



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

FACT SHEET

Nimham Arsenic Mine Site, Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area

Town of Kent, Putnam County

May 2018

Where to Find Information:

Project documents are available at the following location(s) to help the public stay informed.

Kent Public Library

17 Sybil's Crossing
Kent Lakes, NY 10512
Call for hours: (845) 225-8585

NYSDEC, Region 3 Office

21 South Putt Corners Rd
New Paltz, NY 12561
Call in advance: (845) 256-3000

Who to Contact:

Comments and questions are always welcome and should be directed as follows:

Project Related Questions

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NYSDEC

Division of Environmental Remediation

625 Broadway, 11th Floor
Albany, NY 12233-7014
(518) 402-9662

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Public Health questions:

Steven Lawrence
NYSDOH
Empire State Plaza
Corning Tower Room 1787
Albany, NY 12237
(518) 402-7860
bee@health.ny.gov

Multiple Use Area Questions:

Matthew Paul
NYSDEC-Division of Lands & Forests
21 South Putt Corners Rd
New Paltz, NY 12561
(845) 256-3156

**For additional information on Nimham Mtn
Multiple Use Area:**

www.dec.ny.gov/lands/34773.html

Preliminary Actions to Address Exposure

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) will conduct expedited actions within a portion of the state-owned Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area ("site"). The site, locally known by several names such as Mount Nimham, is located on Gypsy Trail Road in the Town of Kent, Putnam County. Please see Figure 1 for the site location. Documents related to the investigation of arsenic impacts at this site can be found at the location(s) identified on the left-hand side of the next page under "Where to Find Information."

Actions to Address Exposure

Preliminary actions will be performed to reduce potential exposures to contamination at the site. The following actions are planned:

- 1) Signs will be hung informing visitors that arsenic-contaminated soils exist in the area and precautions such as washing hands and clothes/footwear should be taken if contact with soil occurs. Site contact information will also be provided on the signs.
- 2) Trails will be closed and rerouted to keep visitors out of restricted areas containing high levels of contamination. A map showing the closed trails is attached. Signs will be hung to denote restricted areas which contain both contaminated soils and pits that may pose physical hazards.
- 3) Portions of some trails will be covered with gravel to reduce exposures to elevated arsenic present in soils along the trails.

Site Description

The site consists of an approximately 50-acre portion of the Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area which is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of the Town of Carmel. The site is mountainous and forested and slopes down approximately 150 feet in elevation from west to east. A stream runs south through the eastern portion of the site from Pine Pond to the north and through a wetland which is fed by two additional tributaries from the west. Several historic mine features exist at the site, including but not limited to a shaft entrance to the main mine (Mine #1) and three additional shaft/pit areas to the west along a trail which follows a ridge. Currently, the site is owned by New York State and is maintained as a Multiple Use Area for recreational use. It is accessible via two trail heads located at Gypsy Trail Road and along Nimham Mountain Court, respectively.

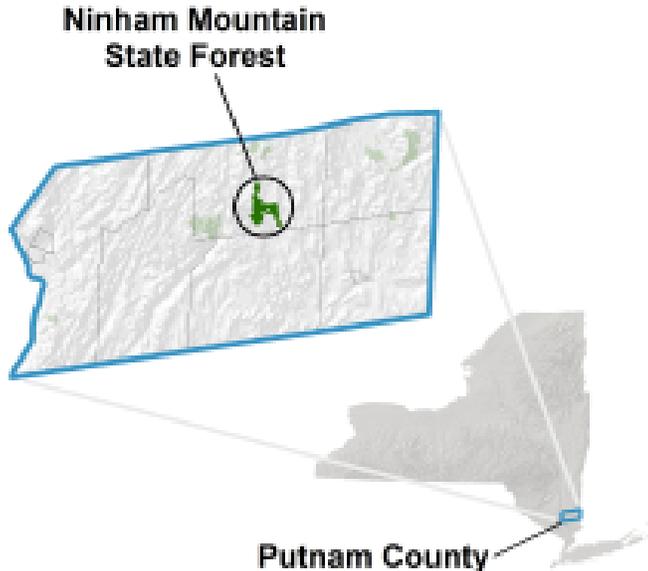


Figure 1: Site Location

Site History

Historic arsenic mining occurred at the site in several phases, starting in the mid-1800s and concluding in the early 1900s. The mine area, also known as Silver Mine and Pine Pond Mine, contained a metal ore called arsenopyrite which was used in the pesticide, glass, and pigment industries. The main mine was accessed by two still-existing shafts, a northern mine shaft located on private property, and a southern mine shaft located at the site (“Mine #1”), see Figure 2 for details. There are many additional features associated with historic mining operations located throughout the site, the most prominent of which are 3 additional pits/shafts used for prospecting, mining, or both (Mines #2, #3 [which has two pits], and #4).

During mining operations, the ore was separated from the waste rock and soils known as tailings. Tailings were disposed in areas surrounding the mine pits/shafts, and contained arsenic which contaminated soils and sediments in areas of the site. Some of the soils at the site which are unaffected by mining operations contain arsenic concentrations above NYSDEC’s soil cleanup objectives (SCOs). The elevated background levels in soils can be attributed to the minerals in the underlying rock which naturally exists at the site.

Previous Investigation Activities at the Site

An *Initial Site Investigation Report* was completed in June 2017 by NYSDEC Division of Environmental Remediation, in consultation with the NYSDEC Division of Lands & Forests and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). The report concluded that arsenic impacts in soils at the site, particularly those near mine pits and shafts, are well above the SCO of 16 parts per million. Limited areas of sediments located near the mine features are also impacted with arsenic. Surface water at the site does not contain arsenic above NYS guidelines. The report recommended additional investigation work to fill data gaps, to assess potential health exposures, and to establish an arsenic background concentration for soils at the site. This additional investigation work is currently underway.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is currently conducting a soil investigation of the northern mine shaft and private parcels near the site to characterize and delineate the impacts from historic arsenic mining operations not on state land. USEPA and NYSDEC are collaborating and sharing information in order to best understand impacts and to protect human health and the environment in the area.

Next Steps

An updated Unit Management Plan (UMP) is currently being developed for the Nimham Mountain Multiple Use Area. Draft UMP issuance is anticipated to occur in summer 2018. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft UMP, and a public meeting will be held prior to final UMP issuance.

The ongoing supplemental investigation work to further characterize and delineate arsenic contamination is anticipated to conclude in fall 2018 with the issuance of a *Supplemental Site Investigation Report*. The report will also contain information on site background levels of arsenic in soils, as well as a description of the actions being described here to reduce the potential for exposure to arsenic in soils.

Arsenic in Soil

Exposure to elevated levels of arsenic in soils at the site occurs through direct contact with contaminated soil. Steps to reduce exposure to arsenic in soils at the site:

- 1) Stay on designated trails and out of restricted areas.

- 2) Avoid tracking contaminated soils into car and home. Leave shoes outside the home or at the door.
- 3) Wash hands and face after visiting the site, especially prior to eating.
- 4) Wash clothes which come into contact with soils at the site.
- 5) If any pets visited the site, wash paws or any parts making contact with soils before entering the car or home.
- 6) Do not bring items such as bicycles or other gear used at the site into the car or home.

We encourage you to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for others to see.

Receive Site Fact Sheets by Email

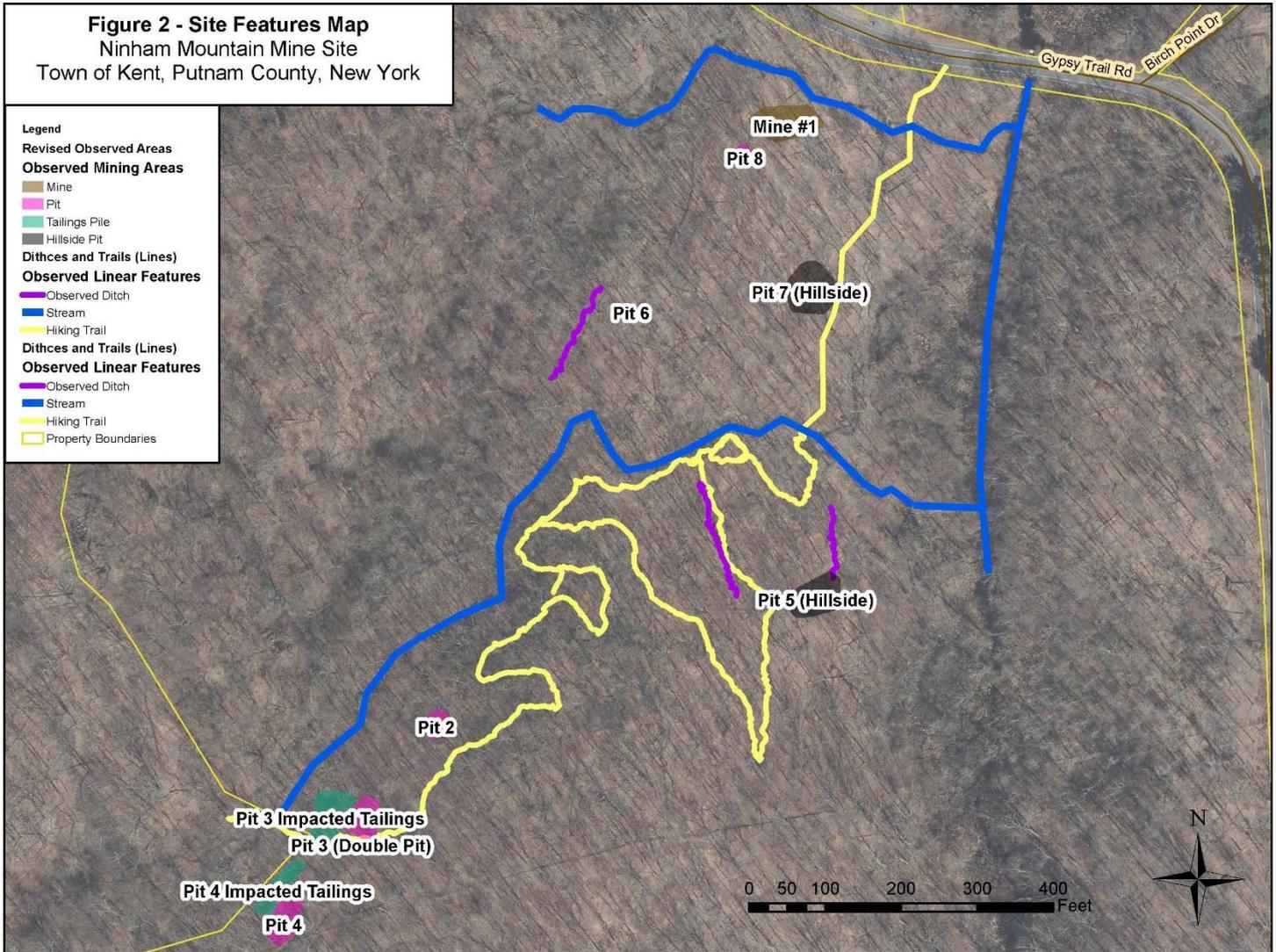
Have site information such as this fact sheet sent right to your email inbox. NYSDEC invites you to sign up with one or more contaminated sites county email listservs available at the following web page:

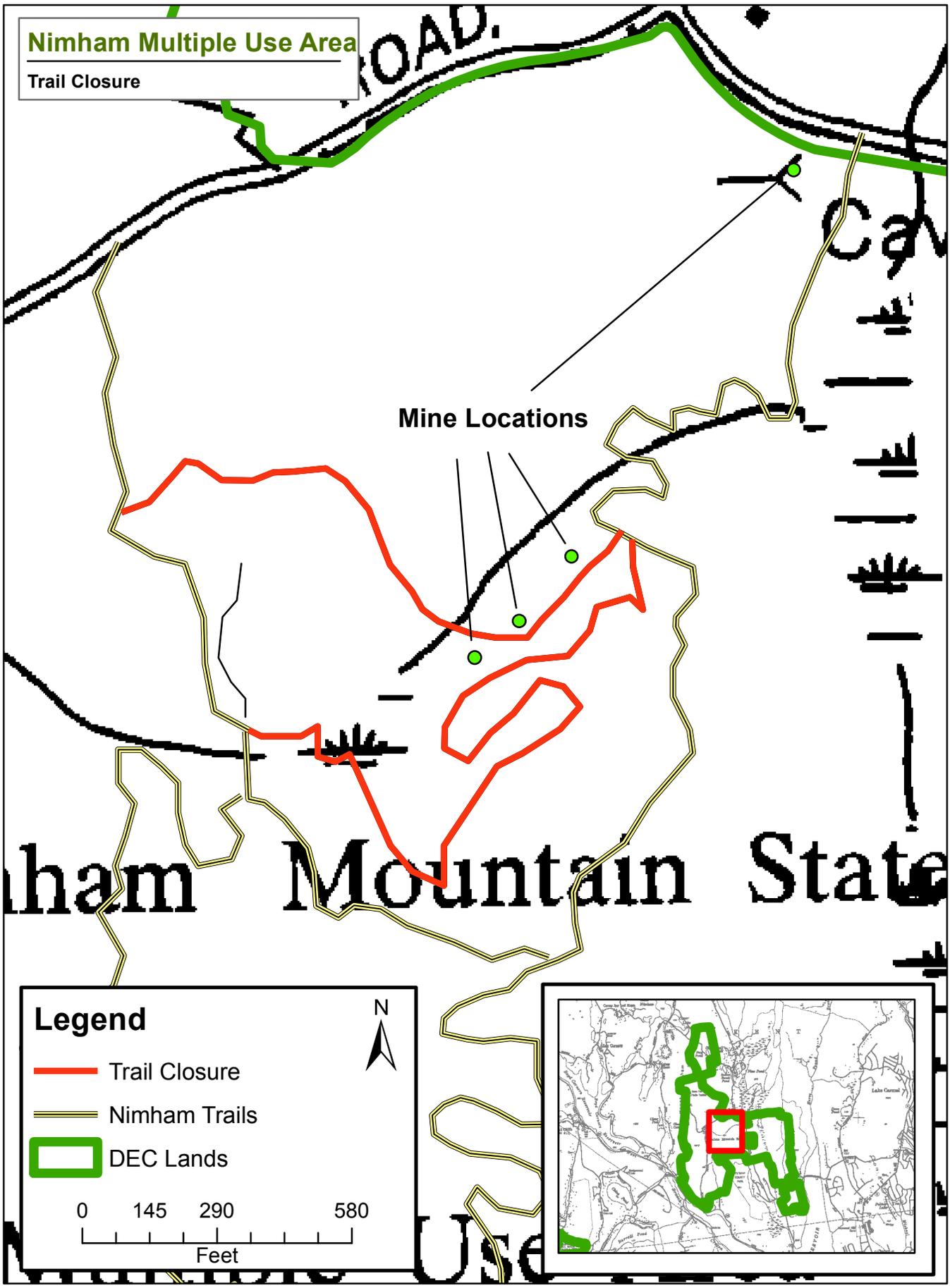
www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html

It's quick, it's free, and it will help keep you better informed. As a listserv member, you will periodically receive site-related information/ announcements for all contaminated sites in the county(ies) you select.

Note: Please disregard if you already have signed up and received this fact sheet electronically.

Figure 2: Site Features Map





GIS is not a substitute for onsite inspection or survey.