

# 1

## Overview

### *1.1 Working Together*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the [2003 Community Involvement Plan](#) (CIP) to facilitate two-way communication between EPA and the communities affected by and interested in the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site and to encourage community involvement in site activities. In developing the plan, EPA made an extensive effort to gather public input and drew upon many information sources, including numerous and detailed community interviews, meetings, and site files.

Since the 2003 CIP was released to the public, EPA has used the outreach tools outlined in the plan to involve the community and has made significant decisions based on public input. For example, EPA decided to phase the dredging and to develop performance standards, an enhanced CIP, and Community Health and Safety Plans, all in response to community concerns. The siting of the sediment processing facility included 17 public meetings over two years and a public comment period to ensure active community participation in the decision-making process. Public interest was also the catalyst for the development of an EPA web site to house performance standard monitoring data during dredging.

To further ensure routine and consistent communication between EPA and the communities and stakeholder groups along the entire site, EPA coordinated the development of a Community Advisory Group (CAG). EPA consulted with the CAG in the hiring of a neutral group facilitator and has presented project design information during each of the group's 41 meetings that have been held since 2004.

**2003 Community Involvement Plan Web Link:**  
[www.epa.gov/udson/cip.htm](http://www.epa.gov/udson/cip.htm)

Over the past six years, project design for the first phase of the project has been completed and many of the original outreach components of the CIP have been implemented. This CIP includes information about project activity since 2003, updates stakeholder information, and outlines the public involvement activities that have been completed to date and that will continue throughout the lifetime of the project.

With the start of dredging in spring 2009, EPA reaffirms its commitment to using the community involvement activities outlined in this plan to ensure the public is kept informed throughout the project and is provided with ample opportunities to be involved.

### ***1.2 Introduction***

#### **The Site**

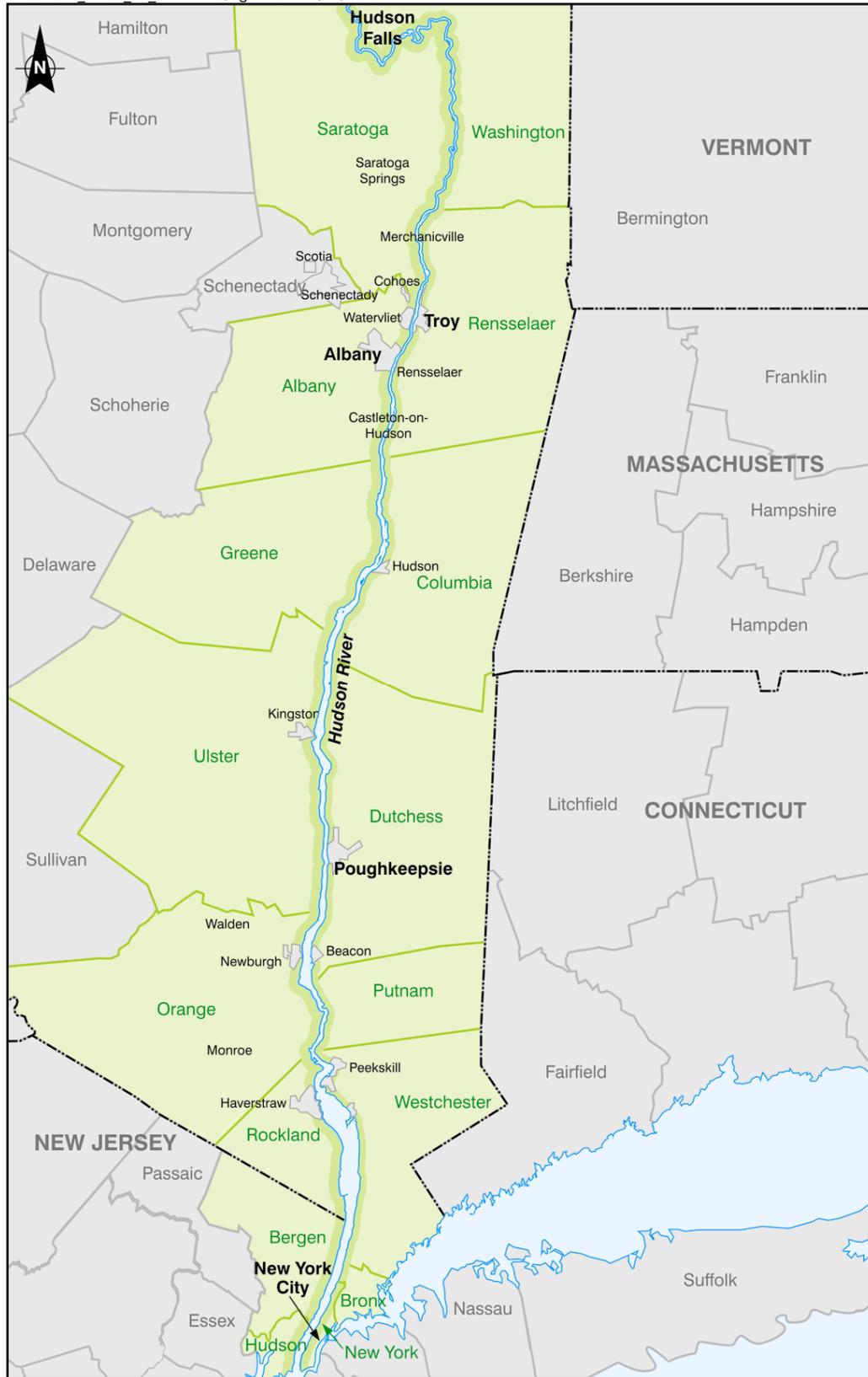
The Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site encompasses a nearly 200-mile stretch of the Hudson River from Hudson Falls, New York to the Battery in New York City and includes communities in 14 New York counties and two counties in New Jersey (see Figure 1-1). The site is divided into two major areas: the Upper Hudson River, which runs from Hudson Falls to the Federal Dam at Troy (a distance of approximately 40 miles); and the Lower Hudson River, which runs from the Federal Dam at Troy to the southern tip of Manhattan at the Battery in New York City.

In February 2002, EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) that called for dredging PCB-contaminated sediments in the Upper Hudson River. EPA's selected cleanup plan culminated a 12-year reassessment of a 1984 interim no-action decision with respect to the contaminated sediments in the Hudson River. The Agency reviewed and considered more than 70,000 public comments on its December 2000 Proposed Plan for the cleanup. As part of this decision, EPA committed itself to conducting rigorous and meaningful public participation.

The post-ROD community involvement program has two major elements: frequent and regular interaction with communities, focused on specific issues of concern; and a notable EPA presence in the upriver community via the Hudson River Field Office (HRFO). The current and future community involvement activities presented in this document are designed to carry out this commitment.

*The history of the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site and EPA's actions are addressed in Section 2.0.*

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**Figure 1-1 Site Location Map  
Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site, New York**

### **The Community**

EPA recognizes that the vast size of the site and the scope of the cleanup plan make this Superfund site unusual. Communities along the Hudson vary greatly in their demographics and concerns about how the dredging will affect them. Even within communities, members have disagreed over the decision to dredge, although nearly all the affected parties share the common goal of a healthy river that benefits the whole community.



*Hudson River communities and their concerns are described in Section 3.0.*

### **The Plan**

This CIP recognizes and addresses the challenges presented by the diversity of the communities involved in the project and will focus on issues related to dredging implementation.



*EPA's detailed Community Involvement Plan for the site is presented in Section 4.0.*

### **Resources**

The CIP is a blueprint for public involvement in the cleanup of the Hudson River. It is a companion to a number of site reports, plans, decision documents, and other sources of information that are available for review. Because EPA does not have the information necessary to identify the precise timing of all activities and points for community involvement, this CIP will remain a living document that will continue to evolve as the project progresses.



*Lists of reference documents and helpful sources of information are at the end of this document.*