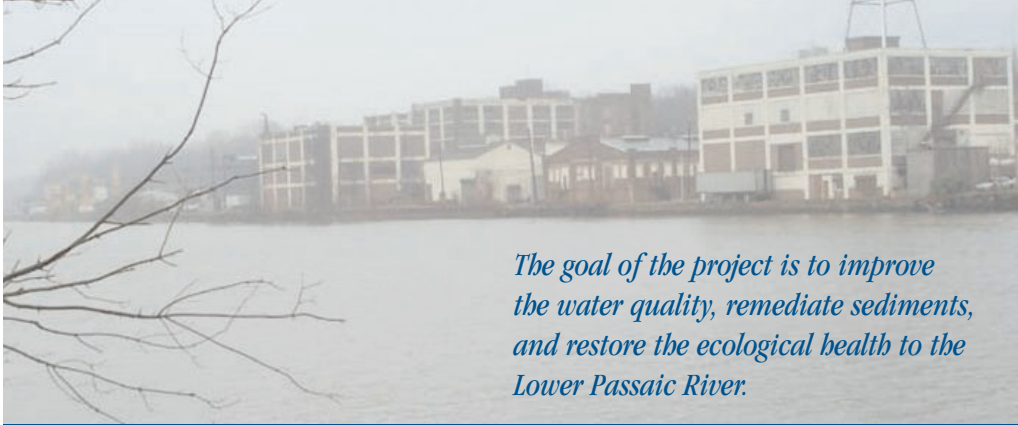


# THE LOWER PASSAIC RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT



*The goal of the project is to improve the water quality, remediate sediments, and restore the ecological health to the Lower Passaic River.*

## FACT SHEET

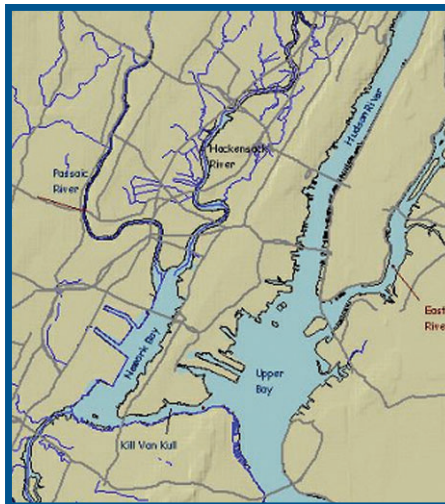
### A FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP IS FORMED

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps), the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) have partnered to conduct a comprehensive study of the Lower Passaic River. The Lower Passaic is the 17-mile tidal stretch of the river from the Dundee Dam south to Newark Bay. The Lower Passaic River Restoration Project is an integrated, joint effort among state and federal agencies that will take a comprehensive look at the problems with the Lower Passaic River Basin and identify remediation and restoration options to address those problems. This multi-year study will provide opportunities for input from the public at all phases of development.

**The primary project goals are to provide a plan to:**

- Remediate contamination found in the river to reduce human health and ecological risks
- Improve the water quality of the river
- Improve and/or create aquatic habitat
- Reduce the contaminant loading in the Passaic and the Hudson-Raritan Estuary

EPA has started the work on the Lower Passaic River Restoration Project using funds from the federal Superfund program. EPA is pursuing those parties responsible for the contamination (referred to as potentially responsible parties) to pay for the EPA's costs in performing the work. Congress provides the Corps with funds for this study in the annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. NJDOT is utilizing the funds from the NY/NJ Joint Dredging Plan and the Transportation Trust Fund to fulfill their contribution as local sponsor. As part of the study, the partnership will examine the best authorities to implement and fund the recommendations.



### A BRIEF HISTORY

*The Passaic River derived its name from the Algonquin word meaning "peaceful valley." The river spans over 80 miles of suburban and urban areas from its headquarters in Morristown, NJ, to its confluence with the tidal waters of the Newark Bay. The Passaic River Basin drains an area of approximately 935 square miles with 787 square miles in New Jersey and 148 square miles in New York. Seven major tributaries bring water into the river's main stem, which is used for water supply, recreation, navigation and wastewater assimilation.*

*During the 1800s, the area surrounding the Lower Passaic River became a focal point for our nation's industrial revolution. By the 20th Century, Newark had established itself as the largest industrial-based city in the country. The urban and industrial development surrounding the Lower Passaic River, combined with associated population growth, have resulted in poor water quality, contaminated sediments, bans on fish and shellfish consumption, lost wetlands, and degraded habitat.*

## FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES GO TO WORK ON THE PROBLEMS

In the early 1980s, EPA had found soil contaminated with dioxin at a manufacturing site in Newark, NJ, next to the Passaic River. Cleanup work was initiated and, in 1984, EPA added the site to the National Priorities List, making it eligible for cleanup funds under the federal Superfund program. Contaminants, such as metals, persistent organic chemicals, pesticides and dioxin, were also found in the sediments of the six miles of the Lower Passaic River bordering the manufacturing site. The contaminated sediments were analyzed and the results showed that, in some areas of the Passaic River, there were concentrations of harmful contaminants at levels that are unsafe according to federal and state standards. Some locations had levels several times higher than the standards.

Several more studies of the Passaic River by EPA, the Corps, and others showed that contaminated sediments and other sources of hazardous chemicals exist along the 17-mile tidal stretch of the River. Therefore, EPA, the Corps, NJDOT, and NJDEP have formed a partnership to expand the study to include the entire Lower Passaic River watershed. The partners are also coordinating with the Federal and State Natural Resource Trustees to include information useful to them for their assessment of injuries and related damages to natural resources associated with hazardous substances releases, as required by law.

The Corps's authority to conduct this study is from a House of Representatives Resolution. Using funds from the annual Energy and Water Resources Appropriations Act, NY/NJ Joint Dredging Plan and the Transportation Trust Fund, a nine million-dollar cost-sharing agreement to study the Lower Passaic River was signed in June 2003 between the Corps and NJDOT. The remediation portion of the study will be funded through EPA's Superfund Program. Since the restoration and remediation studies have many overlapping information needs, the Corps, EPA, and NJDOT have agreed to combine their authorities and funds to carry out a single, integrated study of the Lower Passaic River.



State of New Jersey  
Department of  
Environmental Protection



## FACT SHEET

### CONTACT US

*The Corps, EPA, and NJDOT are establishing a public outreach program to make sure that stakeholders along the Lower Passaic River have input throughout the study. In the meantime, please call the following contacts in each of the agencies for more information, or visit our web site, listed at the end.*

### THE CORPS:

Tom Shea 212-264-5570, or  
Ron Brattain 212-264-5315

### EPA:

Alice Yeh 212-637-4427, or  
David Kluesner 212-637-3653

### NJDOT:

Lisa Baron 609-530-4779

### Web site:

[www.ourPassaic.org](http://www.ourPassaic.org)



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
New York District