



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Lands and Forests  
Division of Environmental Remediation

in consultation with  
New York State Department of Health

## DRAFT FACT SHEET

### WURTSBORO RIDGE STATE FOREST HISTORIC LEAD MINE DEC SITE # 353013 NOVEMBER 2012

It is the policy of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to manage state lands for multiple uses to serve the People of New York State. A Unit Management Plan (UMP) is the first step in carrying out that policy. In the course of developing the UMP for the Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest in the Town of Mamakating, Sullivan County, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) learned of the presence of contamination associated with an historic lead mine on the property (see Figure 1 - Site Location Map).

Major mining began in the 1830s and continued until approximately 1920, though small-scale extraction of lead reportedly occurred much earlier (1600s). As a result of these historic mining operations, four distinct surface deposits of mine tailings remain on the property. Three of these are located near the top of the ridge and the fourth is located at the base of the ridge along the Delaware and Hudson (D&H) Canal, where a county-owned linear park runs along the former towpath. Together these piles comprise approximately 2 acres (see Figure 2). In addition, soil particles have eroded from the lower tailings pile and have accumulated as a sediment deposit (i.e., sand bar) in the D&H Canal (see Figure 2).

Due to the presence of these tailings piles, DEC conducted a potential contaminated site investigation of the historic mine areas in association with development of the property's UMP. Limited sampling data obtained to date indicate that lead levels in the tailings piles, surface water in the vicinity of the tailings piles, and the sediment deposit in the D&H Canal near the lower tailings pile, are contaminated with elevated levels of lead. These findings indicate that precautions must be taken to prevent public contact with this contamination until a detailed site investigation and subsequent remediation can be performed. These precautions include the following:

- In accordance with Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), Section 03-0301, DEC will prohibit public use of the areas affected by historic mining operations that include exposed mine tailings and surface waters emanating from the mine shafts by establishing Restricted Areas and posting signage at the locations shown on maps of the area (see Figure 2 for Restricted Areas).
- DEC, in conjunction with the NYS Department of Health (DOH), is informing the public, including user groups of the State Forest and other stakeholders, of the presence of the Restricted Areas and health precautions that should be taken when using the unrestricted portions of the property.
- No one should enter the posted Restricted Areas, including children and pets.
- Users of the unrestricted portions of the property should not drink, and not filter and drink any surface water they encounter in the vicinity of the mined areas.
- Users of the unrestricted portions of the property should make sure to wash their hands and the hands of children thoroughly with uncontaminated water before eating, drinking or smoking during or after a visit to this property. In addition, shoes/boots and pets should be thoroughly cleaned prior to bringing them indoors.
- DEC has advised Sullivan County of the need for restricting public access to a small affected area in and adjacent to the D&H Canal, along the D&H Canal Linear Park (see Figure 2) and will work with the County to post similar warning signs as noted above.

## CONSUMPTION ADVICE FOR DEER AND OTHER GAME

High levels of lead in the environment can accumulate in wildlife. Because of this, meat, organs and bones from deer and other game taken in the Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest area could contain elevated lead levels. Since much of lead accumulates in bones, NYSDOH recommends removing the bones from meat of deer and other game taken in the Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest area before cooking. Additionally, small lead fragments can be present in game harvested with lead bullets or shot. Some bullets shatter into small pieces that can be too small to detect by sight, feel, or when chewing. Remove all identifiable bullets, slugs, shot, lead fragments and affected meat (including feathers, fur, debris, etc.) from game when preparing it. You may also want to consider using non-lead alternatives to hunt game.

Reducing exposure to lead is important because lead can cause health problems when it builds up in the body, especially for babies and young children. Lead poisoning can slow a child's physical growth and mental development, as well as cause other effects on the nervous system and other organs. Proper preparation methods, good sanitary practices and using non-lead alternatives can all help to reduce exposure to lead from game.

### More Information Concerning Lead Exposure From Fish and Game

- For more information on lead in shot and bullets and best practices when handling or processing animals visit the NYSDOH website at [http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health\\_advisories/advice\\_on\\_eating\\_game.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/advice_on_eating_game.htm)
- Also, for general information on eating fish caught in the waters of New York State please visit the NYSDOH website at: [http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health\\_advisories/](http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/)
- For questions about potential health effects and how to reduce your lead exposures, call NYSDOH at 518-402-7800 (toll free at 1-800-458-1158); or email NYSDOH at [BTSA@health.state.ny.us](mailto:BTSA@health.state.ny.us).

### NEXT STEPS:

DEC will conduct further investigations to determine the extent of contamination for all areas. Test results will be used to formulate a remediation plan. Once the Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP) is developed for the site, it will be presented to the public by the Division of Environmental Remediation. The investigation is planned to begin in 2013, contingent upon the availability of funds. Existing access roads will need to be improved and possibly new portions constructed, to facilitate access to perform the investigation and subsequent remediation work.

The draft UMP is expected to be publically available in 2013. The UMP will be presented, and public comment accepted, at a future public meeting conducted by the Division of Lands and Forests.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROJECT

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

Mamakating Library  
Director: Greg Wirszyła  
156-158 Sullivan Street  
Wurtsboro, NY  
Phone: (845) 888-8004  
<http://mamakatinglibrary.org>

NYSDEC Region 3 Office  
21 South Putt Corners Road  
New Paltz, NY 12561  
Phone: (845) 256-3154  
(Please call for an appointment)

## CONTACTS

Site-related questions should be directed as follows:

### Site Investigation Questions

Janet Brown, P.E.  
NYSDEC  
21 South Putt Corners Rd.  
New Paltz, NY 12561  
(845) 256-3826  
[jbrown@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:jbrown@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

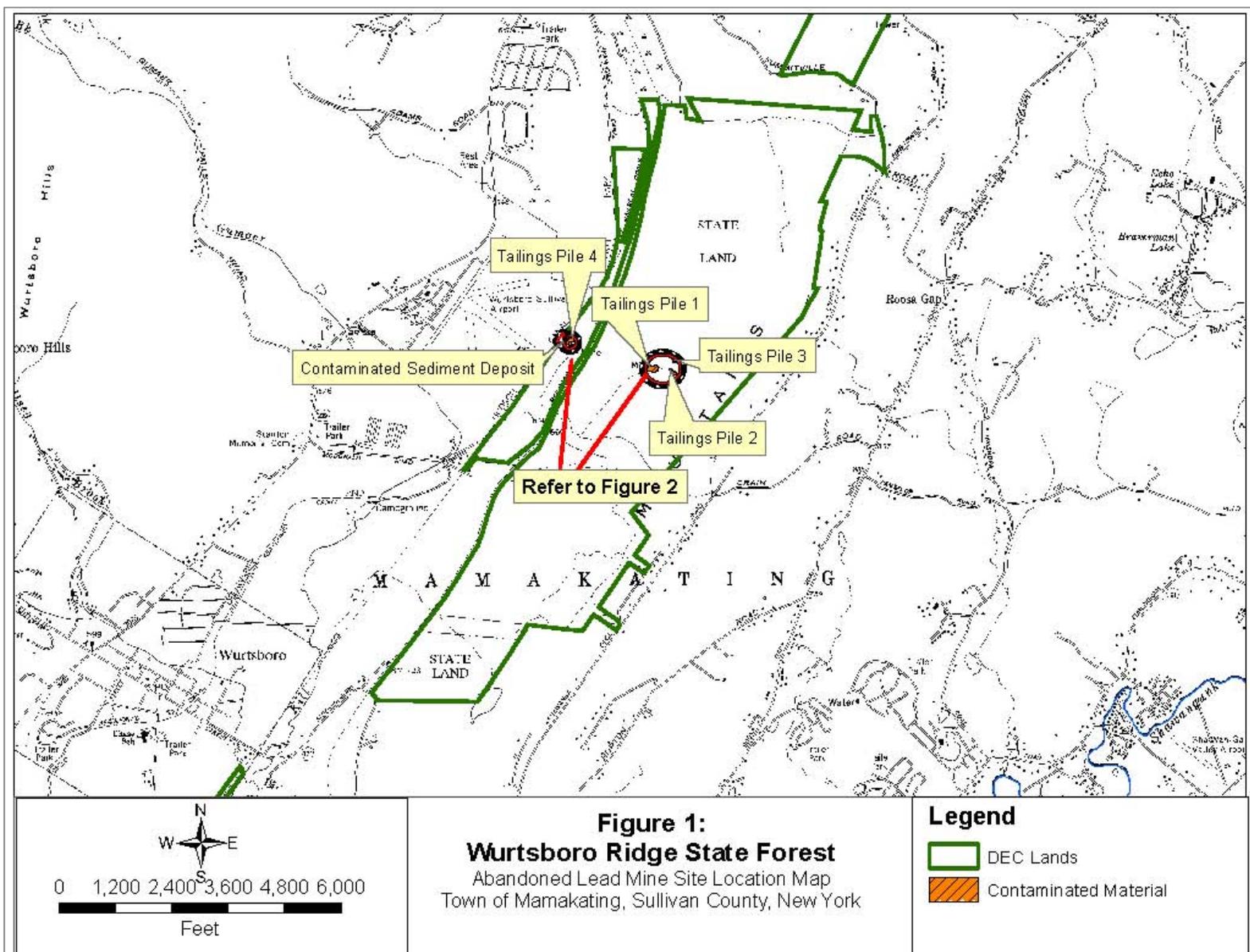
### Site-Related Health Questions

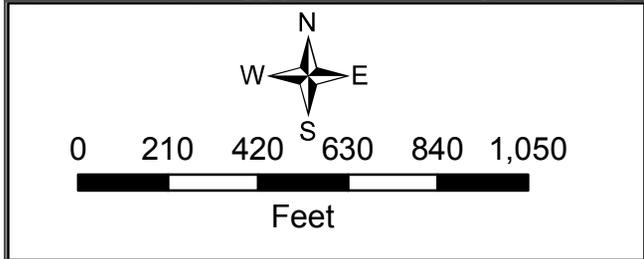
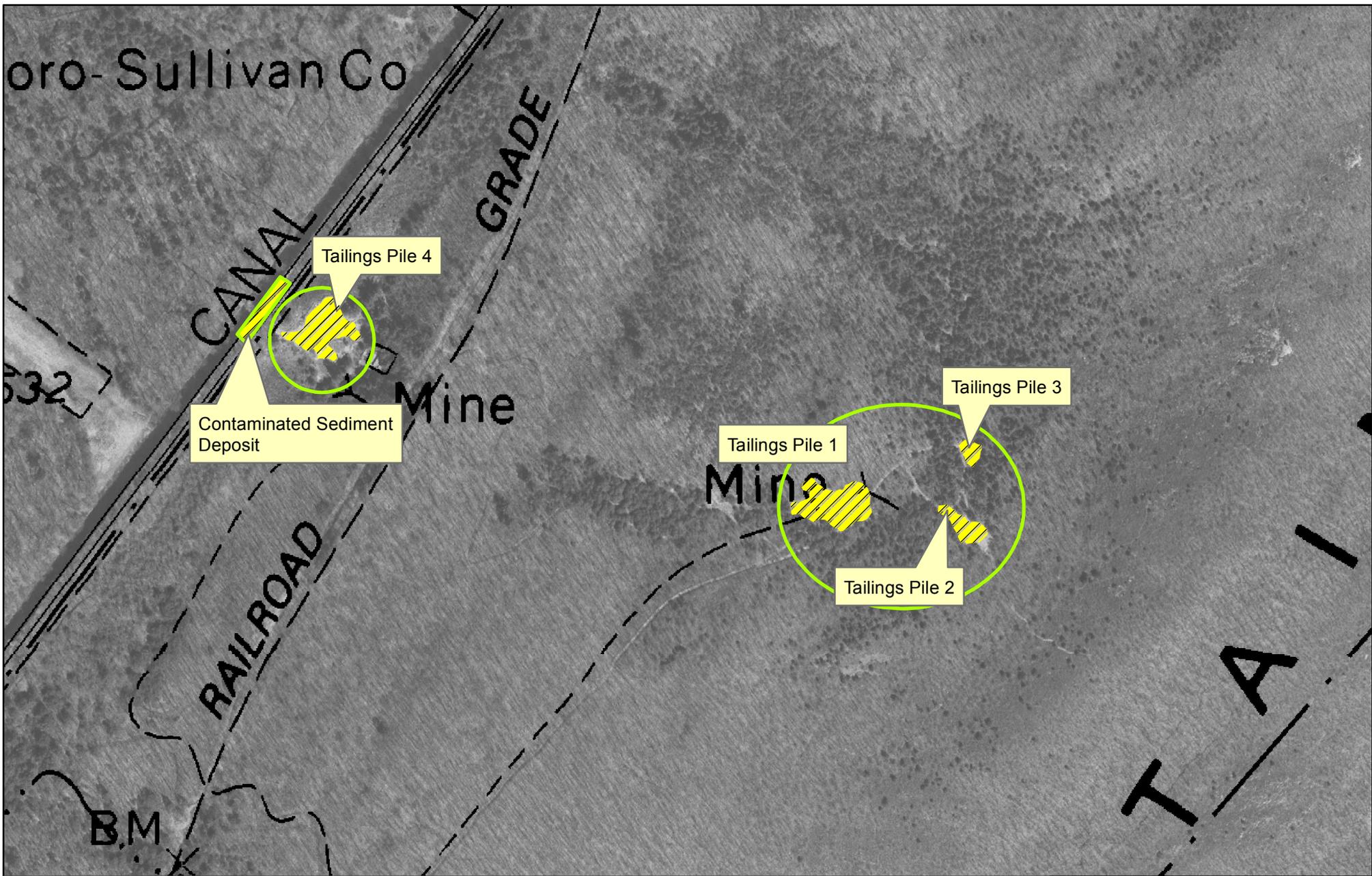
Tony Perretta  
NYS Department of Health  
Empire State Plaza, Corning Tower  
Room 1787  
Albany, NY 12237  
(518) 402-7880  
[BEEI@health.state.ny.us](mailto:BEEI@health.state.ny.us)

### State Forest Use Questions

Jeffrey Wiegert  
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21 South Putt Corners Rd.  
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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.





**Figure 2:**  
**Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest**  
 Abandoned Lead Mine Site Map  
 Town of Mamakating, Sullivan County, New York

**Legend**

-  Contaminated Material
-  Restricted Area