



MARCH 2012

FACT SHEET HUDSON RIVER RESTORATION PLANNING

HUDSON RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Past and continuing discharges of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have contaminated Hudson River natural resources. While the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is continuing with cleanup activities, federal and state trustee agencies – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and New York State (the Trustees) – are assessing how releases of PCBs from the General Electric Company (GE) plants at Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, New York may have harmed the Hudson River's natural resources.

The Trustees are studying the effects of the PCB contamination through a process known as Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). In a NRDA, the Trustees use scientific studies to measure the ways hazardous substances can injure natural resources. The process is complex and lengthy. Currently, the Trustees are in the injury quantification phase, and are making progress in determining the type and amount of restoration required to offset the Hudson River's injured natural resources. Through

work performed to date, the Trustees have preliminarily identified categories of appropriate restoration activities, along with a number of resource restoration ideas that will be part of the group of potential restoration projects considered during future planning efforts. Restoration project proposals that have been submitted by the public in response to past solicitations from the Trustees have been added to this group. The Trustees continue to invite the public to submit restoration project proposals using the Restoration Proposal Form found on the Trustee web sites noted on this Fact Sheet.

After the damage assessment is complete, the Trustees will review the list of potential restoration projects, assessing the appropriateness of those projects using criteria including, but not limited to, relevance of a project to natural resource injury, legality, efficacy, cost-effectiveness, ecological leverage, and their nexus to existing plans. The Trustees anticipate sharing this information with the public in meetings or other presentations, and soliciting the public's views on this

information as part of the restoration planning effort leading to a Draft Restoration Plan that will be released to the public for review and comment.

The Trustees have not established a schedule for selecting restoration projects because of uncertainties surrounding the time needed to complete the injury analysis, evaluate restoration options and projects against the injuries to be restored, and resolve the damage claim. Our goal remains to begin restoration as soon as possible after the damage claim is resolved. Prompt restoration will bring back the Hudson River's lost natural resource services and values as soon as possible.

Restoration is the goal of NRDA. It is an active component of damage assessment that can be seen and felt for generations. The Trustees encourage the public's continued participation in this process and invite you to join our Hudson River NRDA electronic mailing list. Watch our web sites for announcements of new developments and opportunities to assist in evaluating and selecting restoration projects.



Photo: Chris Balk

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Hudson River NRDA Trustee web sites:

- <http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/restorationplans/HudsonRiver/index.html>
- <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/25609.html>
- <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/northeast/hudson/index.html>

To add yourself to the Hudson-NRDA listserv

1. Send a message to: requests@willamette.nos.noaa.gov
2. Write in subject: Subscribe hudsonnrda

If you have questions about natural resource damages, please contact one of the individuals listed below:

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The Hudson River Trustees—assessing and restoring your natural resources