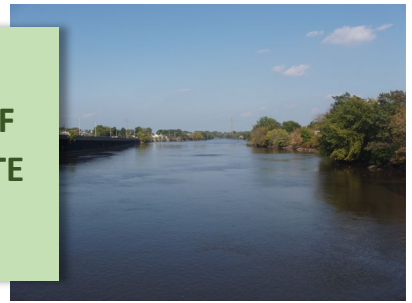




EPA ANNOUNCES CLEANUP DECISION: LOWER PASSAIC RIVER STUDY AREA OF THE DIAMOND ALKALI SUPERFUND SITE

ESSEX, BERGEN, AND PASSAIC COUNTIES, NJ

SEPTEMBER 2021



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected an interim cleanup plan for the upper 9 miles of the Lower Passaic River Study Area (LPRSA) of the Diamond Alkali Superfund site in Essex, Bergen, and Passaic Counties, New Jersey. The cleanup plan was issued in a document known as a Record of Decision on September 28, 2021. The LPRSA covers the entire Lower Passaic River from the mouth of Newark Bay to the Dundee Dam and is known as operable unit 4 or OU4. A separate operable unit, OU2, encompasses the lower 8.3 miles of the Passaic River. This interim cleanup plan addresses contaminated source sediment in the upper 9 miles of the 17-mile stretch of the river.

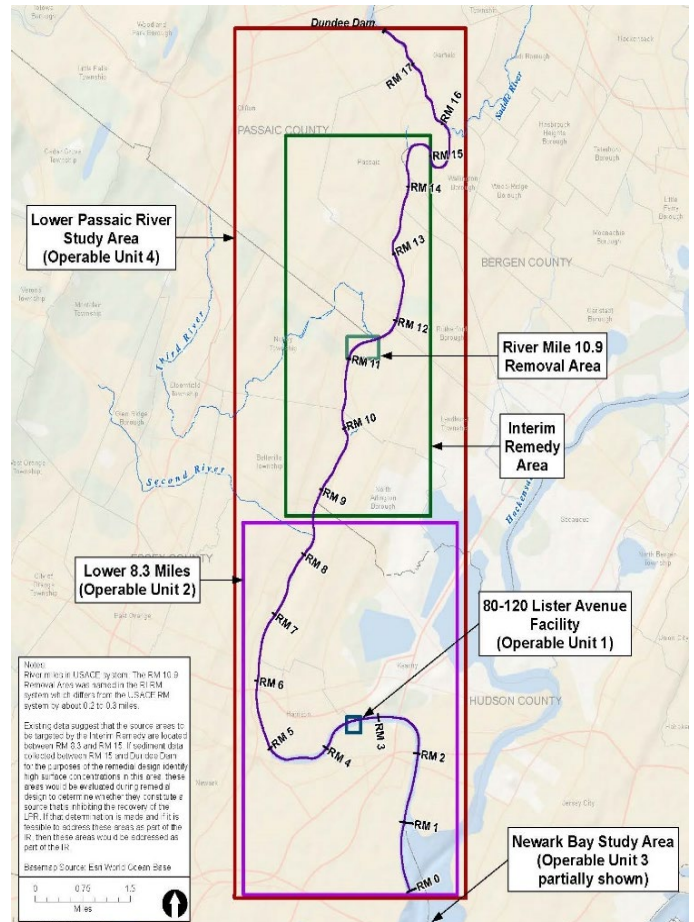
The ROD document is available online:
www.epa.gov/superfund/diamond-alkali

The Selected Cleanup

EPA will use an adaptive, multi-phased approach to address contamination in the upper nine-mile portion of the 17-mile LPRSA. The interim cleanup plan will address sediments in this area that have high concentrations and that can act as an ongoing source of contamination to the water column, other areas of sediment in the river, and animals such as fish and crabs.

EPA will dredge and cap areas of the riverbed between river miles 8.3 and 15, as well as areas at depth that may become exposed through erosion. The dredged materials will be processed at one or more nearby commercial processing facility for off-site disposal at licensed disposal facilities.

After the interim cleanup has been completed, EPA will sample and measure the progress towards meeting the cleanup goals that are still being developed in consultation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.



Community Input

On April 27, 2021, EPA held a virtual public meeting to discuss its proposed cleanup plan and encourage public participation. EPA finalized its cleanup decision after reviewing and considering all comments received during the 60-day public comment period, and after consultation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The [ROD](#) includes a Responsiveness Summary that addresses the comments that were received on [EPA's Proposed Plan](#).

Site Description

The Lower Passaic River and Newark Bay are part of the New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary. The Lower Passaic River refers to the tidal portion of the river (from Newark Bay to Dundee Dam) and its watershed, which includes the major tributaries Saddle River, Third River, and Second River. Dundee Dam isolates the Upper Passaic River from the tidal mixing that influences the lower portions of the river.

Background

In the early 1980s, dioxin-contaminated soil was discovered at the former Diamond Alkali manufacturing facility at 80-120 Lister Avenue, Newark, New Jersey, or OU1. EPA and NJDEP initiated emergency cleanup work, and in 1984, EPA added the site to the National Priorities List. An interim cleanup for OU1 was completed in 2001, which included onsite containment and capping contaminated materials on the Lister Avenue property, a slurry wall and flood wall around the property, and pumping and treating groundwater. In 1983, EPA and NJDEP found contaminants in the sediments of the Passaic River. Investigation of the river continued in the 1990s. In the early 2000s, EPA expanded the study to address the 17-mile LPRSA, and in May 2007, EPA signed an agreement with a group of potentially responsible parties known as the Cooperating Parties Group (CPG) to complete the 17-mile study, under EPA oversight.

During the 17-mile study, the sediments of the lower 8.3 miles were found to be a major source of contamination to the rest of the river and Newark Bay. EPA completed the lower 8.3-mile remedial investigation and focused feasibility study to evaluate taking action to address these sediments, while the study of the 17-mile LPRSA was on-going. A cleanup for the sediment in the lower 8.3 miles, which includes dredging and capping bank-to-bank, was selected in a March 2016 ROD.

Engineering design work that is necessary before the cleanup in the lower 8.3 miles can begin is expected to be completed in 2022.

THE SUPERFUND REMEDIAL PROCESS

ASSESSMENT



Discovery of Contamination



Preliminary Assessment



Site Inspection



National Priorities List (NPL)
Site Listing

CHARACTERIZATION



Remedial Investigation/
Feasibility Study &
Proposed Plan

SELECTION OF REMEDY



Record of Decision

CLEANUP



Remedial Design



Remedial Action

POST-CONSTRUCTION



Operation and
Maintenance



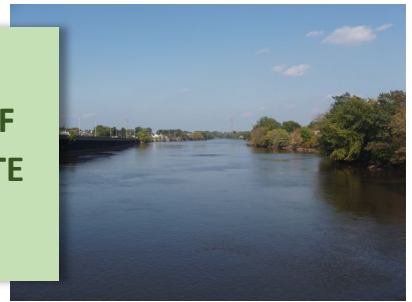
NPL Deletion

Community involvement and planning for a site's redevelopment are integral to the entire process

Five-Year Reviews



**EPA ANNOUNCES CLEANUP DECISION:
LOWER PASSAIC RIVER STUDY AREA OF
THE DIAMOND ALKALI SUPERFUND SITE
ESSEX, BERGEN, AND PASSAIC COUNTIES, NJ**



SEPTEMBER 2021

EPA selected an interim cleanup plan in the upper nine miles of the LPRSA so that work in the lower 8.3 miles and the upper 9 miles can happen at the same time. This way, some of the same infrastructure may be used for both projects and there will be less disruption for traffic in the river and for communities along the river.

EPA Contact Information

Diane Salkie
Remedial Project Manager
212-637-4370
salkie.diane@epa.gov

Shereen Kandil
Community Involvement Coordinator
212-637-4333
kandil.shereen@epa.gov



www.epa.gov/superfund/diamond-alkali | www.ourpassaic.org



<https://www.facebook.com/eparegion2/>



@EPAregion2
