

**NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF**



**ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION**

Dear Interested Citizen:

This Fact Sheet is to inform you about the status of activities associated with the Old Chenango Canal site in Utica.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact:

For technical information:

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FACT SHEET

No. 3

Old Chenango Canal Site

NEW YORK STATE INACTIVE WASTE SITE

Site No. 6-33-051

January 2017

Remedial Investigation Complete

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), with support from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), has been overseeing the completion of a Remedial Investigation (RI) at the Old Chenango Canal Site located along New York State Route 5, in the City of Utica, Oneida County. The project is being conducted by Honeywell, a successor to former manufacturing businesses at 211 Seward Avenue. Remediation has already been completed at the Seward Avenue property. Storm drains from that property connected to a city storm sewer that discharges to a remnant section of the Old Chenango Canal. The RI was conducted to determine the nature and extent of contamination in the canal. The RI is now complete. **NYSDEC approved the comprehensive Final RI Report in December 2015.**

The project area consists of Nail Creek, which runs generally in the old canal alignment along the south side of the Arterial Highway (Route 5) between the French Road and Burrstone Road exits in Utica, New York. Nail creek starts in the footprint of the old canal before transitioning to a channel lined with large limestone blocks. These blocks were placed in the early 1960s to support re-location of Nail Creek during highway construction. The RI studied the full 3,650-foot reach of Nail Creek up to the point where it passes into the Utica Box Culvert to the east of Burrstone Road (see attached Figure).



Nail Creek Channel



Limestone Block Armoring

The RI program collected and analyzed creek water, sediment and adjacent bank and upland soils to identify contaminants of concern (COCs) and establish the nature and extent of impacts at the site.

Soil and sediment contain residual concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) at levels above regulatory standards. PCBs were determined to be the primary COC, although other compounds such as metals and hydrocarbons are present (contributed in part from typical urban influences such as road run-off).

The NYSDEC and NYSDOH have determined that PCBs, along with other co-located contaminants, will require remediation to reduce the potential for human and ecological exposure.

WHAT ARE PCBs?

PCBs are a class of man-made compounds that were manufactured and used extensively in electrical equipment such as transformers, lubricants, hydraulic oils, paints, etc. They were banned in 1979. PCBs are mixtures of up to 209 individual chlorinated compounds and these mixtures are often known by their trade name (e.g. Aroclor). They are usually in the form of oily liquids that are hydrophobic (insoluble in water) and will persist in the environment. PCBs accumulate in sediment and bioaccumulate in the food chain.

REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

During the RI, Honeywell performed several rounds of sampling to assess the distribution of PCBs and other COCs. The RI determined that the highest levels of PCBs are present in sediment in the initial upstream section of the Old Chenango Canal, particularly in a short section of former canal that is situated between the arterial highway onramp from French Road and a railroad bed that crosses the watercourse. The RI identified PCBs at low concentrations (typically one to ten parts per million) in shallow sediment and bordering bank soil along the length of the Nail Creek channel. The chemical properties of PCBs cause them to bind to soil and sediment. They are generally restricted to the area in which they were deposited (i.e., the creek bed and adjacent soils that are impacted during flood events) and do not migrate to other locations. The RI found that PCBs detected above concentrations that will require remediation were typically limited to surficial soil and shallow sediment. The canal setting has been influenced by historical activities including railroad, highway and utility construction, historic fill (in areas alongside the creek), and former industry (e.g. a factory was once located within the current Burrstone Road interchange).

The NYSDEC has established criteria that are contaminant-specific, conservative concentration values that have been promulgated to protect human health and the environment from the possible long-term effects of exposure to contamination. NYSDEC and NYSDOH have determined that a level of 1 part per million (ppm) for PCBs is protective for surface soil and 0.1 ppm for PCBs is protective for sediment.

NEXT STEPS

The project has now entered the Feasibility Study (FS) stage, a process that will evaluate various remedial alternatives and present a recommended approach that will be protective of human health and the environment. The FS will identify the most appropriate alternative that will reduce risk to acceptable levels, most likely through removal of impacted surface soil and sediment and restoration with clean backfill. The removal of PCBs would also address other co-located COCs present at the site. The FS is currently being developed and will be available for public review following NYSDEC review.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information about this project, you are urged to contact the project personnel listed on the cover of this Fact Sheet. If you would like to be added to the contact list, please contact the NYSDEC Project Manager listed on the cover of this sheet. The RI Report and other project documents are available at the Utica Public Library at 303 Genesee Street, Utica, New York 13501.



OLD CHENANGO CANAL SITE
NYSDEC SITE No. 633051
UTICA, NEW YORK



RI SAMPLING
LOCATIONS