UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS TX 75202-2733

JUL 29 2011

VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL

William Earl Thrift, Jr.
Managing Member
San Jacinto River Fleet, LLC
770 Rals Drive
Onalaska, TX 77360

Re: Operations at the Big Star Barge & Boat Co., Inc. ("Big Star") Property located at 18001 East Freeway Channelview, TX 77530

Dear Mr. Thrift,

It has recently come to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) attention that tugboats and barges are operating in the vicinity of the Big Star property. This letter is to inform you of the EPA's concerns regarding these operations. Big Star is located approximately 800 feet to 900 feet northwest of the waste pits at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (Site), where the EPA is conducting various removal and remedial activities.

The prop-wash being generated as the tugboats move the barges is a concern for several reasons. Dioxin has been detected in the river sediments in this area, and the tugboat operations have the potential for re-suspension and mobilization of the contaminated sediments, which may worsen the problem of contamination of fish and crab tissues in the area. Also, should the tugboats come too close to the rock covered waste pits, their operation may result in a loss of integrity of the cover and corresponding release of additional contaminated material.

The EPA's intent is to insure that you are aware of the Site conditions. If future activities contribute to or exacerbate the contamination at the Site, this could create Superfund liability. The EPA recommends that you review the facts of this Site in regards to the operations at the Big Star property.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (214) 665-8318 or via email at miller.garyg@epa.gov, or for legal issues contact Jessica Hernandez, Office of Regional Counsel at (214) 665-8384 or via email at hernandez.jessica@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Sanchez
for Gary Miller P.E.
Remedial Project Manager

cc: Jay M. Roberts (Big Star Barge & Boat Company, Inc.)

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