

NOAA Coastal Resource Coordination Program Massachusetts Sites

OFFICE OF RESPONSE AND RESTORATION

CRC PROGRAM MISSION...

NOAA acts on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce as a Federal trustee, under CERCLA and other laws, for natural resources in coastal and marine areas. NOAA's mandate is to protect and restore trust resources that are injured by Superfund site contaminants. NOAA fulfills its responsibilities through an effective network of Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) placed in eight EPA regional offices, as well as an interdisciplinary support group located in Seattle. NOAA CRCs respond to local technical requirements by identifying risks to natural resources, recommending protective remedial measures, and designing projects to restore injured resources and habitats in cooperation with the U.S. EPA, the State of Massachusetts, and other trustee agencies. Our goal is to ensure that future generations can enjoy the benefits of healthy coastal ecosystems, abundant fishery stocks, and robust populations of marine mammals.



NOAA has developed a one-page fact sheet for sites marked with an asterisk. The fact sheets provide a physical description of the site and the contamination present, list the NOAA resources of concern, and summarize NOAA's involvement in the cleanup process.

NOAA TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITY IN MASSACHUSETTS...

NOAA trust species in Massachusetts include anadromous and catadromous species such as alewife, blueback herring, American shad, Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sturgeon, striped bass, rainbow smelt, and American eel. Some non-anadromous

fish species found in Massachusetts are: white perch, rainbow smelt, winter flounder, Atlantic silverside, Atlantic cod, Atlantic menhaden, Atlantic herring, mummichog, bluefish, pollock, and mackerel. Invertebrates include American lobster, soft shell clam, and several species of crab, shrimp, and starfish. Alewife and blueback herring support both commercial and recreational fisheries in offshore areas. Alewife and blueback herring feed primarily on crustaceans and insects and provide an important link between invertebrates and higher trophic level fish.

NOAA CRCs AND THE SITE CLEANUP PROCESS...

NOAA CRCs provide technical expertise to EPA on resources and ecological risk assessment, mitigative measures, and cleanup strategies to ensure protection of NOAA trust resources. Federal and state trustees' early involvement and coordination in the scoping of ecological risk assessments ensures that assessments and the entire remedial process adequately evaluate the risk to natural resources. Designing a cleanup that protects natural resources as well as human health is a cost effective and efficient way to address the threat posed by coastal waste sites. Through CRC participation in the cleanup process, the government saves time and money by avoiding duplication of efforts and litigation. Responsible parties benefit from an early resolution of natural resource damage liability. Best of all, environmental threats are addressed sooner, increasing the chances for effective protection, recovery and/or restoration of coastal and marine resources.

MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS...

Massachusetts is dotted with 321 military installations and formerly used defense areas, comprising 602 DoD sites. The nature of defense-related activities involves chemicals that are highly toxic and persistent in the environment. In Massachusetts, military-related contaminants of concern include VOCs, PCBs, BTEX, incinerator ash, explosive compounds, acids, paints, chlorinated solvents, emulsifiers, penetrants, radionuclides, photographic chemicals, heavy metals, petroleum products, pesticides, and herbicides. During 1995, the NOAA CRC program conducted coastal hazardous waste site reviews for Hanscom Field/Hanscom Air Force Base, Materials Technology Laboratory (U.S. Army), Natick Laboratory Army Research/D&E Center, Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant, and South Weymouth Naval Air Station. In addition, NOAA CRC developed a waste site fact sheet for Otis Air Force Base and is presently participating in a Natural Resource Trustee Council, monitoring the remedy selection and assisting the regulatory agencies in their studies. DoD has 111 installations contemplated for restoration in Massachusetts. NOAA's input is needed now to ensure that cleanups are protective of coastal natural resources as well as human health. NOAA offers technical expertise and a neutral perspective valued by both the military and the local public.

AREAS OF SPECIAL CONCERN IN MASSACHUSETTS...

The NOAA CRC program works to protect and restore natural resources throughout Massachusetts. However, New Bedford Harbor and associated PCB sediment contamination is of special concern because elevated levels of PCBs have accumulated in many marine species, resulting in bans to all recreational fisheries and several commercial fisheries in the area. NOAA CRC recently reviewed the proposed plan for the Harbor, commenting on the proposed remedial measures and restoration plan. NOAA also visited with commercial fishermen to learn of and integrate their views into recommendations for the feasibility study. Another area of concern for NOAA is the Merrimack River and its tributaries since it provides extensive spawning and migratory habitat for some NOAA trust resources. NOAA CRC has been involved in design of sediment sampling and review of sediment chemistry results. NOAA also was involved in developing and implementing ecological risk assessment studies and providing technical recommendations for protective cleanup strategies.

FYI...

For more information about NOAA's CRC program in Massachusetts, please contact:

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