

# 3

## *Community Background*

### *3.1 Community Profile*

#### **River Characteristics**

The Hudson River originates in the Adirondack Mountains at Lake Tear of the Clouds in Essex County, New York. From its headwaters, the river flows 300 miles through seven locks and over 15 dams and three waterfalls before reaching New York Bay.

The Hudson River, the Mohawk River, and the New York Barge Canal system comprise the nation's only navigable passage through the Appalachians and are important transportation links between the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes. The Hudson supports deep-draft traffic from the Battery all the way to the Port of Albany and barge traffic north of Albany through a series of dams and locks to Fort Edward. The entire river is used for recreational boating.

#### **Population and Demographic Characteristics**

The Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site can be divided into three regions: the Upper, Mid-, and Lower Hudson. The 16 counties within these regions have a total population (2007 estimate) of 7,532,331 and important demographic and socioeconomic differences. The Upper Hudson River area encompasses Washington, Saratoga, Rensselaer, and Albany counties; the Mid-Hudson River encompasses Columbia, Greene, Dutchess, and Ulster counties; and the Lower Hudson River region includes Orange, Putnam, Westchester, Rockland, Bronx, and New York counties in New York State, and Bergen and Hudson counties in New Jersey.

These geographic distinctions are helpful in understanding how community involvement needs and activities may vary along the site.

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Studies show that residents in all three areas fish the river for recreation, as a cultural practice, or for subsistence. Despite state fish consumption advisories, they continue to eat the fish they catch and bring them home to their families.

#### The Upper Hudson River (Washington, Saratoga, Rensselaer, Albany)

The Upper Hudson River is the focal point for project activities. This area is predominantly rural and agricultural but contains some industrialized, urban areas. Just south is the state capital of Albany, where many advocacy organizations and elected officials have their offices.

Upper Hudson River Counties



Communities in the Upper Hudson River area tend to be smaller than those in the Mid- and Lower Hudson. The total population in the four-county area is 733,220. In general, the population base is stable. The area has a higher percentage of residents over the age of 65 than the New York State average.

The Upper Hudson River has a relatively small population of minorities and non-English speakers. However, it should be noted that the majority of those who speak a language other than English at home, speak a language other than Spanish. The area's high school graduation rate is slightly higher than the New York State average, as is the level of college degree attainment.

With the exception of Saratoga County, the median household income is slightly lower than the New York State average. However, the poverty rate is also slightly lower for all counties. Washington County's job loss rate from 2000-2006 was 3% while Saratoga County increased its job rate by 19% (see Table 3-1).

Table 3-1 Upper Hudson River Demographic Profile

	Washington	Saratoga	Rensselaer	Albany
Population (2007 Estimate)	62,743	215,852	155,318	299,307
Population Change (2000-2007)	2.80%	7.60%	1.80%	1.60%
Population over 65 (2007)	14.70%	12.10%	13.00%	13.60%
Minority Population Including Hispanic and Latino (2007)	6.80%	6.40%	12.20%	20.90%
Non-English Speakers (2005-2007 Estimates)	3.40%	5.30%	7.10%	9.90%
High School Graduates (2000)	79.20%	88.20%	84.90%	86.30%
College Graduates (2000)	14.30%	30.90%	23.70%	33.30%
Median Household Income (2007)	\$44,043	\$62,067	\$50,840	\$52,831
Persons Below Poverty Level (2007)	11.60%	6.90%	10.60%	11.70%
Change in Employment (2000-2006)	-2.60%	18.60%	6.80%	3.50%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census 2009 – State and County Quick Facts.

**Mid-Hudson River  
Counties**



**Mid-Hudson River (Columbia, Greene, Dutchess, Ulster)**

The total population for the four-county Mid-Hudson River area is 586,215. In general, the population base is stable or growing. As with the Upper Hudson area, this area has a higher percentage of residents over the age of 65 than the New York State average.

Like the Upper Hudson River, this area also has a relatively low number of minorities and non-English speakers. The area’s high school graduation rate is generally high, while the level of college degree attainment is generally lower than the New York State average.

With the exception of Greene County, the median household income is comparable or slightly above the New York State average. Likewise, the poverty rate is also lower for all counties, except Greene. The rate of employment has increased in all four counties, including Dutchess, which saw a 12% loss in employment in the 1990s, in part due to cutbacks at IBM (see Table 3-2).

**Table 3-2 Mid-Hudson River Demographic Profile**

	Columbia	Greene	Dutchess	Ulster
Population (2007 Estimate)	62,363	49,246	292,746	181,860
Population Change (2000-2007)	-1.20%	2.20%	4.50%	2.30%
Population over 65 (2007)	16.60%	15.20%	12.50%	13.60%
Minority Population Including Hispanic and Latino (2007)	10.7%	12.90%	23.10%	16.40%
Non-English Speakers (2005-2007 Estimates)	6.70%	8.40%	11.90%	10.10%
High School Graduates (2000)	81.00%	78.60%	84.00%	81.70%
College Graduates (2000)	22.60%	16.40%	27.60%	25.00%
Median Household Income (2007)	\$53,214	\$44,966	\$65,847	\$55,589
Persons Below Poverty Level (2007)	10.00%	12.60%	8.70%	11.20%
Change in Employment (2000-2006)	5.40%	15.30%	12.00%	5.90%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census 2009 – State and County Quick Facts.

**Lower Hudson River Counties**



**Lower Hudson River (Putnam, Orange, Westchester, Rockland, Bergen [NJ], Bronx, Hudson [NJ], New York)**

The Lower Hudson River area is the largest in terms of geography and population. While most of the project activities will occur in the Upper and Mid-Hudson River area, the Superfund site covers almost the entire length of the river.

The total population for the eight-county Lower Hudson River area is 6,212,896. In general, the population base is stable or growing slightly. The average number of residents over the age of 65 is generally on a par with the New York and New Jersey averages.

In contrast to the Mid- and Upper Hudson River, more than half of the residents of this area come from a minority community. The total number of people who speak a language other than English at home (about 40%) is higher than the New York and New Jersey state averages of 28% and 18% respectively. The area’s high school graduation rate is higher than the state averages—the exceptions are Bronx County, New York, and Hudson County, New Jersey, which have lower rates. The same is true with college degree attainment. Five of the eight counties have high rates of college degree attainment. The three exceptions are Orange County and Hudson County, New Jersey, and Bronx County, which have lower rates of college degree attainment.

The median household income is high in six of the eight counties of the Lower Hudson. However, Bronx County’s median household income is lower than the New York State average, and New York County’s is higher. Bronx, New York, and Hudson counties have a high number of people living below the poverty level. All counties except Bergen, Hudson, and New York experienced job growth between 2000 and 2006. New York is the only county that sustained negative job growth between 1990 and 2006 (see Table 3-3).

**Table 3-3 Lower Hudson River Demographic Profile**

	Putnam	Orange	Westchester	Rockland	Bergen (NJ)	Bronx	Hudson (NJ)	New York
Population (2007 Estimate)	99,489	377,169	951,325	296,483	895,744	1,373,659	598,160	1,620,867
Population Change (2000-2007)	3.90%	10.50%	3.00%	3.40%	1.30%	3.10%	-1.80%	5.40%
Population over 65 (2007)	11.10%	9.90%	14.00%	13.10%	14.80%	10.50%	10.90%	12.60%
Minority Population Including Hispanic and Latino (2007)	15.70%	29.10%	39.60%	31.40%	35.00%	87.00%	65.30%	50.90%

**Table 3-3 Lower Hudson River Demographic Profile**

	Putnam	Orange	West- chester	Rockland	Bergen (NJ)	Bronx	Hudson (NJ)	New York
Non-English Speakers (2005-2007 Estimates)	13.20%	18.20%	28.40%	29.90%	32.40%	52.70%	56.10%	41.90%
High School Graduates (2000)	90.20%	81.80%	83.60%	85.30%	86.60%	62.30%	70.50%	78.70%
College Graduates (2000)	33.90%	22.50%	40.90%	37.50%	38.20%	14.60%	25.30%	49.40%
Median Household Income (2007)	\$84,622	\$64,799	\$77,097	\$80,620	\$80,063	\$34,031	\$51,247	\$63,704
Persons Below Poverty Level (2007)	6.70%	10.50%	7.70%	8.80%	5.90%	27.10%	13.90%	17.70%
Change in Employment (2000-2006)	20.50%	12.50%	0.60%	4.20%	-3.10%	6.70%	-0.10%	--2.20%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census 2009 – State and County Quick Facts.

### Land Use

Land use along the site is diverse. The Upper Hudson River area is largely agricultural and rural, with urbanized pockets centered around the cities of Albany, Rensselaer, and Troy. The Mid-Hudson River area is more suburbanized, while the Lower Hudson River area is highly urbanized.

### Industry

#### *Upper Hudson*

The Upper Hudson River area is well suited for agriculture and dairy farming. Livestock and livestock products comprise a very large percentage of the state’s agricultural income. The industrial base of the area ranges from basic manufacturing and agriculture to high technology, research, and development-oriented businesses. The area supports petroleum refineries, granaries, and paper mills.

Government has historically been the leading source of jobs in Albany, the state’s capital. Recently the service sector has overtaken that role, boosted by the region’s growth as a vacation destination showcasing major attractions, such as Lake George and Saratoga Springs.

#### *Mid-Hudson*

The Mid-Hudson region has a highly diversified economy, with concentrations in electronics and computing, biomedical industries, pharmaceuticals, business services, and distribution. Tourism is also a significant element of the regional economy.

Services, retail trade, and manufacturing compose the region’s leading private employers. Known for high technology, the Mid-

### 3. Community Background

Hudson region supports a strong concentration of scientists, engineers, physicists, computer scientists, and chemists working at a number of major industrial research laboratories.

Apple-growing operations and wineries are features in several counties, and dairy farms are scattered throughout the region.

#### *Lower Hudson*

New York City dominates the Lower Hudson River economy. The economy of the City is led by the services industry, particularly financial and health services. The City also leads the nation in insurance, accounting, communications, and apparel manufacturing. Virtually every industry is represented in New York City's economy. Foreign travel and tourism has a major impact on New York City's economy and is its single largest export industry.

#### **Waterline from Troy to Waterford/Halfmoon**

EPA constructed a four-and-a-half mile long waterline that runs from Troy, New York to the towns of Waterford and Halfmoon. The waterline will be used by the towns, if needed, as an alternate water source during dredging.

#### **Stillwater's Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) Water Filtration System**

Prior to dredging, EPA installed a GAC drinking water treatment system that will protect the Village of Stillwater's water supply wells during the first phase of the cleanup.

#### **Public Infrastructure**

The entire site has a well-developed transportation system. In areas not served by a public water system, domestic water supplies and water for cattle and other farm animals are obtained almost solely from wells. Several communities along the Hudson River use the river for drinking water, including Waterford, Halfmoon, Poughkeepsie, Rhinebeck, the Highland Water District, and the Port of Ewen Water District. Additionally, some residents and farmers along the Hudson River's banks use the river for watering lawns and gardens and for irrigating crops.

#### **Sports and Recreation**

##### *Upper Hudson*

In addition to outdoor recreational activities, such as biking, boating, swimming, camping, skiing, and fishing, racing fans can find the oldest thoroughbred track in the United States, the Saratoga Race Course, in the City of Saratoga Springs. Saratoga is also the summer home of New York City ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

All of these offerings make the Upper Hudson Valley a haven for tourists who, in addition to other activities, enjoy a variety of county festivals and fairs, such as the Washington County Strawberry Festival, the Washington County Fair, numerous Christmas season festivities, and Revolutionary War re-enactments.

##### *Mid-Hudson*

The Mid-Hudson River area offers numerous recreational opportunities, including Catskill Park and several large state parks. The

Catskill area boasts a number of large year-round resorts. Skiing, hiking, golf, and water sports are popular. The region is also rich in historic sites, art galleries, and museums and has become a destination for visitors seeking antiques and country inns.

#### ***Lower Hudson***

The Hudson River forms the western boundary of the island of Manhattan and is a dominant part of the landscape of New York City. Because of its many cultural and entertainment offerings, tourism is a major industry in the New York City area. From the Bronx Zoo to the Statue of Liberty, New York City's shopping, theater, music, sports, arts, special events, buildings, and other landmarks are preeminent.

#### **Summary**

Nearly one-third of New York State residents live within an hour's drive of the Hudson River. The entire Hudson River area benefits from a diverse economic base and the numerous housing, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities. Rich in history, the region played a major role in the American Revolution, the population migration westward after the Revolution, and the early transportation systems centered on the Erie Canal and several early turnpikes.

The Hudson River is an integral part of the lives and lifestyles of area residents. The river is still a major industrial transport route. Water-based recreational activities, such as waterfowl hunting, trapping, swimming, boating, and fishing abound, although various bans and advisories on catching and eating fish from the river have affected this sport.

### ***3.2 Key Community Concerns***

The Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site has long been the center of controversy, largely centered on the proposal and ultimate decision to dredge the Upper Hudson River. Over the years, the proposed dredging project has been met with both strong support and strong opposition. Stakeholder interests in the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site comprise a broad range of individuals and groups, including:

- Activist groups;
- Elected officials;
- Government agencies;
- Business, labor, and agriculture groups;
- Industry groups; and
- Residents and landowners.

#### **Community**

An interacting population of various types of individuals (or species) in a common location; a neighborhood or specific area where people live.

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Some community members believe that the dredging project will not achieve the goal of cleaning up the river. They assert that the river's health is continuing to improve without dredging—that the river is cleaning itself—and that the risks associated with dredging do not outweigh the potential benefits. Others feel that dredging is the key to the long-term health of the river and to reducing risks to those who use its resources.

Geography has also influenced attitudes about the project, although public opposition to dredging has softened considerably during the design of the cleanup. Downriver communities have tended to be more supportive of the project, citing long-term environmental benefits as a primary reason. Upriver communities have expressed reservations about the project, although there is support among some upriver residents. Since the dredging will have a more direct impact on upriver communities, some upriver residents view the possible effects of the project from a different perspective.

General concerns expressed by stakeholders have centered on the need for an open and meaningful process of community involvement. Issues include a need to provide input on a variety of issues in multiple ways, a desire for basic information, and the belief that outreach should include a broad range of stakeholders while still retaining an upriver focus. Specific project concerns have included questions about the effects of project activities on community health, agriculture, river health, the environment, river congestion, boating, traffic, the local economy, tourism, recreation, archaeology, fishing, and jobs.

General and specific community concerns were developed from community interviews and workshops conducted during the development of the 2003 CIP. Since 2003, EPA has continued to work closely with affected communities to understand and address their concerns.

Despite past positions regarding dredging, during the past six years of the cleanup design process, many stakeholders have become involved with the project in a constructive way when opportunities for rigorous and meaningful public participation have been provided, as described in this CIP.

**General community concerns** relate to the process of community involvement for the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site.

#### *3.2.1 Community Concerns about the Process*

The following is a summary of general concerns expressed by community members during the development of the 2003 CIP.

**The community wants a clear explanation of its role and responsibilities in EPA's decision-making process.**

Clear guidelines on the aspects of the project in which community members have influence must be provided.

**The community wants a process that is transparent.**

Transparency means that the public can easily obtain information about EPA's decision-making on the project and that all aspects of decision-making are understandable to stakeholders. Providing adequate information alleviates perceptions that aspects of the project are being concealed.

**The community wants a process that is meaningful.**

EPA's involvement must focus attention on tasks and issues in which public input will have a tangible influence on future decisions. EPA must follow through on commitments made.

**Community involvement must be adequately supported, especially with key information.**

Participants need to be informed in a timely manner about issues, meetings, and upcoming decisions so they can prepare for participation. Participants also need sufficient technical information (written in plain language) that is provided early enough to be assimilated and used in the community involvement process. In addition, time must be allowed for public input to be considered before final decisions are made.

**The community involvement process must be responsive to the needs of stakeholders.**

Members of the public want assurance that EPA values their input. The process must include feedback to stakeholders about how their input was considered and how it influenced the decisions that EPA made.

**The community wants a process that is flexible.**

The process should include a wide variety of approaches and strategies for involvement. EPA should evaluate its participation efforts throughout the project, revising its approaches as needed.

**Community involvement must be inclusive.**

The process must involve a broad and representative range of interests. Broad participation increases the legitimacy of decisions that are made.

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#### 3.2.2 Community Concerns about the Remedy

Remedy-specific community concerns relate to the dredging of the Upper Hudson River.

Community members have expressed concerns about the short- and long-term impacts of the remedy. The primary concerns focus on a range of potential impacts:

##### **Human Health**

Possible resuspension and residuals of PCB-contaminated sediments that may affect human health as a result of drinking, bathing or swimming in Hudson River water.

##### **Quality of Life**

Dredging operations and facility lighting, noise, and odor.

##### **Economic Impacts**

Potential traffic-related issues, negative public perceptions, and local jobs/hiring concerns.

##### **Agricultural Operations**

Irrigation, disturbances to animals, potential loss of farmland due to the siting of sediment processing/transfer facilities, and the potential for a negative image of agricultural products to be created among consumers.

##### **Fish and Wildlife**

Resuspension of contaminants, the loss and recovery of fish and wildlife habitat, and the long-term impacts of the remedy on the health of fish in the river.

##### **Cultural and Archaeological Resources**

Historic artifacts and archaeological sites, the recovery and display of artifacts recovered, and the fear that historical and archeological issues would be used to delay or stop the dredging.

##### **River Navigation**

River congestion and delays and fear that resuspended sediments could make navigational dredging more difficult and expensive.

#### 3.2.3 Community Involvement Commitments from the 2002 ROD

Over the years EPA has involved the community and made significant decisions based on public input. See Section 1.1.

In the February 2002 ROD, EPA committed itself to involving the public in activities relating to the implementation of the dredging project. Many aspects of the design and implementation of the project are of interest to the public, especially those activities that have potential impacts on local communities.

Phase 1 dredging design and work plans are complete, and dredging began in May 2009. Throughout project design, EPA focused

### 3. Community Background

efforts on getting public input and providing information on those decisions and activities that have the greatest potential impact on the community and on the big-picture issues that are most important to the public. In the future, the public will be afforded an opportunity to provide input on the Phase 2 design and work plans.

The project design includes:

#### **Dredging Project Design**

The design included a sediment sampling program that was initiated in October 2002 to confirm the precise areas of the Upper Hudson River between Fort Edward and the Troy Dam that required dredging. Other design tasks included determining dredging sequencing and timing; identifying the location of dredging operations; identifying the location of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 dredging areas; developing dredging cut lines; identifying backfill sources; evaluating beneficial uses for dredged sediment; and evaluating and selecting dredge technology. These design elements have been addressed in the [Phase 1 and Phase 2 Dredge Area Delineation Reports](#) and [Remedial Design Work Plans](#).

#### **Quality of Life Performance Standards**

Quality of life performance standards are intended to minimize the impacts of the dredging, dewatering, and support operations on people, businesses, recreation, agriculture, and community activities in the Upper Hudson River project area. Potential impacts include noise, air quality exceedances, light, river traffic, and odor. The 2002 ROD included performance standards for air emissions and preliminary performance standards for noise emissions and required the development of additional quality of life standards by EPA during design, with input from the public and in consultation with the state and the Federal Natural Resource Trustees.

In December 2003, EPA released Draft Quality of Life Performance Standards for public comment. Informational meetings were held in Fort Edward and Albany in January 2004 to educate the public about the draft standards and answer questions. The [Final Quality of Life Performance Standards](#) were released in May 2004 and reflect public input on further ways to minimize potential community impacts.

#### **Web Links:**

##### **Phase 1 and Phase 2 Dredge Area Delineation Reports:**

[www.epa.gov/udson/proj\\_des.htm](http://www.epa.gov/udson/proj_des.htm)

##### **Remedial Design Work Plans:**

[www.epa.gov/udson/work\\_plans.htm](http://www.epa.gov/udson/work_plans.htm)

##### **Quality of Life Performance Standards:**

[www.epa.gov/udson/quality\\_life.htm](http://www.epa.gov/udson/quality_life.htm)

#### **Engineering Performance Standards**

Engineering performance standards have been developed to make sure the dredging is done safely and is protective of people's health and the environment. The standards address resuspension of PCBs during dredging, the residual amounts of PCBs that may remain in sediments after dredging and establish productivity goals to keep dredging on schedule.

In May 2003, EPA released Draft Engineering Performance Standards to the public for review and comment and held a series of informational meetings in Fort Edward, Queensbury, Albany, and Poughkeepsie during the public comment period (May, June 2003). The Draft was revised based on public comment and then submitted for peer review by a panel of independent experts. The draft standards were subsequently revised based on public and peer review comments and [Final Engineering Performance Standards](#) were released in April 2004. EPA has established a website to host information about the performance standard monitoring data that is being generated during dredging which is available at [www.hudsondredgingdata.com](http://www.hudsondredgingdata.com).

#### **Phase 1 Peer Review**

The 2002 ROD calls for an independent external peer review of the dredging resuspension, PCB residuals, and production rate performance standards and the attendant monitoring program. Additionally, the ROD requires the preparation of reports at the end of the first phase of dredging that evaluate the dredging with respect to these performance standards.

The 2006 Consent Decree provides further details for this process. In particular, it provides that GE will prepare a Phase 1 Data Compilation, and that GE and EPA will each prepare a Phase 1 Evaluation Report that will include an evaluation of the Phase 1 dredging operations, will set forth proposed changes to the standards, if appropriate, and in general will evaluate the experience gained from the Phase 1 dredging operations.

EPA will release the Phase 1 Evaluation Reports to the public, and a contractor hired by EPA (peer review contractor) will release the Phase 1 Evaluation Reports to the Peer Review panel. EPA will

#### **Web Links:**

**Engineering Performance Standards:**

[www.epa.gov/hudson/perf\\_standards.htm](http://www.epa.gov/hudson/perf_standards.htm)

**EPA Dredging Data Web Site:**

[www.hudsondredgingdata.com](http://www.hudsondredgingdata.com)

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accept public comments on the Phase I Evaluation Reports for a period of not less than 30 days. EPA will compile public comments received on the Phase 1 Evaluation Reports and the peer review contractor will make such comments (along with any written response that EPA and/or GE chooses to provide to such comments) available to the Peer Review panel during the period of its review.

EPA will then consider the conclusions of the peer review panel and determine whether changes to the performance standards should be made and will inform GE of any modifications that would be required during Phase 2 of the dredging program. GE is then to notify EPA as to whether it will implement Phase 2 of the dredging.

#### **Baseline Monitoring**

In 2008, a baseline water monitoring project was funded by EPA and conducted by NYSDOH. The monitoring program was developed to provide a baseline of information about water supplies before GE began dredging. From May-November 2008, NYSDOH collected water samples for PCB analysis at nine public water systems on the Hudson River. All samples were found to have a PCB concentration less than the federal and state drinking water standard of 500 nanograms per liter (ng/L). Results of the analysis were communicated to the public by NYSDOH during public meetings and information sessions sponsored by EPA. NYSDOH will continue to monitor the Hudson River public water systems during dredging.

#### **Sediment Processing/Transfer Facility**

In 2004, a public involvement effort was initiated by EPA to solicit public input during the selection of an appropriate sediment processing/transfer facility site. During dredging, the sediment processing/transfer facility located in the Town of Fort Edward will be used to prepare PCB-contaminated materials for off-site disposal.

Prior to facility site selection, the public was notified of all potential facility locations that met the necessary criteria. A 90-day public comment period on the Draft Facility Siting Report ran from May 3 through July 31, 2004. During the comment period, the public submitted more than 2000 comments. After considering public input on all of the proposed sites, in December 2004, the Energy Park site in Fort Edward, New York was selected as the dewatering and sediment transfer site. EPA continued its outreach and involvement efforts by hosting public forums to further explain the site selection process and answer questions. Seventeen

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public informational meetings focused on facility siting were sponsored by EPA between 2002 and 2005.

The 110-acre Energy Park site is located in the town and village of Fort Edward between the New York State Champlain Canal and the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Construction of the processing facility began in April 2007 and was completed in spring 2009.

Dredged sediments are transported to the dewatering facility by barge. After debris is removed from the sediments, filter presses are used to remove water from the sediment. The water is then treated to comply with federal drinking water standards before it is returned to the Champlain Canal. The remaining sediments are loaded into railcars onsite for transport to a permitted landfill in Andrews, Texas.

The processing facility operates during daylight hours, six days a week. [Quality of life performance standards](#) developed for the project ensure that noise, lighting, odor and air emissions surrounding the facility are within safe levels.

#### Community Health and Safety Plan

The purpose of the [Community Health and Safety Plan](#) (CHASP) is to ensure that the work associated with the sampling, construction, and dredging operations is performed in a manner that is safe for the public and the environment and, in the event of an accident, provides a prompt and effective response.

The Phase 1 Remedial Action CHASP was developed by GE and submitted to EPA in March 2006. Following a public comment period, the document was revised based on input from the public, Fort Edward Citizens Committee and EMS First Responders. Once contractors were in place and details regarding drinking water supplies were completed, Revision 2 was released for public comment in February 2009. Following the public comment period, the document was revised again to reflect public input and to include the most current contact and emergency responder information. Revision 3 was released in May 2009, prior to dredging.

**CHASPs**  
Community Health and  
Safety Plans

**CENP**  
Community Education and  
Notification Plan

**CMP**  
Complaint Management  
Program

#### Web Links:

##### Quality of Life Performance Standards:

[www.epa.gov/udson/quality\\_life.htm](http://www.epa.gov/udson/quality_life.htm)

##### Phase 1 Remedial Action CHASP:

[www.epa.gov/region2/superfund/udson/pdf/chastp\\_ph1rev2.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region2/superfund/udson/pdf/chastp_ph1rev2.pdf)

**GE Project Web Site:**

[www.hudsonredging.com](http://www.hudsonredging.com)

**GE Toll-Free Hotline:**

**(888) 596-3655**

The CHASP discusses potential hazards, control of those hazards, protection of drinking water supplies (consistent with the January 2009 consent decree modification), emergency response planning, and identifies project safety personnel and emergency contacts. The CHASP also sets forth a Community Education and Notification Plan (CENP) for providing the public with timely and accurate information about project work activities and schedules, and a Complaint Management Program (CMP) for the public to register project-related complaints. Informational meetings highlighting the components of the CHASP were held in winter/spring 2009. For more information about the CHASP, see Section 4.2 under “General Electric’s Output Tools and Activities.”

#### **Floodplains**

In 2002, EPA signed the ROD for the cleanup that dictated the removal of PCB-contaminated sediments from the river bottom. The ROD also states that concerns related to possible exposure of residents and ecological receptors to PCBs in the floodplain must be evaluated. Between 2002 and 2007, several soil sampling events took place in the floodplain that indicated that PCBs may be present in some areas that are routinely flooded by the river. In 2008, additional soil sampling took place on a number of properties between Fort Edward and the Troy Dam to further evaluate the extent of PCBs in the floodplain. A [fact sheet](#) about the 2008 floodplains sampling effort is available on EPA’s web site.

#### **Floodplain**

Low-lying lands near rivers that are submerged when the river overflows its banks.

Information about the ongoing floodplains investigation has been presented to the public during information sessions and CAG meetings. Fact sheets about the sampling have been mailed to river residents and EPA is in communication with land owners regarding the sampling that is being done on individual properties. EPA will continue to present the findings of the sampling and report any remedial measures that are being undertaken as a result of the floodplains investigation.

#### **Web Link:**

**EPA Floodplain Summary Fact Sheet**

[www.epa.gov/hudson/floodplains.htm](http://www.epa.gov/hudson/floodplains.htm)

**NHPA**  
National Historic  
Preservation Act

**SHPO**  
State Historic Preservation  
Office

**Cultural Resource**

A term used to describe buildings, landscapes, archaeological sites, ethnographic resources, objects and documents, structures and districts that have significant meaning and embody a rich heritage of human experiences and cultural identities.



**Cultural and Archaeological Resources**

Historic properties, such as historical artifacts buried in river sediments, may be affected by the dredging project. EPA is required to comply with substantive requirements in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The NHPA process is carried out in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and calls for significant community involvement.

*See Appendix G for SHPO contact information.*

EPA has hosted several public sessions on cultural resources that explained how the public would be informed and involved in the Section 106 process. Under the Section 106 process, EPA identified several consulting parties that represent municipalities, community organizations, and business owners. These consulting parties work with EPA to ensure that local concerns about historical artifacts remain an integral part of the design and implementation of the dredging project.

*See Appendix F for a listing of the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site Consulting Parties.*

In compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, EPA prepared a [Phase 1 Cultural and Archaeological Resource Assessment](#). EPA's assessment work is contained in the Stage 1A Cultural Resources Survey, which is included as Appendix C of Book 3 of the Responsiveness Summary. EPA identified a number of cultural resources, located within 2,000 feet of the banks of the Hudson River, including resources that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The information from the Stage 1A survey work has been used by GE as a starting point for conducting additional cultural and archaeological resource assessments. A series of on-land archaeological surveys have been undertaken in the course of the facility siting process, and archeological resources have been evaluated for their significance. Significant archaeological sites that could not be avoided due to the engineering constraints have been investigated by large-scale excavations and/or data collection.

**Phase 1 Cultural Resource Assessment Web Link:**  
[www.epa.gov/udson/work\\_plans.htm](http://www.epa.gov/udson/work_plans.htm)

#### MOA Memorandum of Agreement

Underwater archaeological surveys have been completed within the Phase 1 Dredge areas and the archaeological resources that have been discovered will either be avoided during the dredging or have been extensively investigated. In compliance with the Section 106 of the NHPA, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been signed by the EPA, State Historic Preservation Office, NYSDEC, and the Town of Fort Edward. This MOA ensures that there will be no significant adverse effects on cultural resources during Phase 1 dredging and designates the New York State Museum as the repository for archaeological artifacts that are uncovered during dredging or related studies. The MOA also requires the creation of an exhibit dedicated to riverine culture and technology of the Upper Hudson River/Champlain Barge Canal, to be exhibited in public places locally (e.g., Fort Edward Library, Town Hall, or at some other appropriate location).

#### 3.3 EPA's Response to Community Concerns

Since the 2002 ROD was signed, EPA has been proactive in improving relationships with the community, in conducting community outreach, and in involving the community in decision-making. EPA has already:

- **Established a field office in Fort Edward**, in the heart of the upriver community;
- **Hosted numerous public availability sessions and public forums** on topics such as sediment sampling, draft engineering performance standards, draft Quality of Life performance standards, draft CHASP, draft design work plans, facility siting, and the proposed CIP;
- **Attended stakeholder meetings**, given presentations, received regular public input, and coordinated with local officials and agencies on project activities;
- **Invited public comments** on the engineering performance standards, CHASP, Quality of Life performance standards, the proposed CIP and invited input on the draft project design work plans;
- **Invited public comments on the Draft Facility Siting Report** during the selection of the sediment processing/transfer facilities;
- **Invited the public to nominate members of the peer review panel** for the engineering performance standards;
- **Issued fact sheets** on project documents and design activities;
- **Activated the EPA-Hudson listserv**, an electronic news distribution service that has more than 800 subscribers; and
- **Established a toll-free number** for the Hudson River Field Office (1-866-615-6490).

### ***3. Community Background***

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# Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site: Sequence of Key Events and Public Involvement Opportunities 2002-2010



