

Tar Creek NPL

Case History: The [Tar Creek Superfund Site](#) located in Ottawa County constitutes the Oklahoma portion of the [Tri-State Mining District](#) which covers approximately 2,500 square miles across the states of Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. The Tri-State Mining District was the largest historic producer of zinc and the fourth largest historic producer of lead within the United States with mining beginning in the late 1850's and continuing until the early 1970's. Approximately 3,700 acres of terrestrial environment within Oklahoma are impacted by waste materials from mining and milling operations and have elevated concentrations of cadmium, lead, zinc and other heavy metals. Several Creeks drain the mine impacted areas within Oklahoma including Tar Creek,



Lytle Creek, Elm Creek and Beaver Creek. These streams flow into either the Neosho River or Spring River which form the watershed for Grand Lake. The Spring River drains the Missouri and Kansas portions of the Tri-State Mining District before entering Oklahoma. In addition to the contamination of terrestrial and stream environments, mining related hazardous materials have elevated groundwater concentrations of cadmium, [lead](#), [zinc](#) other metals

within the Tar Creek Superfund Site. Trust resources include migratory birds, and federally-listed and candidate-listed birds, bats, terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates, and fish, as well as resources of state and tribal interest. The Grand Lake watershed includes the jurisdictional areas for nine Oklahoma tribes.

Responsible Parties: multiple

Participating Trustees:

[State of Oklahoma](#);

[Cherokee Nation](#); [Eastern Shawnee Tribe](#); [Miami Tribe of Oklahoma](#); [Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma](#); [Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma](#); [Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma](#); [Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma](#); [Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma](#);

[Bureau of Indian Affairs](#);

Department of Interior – Fish and Wildlife Service [DOI-FWS](#)

Current Status: The Participating Trustees are all members of the Tar Creek Trustee Council. The Trustee Council is currently developing an Assessment Plan for the Tar Creek superfund site.

Points of Contact:

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Other Links:

[Region 2 Environmental Contaminants Program Homepage](#)

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Environmental Contaminants Program Washington Office Homepage](#)

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