New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

February 2014

FACT SHEET

State Superfund Program

Receive Site Fact Sheets by *Email.* See "For More Information" to Learn How.

Site Name: Former Paulsen - Holbrook
DEC Site #: 401046 Operable Unit 02 *
Address: 54 Railroad Avenue
Guilderland, NY 12205

Have questions? See "Who to Contact" Below

Remedy Proposed for State Superfund Site; Public Comment Period and Public Meeting Announced

Public Meeting, Thursday, 3/13/2014 at 6:30 PM
Town of Colonie Community Center (Youth Bureau), Room 8, 1653 Central Avenue, Colonie, New York
NYSDEC invites you to a public meeting to discuss the remedy proposed for the site. You are encouraged to provide comments at the meeting, and during the 30-day comment period described in this fact sheet.

The public is invited to comment on a remedy proposed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) related to the Former Paulsen - Holbrook site ("site") located at 54 Railroad Avenue, Guilderland, Albany County. Please see the map for the site location.

Documents related to the cleanup of this site can be found at the location(s) identified below under "Where to Find Information."

How to Comment
NYSDEC is accepting written comments about the proposed plan for 30 days, from **February 25, 2014** through **March 26, 2014**. The proposed plan is available for review at the location(s) identified below under "Where to Find Information." Please submit comments to the NYSDEC project manager listed under Project Related Questions in the "Who to Contact" area below.

The site is listed as a Class "2" site in the State Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites (list of State Superfund sites). A Class 2 site represents a significant threat to public health or the environment; action is required.

Proposed Remedial Action Plan
The remedy proposed for the site includes:

The top 12 inches of soil contaminated above the commercial soil cleanup objectives for arsenic, chromium, or copper will be excavated from the off-site drainage swale and disposed at a permitted disposal facility. Approximately 600 cubic yards of soil will be removed from the site.

**Operable Unit:* An administrative term used to identify a portion of a site that can be addressed by a distinct investigation and/or cleanup approach. An operable unit can receive specific investigation, and a particular remedy may be proposed.

A 12-inch soil cover will be placed in areas where surface soil was excavated. A visible layer, such as orange snow fence, will separate the clean soil cover from the contaminated soil below, and the upper six inches of the cover will be of sufficient quality to maintain vegetation.

The Site Management Plan for the source property will be updated to encompass the off-site area. The Site Management Plan provides a detailed description of all procedures required to manage remaining contamination at the site after completion of the Remedial Action.

Summary of the Investigation

The investigation of Operable Unit 02 (OU2 - the off-site drainage swale) was planned using information from the Remedial Investigation (RI) at OU1 (the area around the former pressure treatment building) to narrow the range of possible contaminants and affected media. During the OU1 RI, the Department determined that the only contaminants of concern were metals. Metals contamination in the groundwater originated at the location of the former pressure treatment building, where pressure treatment chemicals were found in the soil at very high concentrations and were in contact with the water table (a depth of 11-14 feet below grade). These conditions did not occur at OU2, so groundwater was not sampled during the OU2 investigation.

Soil samples were collected to a depth of up to ten feet along the length of the swale for a distance of approximately 1,800 feet from the stormwater discharge point. At each location, samples were collected from three borings across the width of the swale: one from the north side, one from the south side, and one from the middle.

The soil samples from each boring were examined in the field using a portable X-ray fluorescence analyzer and found to contain a wide range of metals, but only arsenic, chromium, and copper were related to the former pressure treatment operation.

During sampling, contaminated soil was found up the southern wall of the swale, suggesting that there might be a secondary source of metals contamination unrelated to OU1. Therefore, seven targeted soil samples were collected from areas that would not have been affected by the pressure treatment activities at the site or by runoff in the swale (e.g., samples along the railroad tracks to the northeast of the site and on the opposite side of the tracks, hereafter called upland samples.) The targeted samples were analyzed for metals and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs). Three targeted surface soil samples from the swale were also analyzed for SVOCs. Since SVOCs were not found at OU1, finding them in the swale would support an off-site source of contamination.

Runoff of chemicals used to pressure treat lumber at the Former Paulsen-Holbrook site (OU1) resulted in contamination of soil in the off-site drainage swale. The primary soil contaminants are arsenic, chromium, and copper. The analytical results show that soil contamination in the swale decreases with sample depth. Contamination also decreases with distance away from the stormwater discharge point. The vast majority of contaminated soil is in the top four feet. Soil contaminated with chromium and copper does not extend below a depth of four feet, but arsenic contamination extends up to ten feet in a few isolated locations.

A secondary source of contamination is the soil associated with the adjacent railroad tracks. This upland soil is contaminated with arsenic, chromium, and copper, as well as SVOCs.

SVOCs were not associated with OU1. There are places where upland soil has washed down from the tracks into the drainage swale and SVOCs were found both in the upland samples and some of the swale samples. It was therefore determined that the swale was contaminated by both upland soil and the runoff from OU1.

NYSDEC developed the proposed remedy after reviewing the detailed investigation of the site and evaluating the remedial options in the “feasibility study” submitted under New York’s State Superfund Program.

Next Steps

NYSDEC will consider public comments as it finalizes the remedy for the site. The selected remedy will be described in a document called a "Record of Decision" that will explain why the remedy was selected and respond to public comments. A detailed design of the selected remedy will then be prepared, and the cleanup will be performed.

NYSDEC will keep the public informed throughout the investigation and cleanup of the site.

Background

Location: The site consists of a half-acre portion of an 8.8-acre property located along the southern boundary of 54 Railroad Avenue in the Town of Guilderland. Operable Unit 2, the off-site drainage swale, is described in the Operable Units section, below.

Site Features: This property is located in an industrial and commercial area bounded by Fuller Road, Amtrak railroad tracks, and Railroad Avenue. Patroon Creek is located to the south of the site and flows to the east-southeast. The site is approximately 250 feet above sea level and is flat. The property has been largely unoccupied since at least 2002. Various buildings have been removed as they have fallen into disrepair, but the concrete slabs remain. The areas between buildings are paved with a thin layer of asphalt, although the asphalt is now broken up. A drainage swale located on railroad property slopes gently to the southeast just south of the fence separating the site from the raised railroad tracks. Stormwater at the site is collected in a drainage system that discharges to the swale.

Current Zoning/Use: The site is located in a neighborhood consisting of various commercial businesses and light industries. The site and immediate neighborhood is zoned for industrial use.

Past Use of Site: Various lumber companies which occupied the property operated a wood treatment operation at this location from the early 1950s until sometime before 1978. Wood was preserved by pressure treating it with chromated copper arsenate (CCA - a solution of chromic acid, cupric oxide, and arsenic pentoxide) in a large pressure vessel. After treatment, the batches of lumber were removed from the pressure vessel and allowed to air dry on site. A 2,000- to 3,000-gallon spill of CCA occurred at the site in 1965 when the pressure vessel was opened before it was pumped out. According to available aerial photographs, the building containing the pressure vessel was removed some time between 1982 and 1985.

The property was being investigated under the Voluntary Cleanup Program (under the name Albany Miron) but the volunteer never completed the program. A settlement with the responsible parties and volunteer was executed in March 2007, after which the site was referred to the State Superfund to complete the remedial program.

Operable Units: Operable Unit 1 (OU1) is the main site area around the former pressure treatment building. A remedial investigation and feasibility study for OU1 began in October 2008 and was completed in 2009. A Proposed Remedial Action Plan for OU1 was issued for public comment in February 2010 and a final remedy was selected for the site as documented in a Record of Decision signed on March 31, 2010.

During pre-design sampling in the drainage swale abutting the railroad tracks in November 2010, additional contaminated soil was found to extend off-site to the southeast for an undetermined distance. The soil was contaminated with arsenic, chromium, and copper. Because the contamination in the swale appeared to come from the storm drain that discharged stormwater from the area around the pressure treatment building, this additional off-site contaminated soil was designated as a separate operable unit.

The remedial construction activities at OU1 began in the fall of 2012 and were completed in 2013.

OU2 is the narrow area of soil in the off-site drainage swale along the railroad tracks extending approximately 1,800 feet to the southeast from the storm sewer outlet. This operable unit is almost exclusively located on railroad property. The investigation of OU2 began in November 2012.

Site Geology/Hydrogeology: The soil at the site consists primarily of a fine, brown sand with a few lenses of clay interspersed. Groundwater is found at a depth of between 11 and 14 feet below the ground surface, and the flow is generally to the south.

Additional site details, including environmental and health assessment summaries, are available on NYSDEC's website at:
http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfmx/extapps/derexternal/haz/details.cfm?pageid=3&progno=401046

State Superfund Program: New York's State Superfund Program (SSF) identifies and characterizes suspected inactive hazardous waste disposal sites. Sites that pose a significant threat to public health and/or the environment go through a process of investigation, evaluation, cleanup and monitoring.

NYSDEC attempts to identify parties responsible for site contamination and require cleanup before committing State funds.

For more information about the SSF, visit: http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8439.html

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Where to Find Information

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

William K. Sanford Town Library
629 Albany Shaker Road
Loudonville, NY 12211
phone: (518) 458-9274

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

Project Related Questions
Larry Alden
Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Environmental Remediation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-7016
518-402-9767
ljalden@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Site-Related Health Questions
Bridget Callaghan
New York State Department of Health
Bureau of Environmental Exposure Investigation
Empire State Plaza - Corning Tower, Room 1787
Albany, NY 12237

BEEI@health.state.ny.us

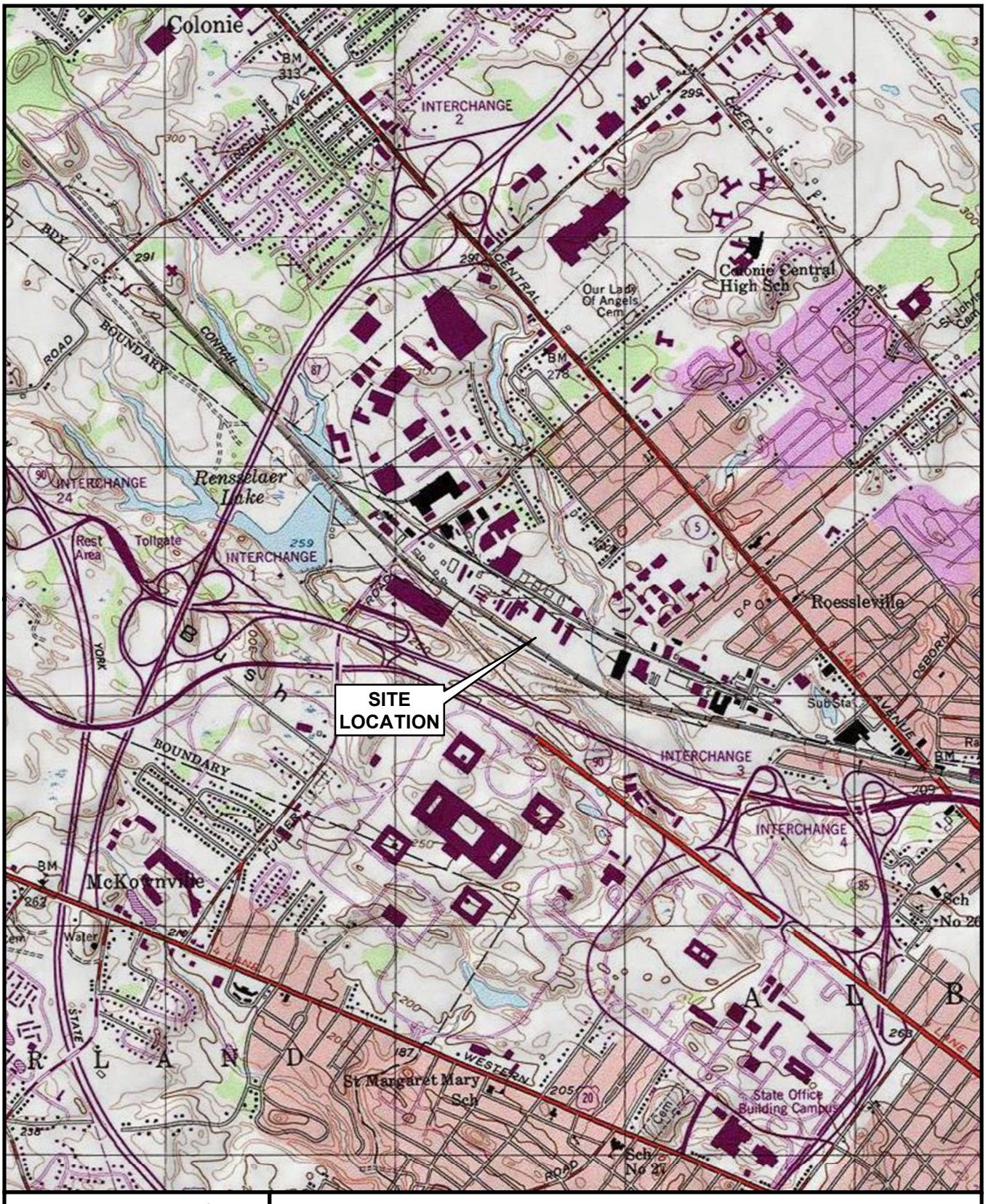
We encourage you to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for others to see.

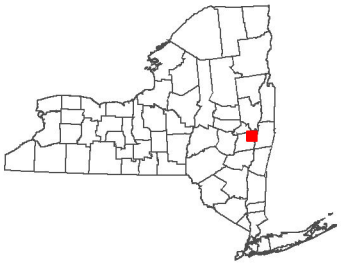
Receive Site Fact Sheets by Email

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: http://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.





N
W E
S

0 1,000 2,000
Feet

Figure 1

Site Location Map

Former Paulsen-Holbrook Site - OU2
Town of Guilderland/Albany County
Site No. 401046

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION • NEW YORK STATE •