



# FACT SHEET

## Nimham Arsenic Mine Site, Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area

Town of Kent, Putnam County

April 2019

### Where to Find Information:

*Project documents are available at the following location(s) to help the public stay informed.*

#### **Kent Public Library**

17 Sybil's Crossing  
Kent Lakes, NY 10512  
Call for hours: (845) 225-8585

#### **NYSDEC, Region 3 Office**

21 South Putt Corners Rd  
New Paltz, NY 12561  
Call in advance: (845) 256-3000

### Who to Contact:

*Comments and questions are always welcome and should be directed as follows:*

#### **Project Related Questions**

Kiera Thompson  
NYSDEC

Division of Environmental Remediation

625 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12233-7014  
(518) 402-9662

[kiera.thompson@dec.ny.gov](mailto:kiera.thompson@dec.ny.gov)

#### **Public Health questions:**

Stephen Lawrence  
NYSDOH

Empire State Plaza  
Corning Tower Room 1787  
Albany, NY 12237  
(518) 402-7860

[beej@health.ny.gov](mailto:beej@health.ny.gov)

#### **Multiple Use Area Questions:**

Matthew Paul

NYSDEC-Division of Lands & Forests

21 South Putt Corners Rd  
New Paltz, NY 12561  
(845) 256-3156

**For additional information on Nimham Mtn  
Multiple Use Area:**

[www.dec.ny.gov/lands/34773.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/34773.html)

## **Actions to Address Exposure to Begin**

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) will take preliminary measures to reduce potential exposures within a portion of the state-owned Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area (MUA). The site, locally known by several names such as Mount Nimham, is located on Gipsy Trail Road in the Town of Kent, Putnam County. Please see Figure 1 for the site location. Documents related to the investigation of arsenic impacts at this site can be found at the location(s) identified on the left-hand side of the next page under "Where to Find Information."

### Action to Address Exposure

A preliminary action will be performed to reduce potential exposures to contamination for users of the MUA trails. Portions of trails exhibiting elevated levels of arsenic in surficial soils will be covered with clean material and maintained to eliminate potential exposures. Trail covering actions will include trail improvements such as widening and additional erosion control where necessary. The planned work is expected to begin this Spring.

### Site Description

The work area site consists of specific trails in an approximately 50-acre portion of the Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area which is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of the Town of Carmel. The site is mountainous and forested and slopes down approximately 150 feet in elevation from west to east. A stream runs south through the eastern portion of the site from Pine Pond to the north and through a wetland which is fed by two additional tributaries from the west. Several historic mine features exist at the site, including but not limited to a shaft entrance to the main mine (Mine #1) and many additional features associated with historic mining operations located throughout the area that are not shown on Figure 2. Currently, the MUA is owned by New York State and is maintained as a Multiple Use Area for recreational use. It is accessible via two trail heads located at Gipsy Trail Road and along Nimham Mountain Court, respectively.

### Site History

Historic arsenic mining occurred at the site in several phases, starting in the mid-1800s and concluding in the early 1900s. The mine area, also known as Silver Mine and Pine Pond Mine, contained a metal ore called arsenopyrite which was used in the pesticide, glass, and pigment industries.



**Figure 1: Site Location**

### **Site History continued**

During mining operations, the ore was separated from the waste rock and soils known as tailings. Tailings were disposed in areas surrounding the mine pits/shafts, and contained arsenic which contaminated soils and sediments in areas of the site. Some of the soils at the site which are unaffected by mining operations naturally contain arsenic concentrations above NYSDEC's soil cleanup objectives (SCOs). The elevated background levels in soils can be attributed to the minerals in the underlying rock which naturally exists at the site.

### **Previous Investigation Activities at the Site**

An *Initial Site Investigation Report* was completed in June 2017 by NYSDEC Division of Environmental Remediation, in consultation with the NYSDEC Division of Lands & Forests and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). The report concluded that arsenic impacts in soils at the site, particularly those near mine pits and shafts, are well above the SCO of 16 parts per million. Limited areas of sediments located near the mine features are also impacted with arsenic. Surface water at the site does not contain arsenic above NYS guidelines. The report recommended additional investigation work to fill data gaps, to assess potential health exposures, and to establish an arsenic background concentration for soils at the site. Some of this additional investigation work has been completed and a report is being developed.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is currently addressing affected nearby private parcels regarding the impacts from historic arsenic mining operations not on state land. USEPA, NYSDEC and NYSDOH are collaborating and sharing information in order to best understand impacts and to protect human health and the environment in the area.

### **Previous Actions at the site**

In May and June of 2018, the following actions occurred:

- 1) Signs were posted at trailheads informing visitors that arsenic-contaminated soils exist in the area and precautions such as washing hands and clothes/footwear should be taken if contact with soil occurs. Site contact information was also provided on the signs.
- 2) Particular trails were closed and rerouted to keep visitors out of restricted areas containing high levels of contamination. Signs were posted to denote restricted areas which contain both contaminated soils and pits that may pose physical hazards.

### **Next Steps**

An updated Unit Management Plan (UMP) is currently being developed for the Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area. UMPs assess the natural and physical resources present within a land unit. They also identify opportunities for public use which are consistent with the classifications of these lands and consider the ability of the resources and ecosystems to accommodate such use. Draft UMP issuance is anticipated to occur in 2019. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft UMP, and a public meeting will be held prior to final UMP issuance.

A supplemental investigation report further characterizing arsenic contamination, particularly that in sediments and surface water, is anticipated to be finalized and released soon. The report will also contain information on site background levels of arsenic in soils, as well as a description of the actions being described here to reduce the potential for exposure to arsenic in soils.

### **Steps to Reduce Exposure to Arsenic in Soils:**

Exposure to elevated levels of arsenic in soils at the site occurs through direct contact with contaminated soil.

- 1) Stay on designated trails and out of restricted areas.

- 2) Avoid tracking contaminated soils into car and home. Leave shoes outside the home or at the door.
- 3) Wash hands and face after visiting the site, especially prior to eating.
- 4) Wash clothes which come into contact with soils at the site.
- 5) If any pets visited the site, wash paws or any parts making contact with soils before entering the car or home.
- 6) Do not bring items such as bicycles or other gear used at the site into the car or home.

***We encourage you to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for others to see.***

#### **Receive Site Fact Sheets by Email**

Have site information such as this fact sheet sent right to your email inbox. NYSDEC invites you to sign up with one or more contaminated sites county email listservs available at the following web page:

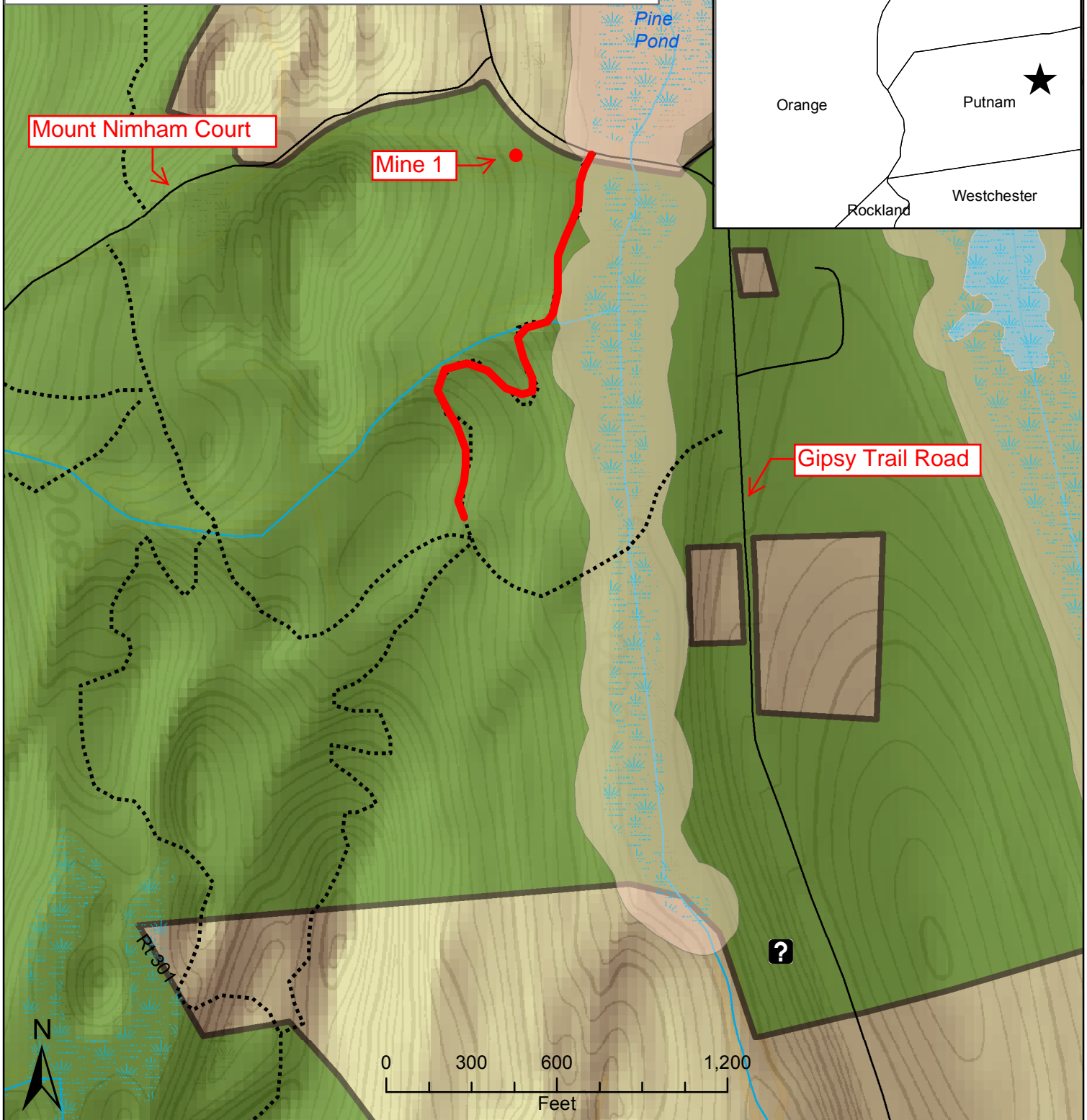
[www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html)






It's quick, it's free, and it will help keep you better informed. As a listserv member, you will periodically receive site-related information/ announcements for all contaminated sites in the county(ies) you select.

Note: Please disregard if you already have signed up and received this fact sheet electronically.

# Nimham Multiple Use Area

## Trail Capping Project Area



-  Nimham Multiple Use Area
-  Freshwater Wetland
-  Freshwater Wetland Buffer (100 Ft)
-  Project Area
-  Trail

\* GIS is approximate and should not be considered a substitute for on-site inspection or survey. 3/29/19