



# New York

## Protecting and Restoring Coastal and Marine Resources

NOAA's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (CPRD) protects and restores natural resources in marine and coastal environments that are affected by hazardous waste sites. NOAA Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the State of New York, and other trustee agencies to identify risks to natural resources, recommend site cleanups that protect habitat and wildlife, and design projects to restore injured resources and habitats.

### NOAA Works to Improve New York's Coastal and Marine Areas

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) acts for the Secretary of Commerce as a federal trustee under the Superfund Act to protect and restore natural resources in coastal and marine areas. NOAA trust resources in New York include beluga whales, alewife, American shad, striped bass, American lobster, eastern oyster, blue crab, and dozens of other species and their supporting habitats (e.g., tidal wetlands). Of special concern are federally threatened and endangered shortnose sturgeon, whales, and sea turtles. NOAA's stewardship also safeguards our nation's waterways and coastal activities, ranging from safe navigation and marine transportation to recreational activities along navigable waters.

### Cleaning up and Restoring Sites in New York

The Office of Response and Restoration's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (OR&R/CPRD) partners with other agencies and responsible parties to ensure that waste site cleanups not only reduce risk but also restore natural resources and improve the quality of the environment. NOAA Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) get involved early in site cleanups to:

- ensure that ecological assessments and the entire cleanup process evaluate and mitigate any risk to sensitive species and habitats;

#### Waste Sites

- ALCOA Aggregation Site
- Reynolds Metals Co.
- General Motors (Central Foundry Division)
- York Oil Co.
- Pollution Abatement Services
- Hooker Hyde Park
- Newstead Site
- Forest Glen Mobile Home Subdivision
- Dupont/Necco Park
- Love Canal
- Hooker (102nd Street)
- Hooker S Area
- Wide Beach Development
- Peter Cooper
- Hudson River PCB's
- Mercury Refining Inc.
- Hudson Coal Tar
- Consolidated Iron and Metal
- Marathon Battery Corp.
- Harbor at Hastings Associates
- Fort Totten
- Stanton Cleaners
- Li Tungsten Corp.
- Mattiace Petrochemical Co., Inc.
- Applied Environmental Services
- Jackson Steel
- Old Roosevelt Field Contaminated GW Area
- Liberty Industrial Finishing
- Computer Circuits
- Smithtown Groundwater Contamination
- Lawrence Aviation Industries Inc
- Brookhaven National Laboratory (USDOE)
- North Sea Municipal Landfill
- Rowe Industries Groundwater Contamination



- incorporate environmental restoration into cleanup actions;
- monitor the successful recovery of trust resources and habitats; and
- reduce the need for expensive re-evaluations.

Because CRCs help make site-cleanup and restoration decisions in coastal regions, everyone saves time and money by avoiding litigation and duplication of effort. Responsible parties benefit from an early resolution of liability for damage to natural resources. Best of all, we can address environmental threats sooner, increasing the chances for effective protection, recovery, and restoration of coastal and marine resources and their habitats.

## Areas of Special Concern in New York

Almost 200 miles of the Hudson River form a single designated Superfund site. Two General Electric plants at Hudson Falls and Fort Edward discharged more than 1.33 million pounds of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) into the Hudson River between 1940 and 1977, with uncontrolled discharges to the river continuing today. River sediments above the Federal Dam at Troy are permeated with more than an estimated 200,000 pounds of PCBs; approximately 500 pounds of PCBs are transported into the Hudson River estuary each year. NOAA supports EPA's recent decision to actively clean up contaminated sediments in the upper 40-mile stretch between Rogers Island and Troy and is working with the other trustees on a natural resource damage assessment.

PCBs are organic pollutants that accumulate and remain for long periods in human and animal tissues. PCBs are linked to a wide range of severe health problems, including reproductive, developmental, neurological, and immunological effects. High levels of PCBs have been detected in Hudson River fish and wildlife. Commercial fishing has been banned in the Hudson River for over 25 years. For 20 years, recreational fishing was banned in the upper Hudson below Hudson Falls. Today, the fishery is still limited to catch-and-release only on this stretch of the river. Consumption advisories are also in effect for the lower river (estuary). Despite the advisories, studies show many people still eat Hudson River's contaminated fish.

NOAA is also helping EPA design remedial investigations and evaluate wetland restoration at other Hudson River hazardous waste sites, such as Marathon Battery, Hudson Coal Tar, Mercury Refining, and Consolidated Iron and Metal.

The NOAA CPRD has developed a watershed database and mapping project for the Hudson River ([response.restoration.noaa.gov/cpr/watershed/watershedtools.html](http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/cpr/watershed/watershedtools.html)). This unique tool compiles data from many sources that can be easily mapped,

[www.response.restoration.noaa.gov/cpr/cpr.html](http://www.response.restoration.noaa.gov/cpr/cpr.html)

such as the locations of hazardous waste sites, contaminants, toxicity data, and information on natural resources in the Hudson River. This tool provides resource managers with information to make effective decisions about site cleanups and restoration options.

**Long Island Sound** extends from the East River to the Atlantic Ocean. For the Applied Environmental Services site, NOAA, EPA, New York State, and the U.S. Department of the Interior are making sure that valuable *Spartina* marsh habitat is being restored and enhanced off-site. NOAA is advising decision-makers on protective cleanup remedies and waterfront redevelopment efforts for the Glen Cove Brownfields Showcase Community, which includes two Superfund sites, Li Tungsten and Mattiace Petrochemical. NOAA is helping EPA design investigations at other hazardous waste sites on Long Island Sound, such as Smithtown Groundwater Contamination and Lawrence Aviation Industries.

The **Peconic Estuary** is a system of shallow, connecting bays fed by groundwater, creeks, and rivers at the eastern end of Long Island. Contamination from several hazardous waste sites along these bays threatens commercial and recreational fisheries in the estuary. NOAA, EPA, and natural resource trustees are making sure that cleanup remedies for each of these sites protects the estuary.

PCB, mirex, and dioxin contamination in the **Niagara River** and **Lake Ontario** have resulted in health advisories on fish consumption in these areas. NOAA is helping EPA clean up several hazardous waste sites in the region. At the Forest Glen Superfund site, for example, NOAA is developing a plan to investigate whether sediment contamination may have spread into a nearby creek.

In the **St. Lawrence River** fish consumption advisories are in effect due to PCB, mirex, and dioxin contamination. Many natural resources also are at risk, including beluga whales that feed on contaminated eel. Here, NOAA is working with New York State, federal agencies, and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe to ensure that site cleanups also protect habitat and wildlife, assess injury to natural resources, and identify restoration options.

For information about NOAA's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division in **New York** please contact:

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*Our goal: healthy, productive coastal ecosystems, fisheries, and marine mammals in New York and the U.S.*

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