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LeSueur River Fish Said Safe

ST PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Fish taken from the LeSueur River in southern Minnesota are not unsafe to eat as was indicated earlier, the state Natural Resources Department (DNR) said Tuesday.

The DNR said an interagency task force, with representatives from federal agencies and 12 states, analyzed 16 fish taken from the river in August and found the levels of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBO), a toxic industrial chemical, to be well below the level deemed safe for human consumption.

A shipment of carp taken from the LeSueur River July 31 for shipment to eastern markets was destroyed when it was found to contain more than the allowable limit.

The DNR said that since the fish taken from the LeSueur were "relatively free" of PCB contamination, task force members concluded that the carp checked in July migrated about 40 miles from the Minnesota River up the Blue Earth River to the LeSueur River.

Marvin Hora, senior biologist for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency said there is still a possibility that fish may be migrating from a higher PCB area up the LeSueur River to Lake Elysian.

However, Hora said rpsearchers feel most fish in the lake should be safe.

The DNR said PCB levels exceeding the limit for human consumption have been found in some fish, particularly channel catfish, white bass and carp, taken from the Minnesota River near Mankato.

Task force members believe this indicates a probable PCB pollution problem in the Mankato area, the DNR said.

The task force is establishing new fish sampling stations on the Mississippi, Minnesota and Blue Earth rivers, in an attempt to determine the source of PCB discharges into state waters. //

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