosho River just before it combines with Spring River to form Grand River.

Watersheds in the Tri-State Mining Region





Tar Creek Site or Picher Mining Field

Beginning in the early 1900s, and continuing through the 1970s, this northeastern region of Oklahoma was extensively mined for lead and zinc ore; with this district's lead and zinc production ranking as one of the highest in the world. Milling the lead and zinc ore resulted in a concentrate of the original mined material. However, the milling process for lead and zinc ore also produced waste mile tailings, also known as chat. Over the years, mining companies disposed of chat by creating large aboveground piles, and by dumping it into flotation or tailing ponds. Some chat piles rise as high as 200 feet; all contain elevated levels of lead and other heavy metals.

In addition to chat, another by-product of the mining operation is highly acidic <u>mine water</u>. Acid Mine Drainage into Tar Creek at Douthat Bridge



The U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have estimated that Tar Creek generally contains 75 million tons of chat piles





Hazardous Mining Waste. (A Huge Chat Pile)









Ground Water Seep into Spring River



Ground water Seep into Spring River





What It Should Look Like



What It Should Look Like



What It Should Look Like

DKPrairie.com



A modern-day Indian "Cutting" a Buffalo.