



New York Field Office, Cortland
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Partners for
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Endange
 Species



Contaminants

Fish & Wildlife
 Conservation

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 Information

Environmental Contaminants:

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Natural Resource Damage Assessment:

The Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) Program is designed to restore natural resources that have been impacted by releases of hazardous substances or oil spills. Several laws provide the foundation for NRDAR, giving natural resource Trustees the legal authority to have those responsible for harm to natural resources pay to restore those resources. [1] Natural resource Trustees include Federal and State agencies and Indian Tribes that have the responsibility and authority to protect natural resources.

Restoring Natural Resources

To fulfill the mission of restoring natural resources that have been injured by oil spills or hazardous substance releases, the natural resource Trustees conduct a damage assessment to determine the extent of injury to natural resources caused by the hazardous substance release or oil spill. This information is used to determine the amount of restoration that is needed. The Trustees then either reach an agreement with the responsible parties through a negotiated settlement or file suit against the responsible parties for the damage claim. Damage claims are for the cost of restoration, loss of use of the land or natural resources by the general public, and money spent to assess damages. Once the claim is resolved, the Trustees take action to restore the injured resources. Finally, the Trustees monitor the completed restoration projects to ensure success.

Hudson River Natural Resource Damage Assessment:



The Hudson River is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), primarily from General Electric's Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, New York manufacturing plants. Two hundred miles of the river have been designated a Federal Superfund Site by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Fish and wildlife resources of the Hudson River valley, including fish, birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, and their habitats are contaminated with PCBs. PCBs are a major concern because they persist in the environment for many decades, can be harmful at low concentrations, and accumulate in living creatures, posing a health hazard to fish, birds, mammals, and other wildlife.

To determine the need to restore those resources which have been adversely impacted by the contamination of the Hudson River, a natural resource damage assessment (NRDA) is being conducted by the Federal and State Natural Resource Trustees

-- the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of the Interior (the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service) and New York State. The NRDA was initiated in October 1997 with the Trustees' release of the Hudson River Preassessment Screen. Currently the Trustees have in progress several preliminary investigations designed to improve our understanding of exposure of Hudson River resources to PCBs. These preliminary investigations include a fish health reconnaissance study, an avian egg exposure investigation, floodplain soil and biota screening, an assessment of mink, muskrat and otter for PCB exposure and a snapping turtle egg exposure investigation. On September 16, 2002, the Trustees issued an Assessment Plan for the Hudson River. That Plan identifies the procedures the Trustees will use to evaluate injuries to natural resources from PCBs. The focus of the NRDA is the restoration of those injured natural resources.

More information, including the Assessment Plan and Responsiveness Summary for that Plan, the Preassessment Screen, fact sheets and reports regarding the preliminary investigations, and other determinations by the Trustees, is available at the Hudson River NRDA Website. That Website also provides details regarding how to join a listserv the Trustees have established to provide updates on the ongoing NRDA and restoration efforts for the Hudson River. You are invited to join the listserv



St. Lawrence Environment Natural Resource Damage Assessment:

The St. Lawrence Environment Natural Resource Damage Assessment is being conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and State of New York. We are evaluating impacts to natural resources as a result of contamination of the St. Lawrence River, Grasse River, Raquette River, Mohawk Tribal lands (Akwesasne), and associated habitats. Contaminants include polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), fluorides, and polychlorinated aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

Fish from the assessment area have been found to contain PCB concentrations as high as 80 parts per million (ppm), tree swallows as high as 69 ppm, snapping turtles as high as 812 ppm, and waterfowl as high as 253 ppm. Remedial activities have removed some of the contaminated sediments, but additional sediment dredging and other remediation is needed to reduce the contaminants-related impacts to fish and wildlife.

We currently are working with the industries in a cooperative manner to assess natural resource injuries and develop restoration proposals.

Settlements Negotiated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (as part of the Department of the Interior):

Applied Environmental Services, Nassau County

Batavia Landfill, Genesee County

<http://nyfo.fws.gov/ec/nrda.htm>

1/8/2004

Brewster Wellfield, Putnam County

Conrail Diesel Fuel Spill, Tompkins County

Cortese Landfill, Sullivan County

Forest Glen Mobile Home Subdivision, Niagara County

Hi-View Terrace, Erie County

102nd Street Landfill, Niagara County

Love Canal, Niagara County

Rosen Brothers Scrapyard, Cortland County

Volney Landfill, Oswego County

Wide Beach Development, Erie County

York Oil, Franklin County



Restoration Plans Available:

Hi-View Terrace

Links:

USFWS National Restoration Program

[NOAA Damage Assessment and Restoration Program](#)

[1] Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA); the Clean Water Act; the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

