



## COMMUNITY UPDATE

June 2024

# Hercules Inc./Dyno-Nobel Site Update New York State Superfund Program (Site 356001)

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), in coordination with the State Department of Health (DOH), is committed to ongoing monitoring of the Hercules Inc./Dyno-Nobel site and surrounding properties and keeping the Esopus community informed about recent work underway related to this State Superfund site.

### Current Conditions

As reported in the February 2019 Proposed Remedial Action Plan, DEC is overseeing an investigation conducted by Dyno-Nobel within Plantasie Creek and its floodplain area to determine the nature and extent of contamination related to the Hercules Inc. site. DEC's review of preliminary data from samples collected in October 2023 indicates potential areas of contamination with levels of metals in the stream and floodplain soil above the State's protective standards.

Out of an abundance of caution, on May 24, 2024, DEC conducted testing for metals in the floodplain surrounding the stream running adjacent to the Robert L. Graves Elementary School after receiving reports of a soil disturbance caused by excavation of the stream channel during work performed by the town of Esopus.

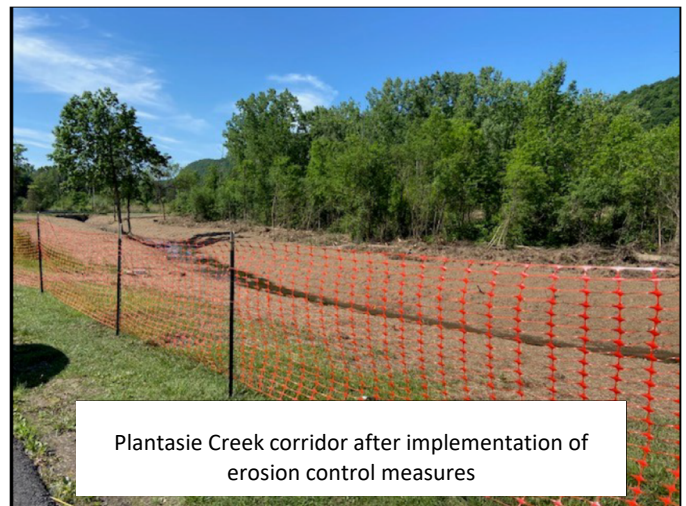
### Steps Taken

Due to a disturbance of sediments and soils within and adjacent to Plantasie Creek, DEC collected 12 surface soil samples from the disturbed area in the vicinity of the school and analyzed the samples for the metals mercury and copper, which were found in previous investigations in the off-site areas.

Preliminary evaluation of the data indicates the total mercury was detected in the range of 0.031-3.8 parts per million (ppm), with five samples exceeding the applicable standard of 0.81 ppm.

Copper was detected in the range of 1.7 to 300 ppm, with one sample exceeding its applicable standard of 270 ppm. Dyno-Nobel is also anticipated to conduct an additional investigation in off-site areas.

On May 21, 2024, DEC issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) to the town of Esopus for the unpermitted work. The town immediately worked closely with DEC to implement corrective measures, including covering areas of soil disturbance and installing temporary fencing near the elementary school to reduce the risk of public exposure. This work was completed May 24, 2024. These soil stabilization measures reduce the risk of public exposure.



DEC continues to closely monitor the area of the soil disturbance to ensure protection of public health and the environment.

In addition, DEC continues to work with Dyno-Nobel, the owner of the Hercules Inc./Dyno-Nobel State Superfund Site (DEC Site No. 356001), as the party responsible for cleanup at the Superfund site.

## Health Exposure Assessment

Based on expert DEC and DOH review of preliminary results from the October 2023 floodplain sampling event associated with the investigation of areas along and near Plantasie Creek (prior to the recent soil disturbance), DEC and DOH determined the risk of health effects is low as a result of contact with site-related contaminants, such as copper and mercury, in the Plantasie Creek area.

Further, the chances for exposure to these contaminants is reduced by taking reasonable and practical steps to avoid direct contact with stream sediment and floodplain soils, particularly by young children. Unnecessary digging and wading in the stream should be avoided, and children and adults should wash hands after outdoor activities in areas adjacent to the stream. It is important to note that all soils and sediments naturally contain metals and microorganisms, and therefore it is always a good idea to minimize getting soils and sediments into the body whether soil is contaminated or not.



Plantasie Creek corridor following grass growth

## Recent Site History

The Hercules Inc./Dyno-Nobel site is located at 161 Ulster Avenue in Ulster Park, approximately one mile south of the village of Port Ewen. The site includes the former main manufacturing plant area and land east of a rail line located outside of the fenced main plant area.

The site was divided into two operable units. An operable unit represents a portion of a cleanup for a site that for technical or administrative reasons can be addressed separately from the whole site to investigate, eliminate, or mitigate a release, threat of release, or exposure pathway resulting from the contamination at that site.

Operable Unit (OU) 01 of the Hercules Inc/Dyno-Nobel site includes the former manufacturing area west of the railroad tracks and east of Hussey Hill, the wetlands area east of the railroad tracks, and the Plantasie Creek corridor extending to Mountain View Road.

Preliminary extent of OU 02 consists of areas along and near Plantasie Creek from the OU 01 northern boundary to approximately 1.5 miles downstream to Rondout Creek. The final extent of OU02 will be determined by the additional investigation currently underway in the offsite Plantasie Creek corridor documenting site-related contamination.

**OU 01:** Former manufacturing operations for primers and igniters for explosives took place in the developed portion of the site, which occupies approximately 100 acres. However, present-day operations include producing electric detonators within a smaller portion of the site.

Disposal activities occurred within the plant area and in wetland areas in the eastern portion of the property. Most of the surrounding areas are naturally vegetated with cover types ranging from old fields to forested areas. Additional site details, including environmental and health assessment summaries, are available on DEC's Environmental Site Remediation Database (by entering Site ID 356001) at:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfmx/extapps/derexternal/ind ex.cfm?pageid=3>

DEC and Dyno-Nobel entered into an Order on Consent in 2018. DEC is conducting a supplemental investigation of the site to help inform the final on-site cleanup plan. After the supplemental investigation is complete, DEC will evaluate results in consultation with DOH to develop and evaluate cleanup options that will be evaluated in a revised Feasibility Study and subsequently presented in a revised Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP) that will be released

for public comment. DEC will also hold a public meeting to present the study and PRAP.

Ultimately, the selected remedy for OU 01 will be memorialized in a document called a “Record of Decision” (ROD) that explains why the remedy was selected and includes a formal written response to public comments received on the PRAP.

A detailed design of the selected remedy will then be prepared, and once approved, the cleanup will be performed.

**OU 02:** The investigation in the Plantasie Creek and its floodplain area downstream of the northern site boundary to Rondout Creek is being conducted

to determine the extent of off-site contamination. Upon completion of the investigation and a Feasibility Study evaluating cleanup options, DEC will release a PRAP for OU 02 for public comment. At that time, another public meeting will be held.

Similar to OU 01, the selected remedy for OU 02 will be memorialized in a ROD that explains why the remedy was selected and includes a formal written response to public comments received. A detailed design of the selected remedy will then be prepared, and once approved, the cleanup will be performed.

## Further Information

New York State’s top priority continues to be ensuring the protection of public health and the environment.

DEC encourages residents and other community stakeholders to sign up for our LISTSERV to continue receiving updates on these actions: DEC’s website contains further information on the status of the site, along with information on site history and links to previous site documents:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/117410.html>

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/data/DecDocs/356001> DEC is committed to ongoing monitoring of Dyno Nobel and the surrounding properties while keeping the Esopus community informed of our actions. The site is subject to several ongoing controls to properly manage the site.

### Where to find information:

Project documents are available at the following locations to help the public stay informed:

Town of Esopus Library 128 Canal Street Port Ewen, NY 12466 (845) 338-5580

NYSDEC Region 3 Office 21 S. Putt Corners Road New Paltz, NY 12561 (845) 256-3000

## Ongoing Community Engagement

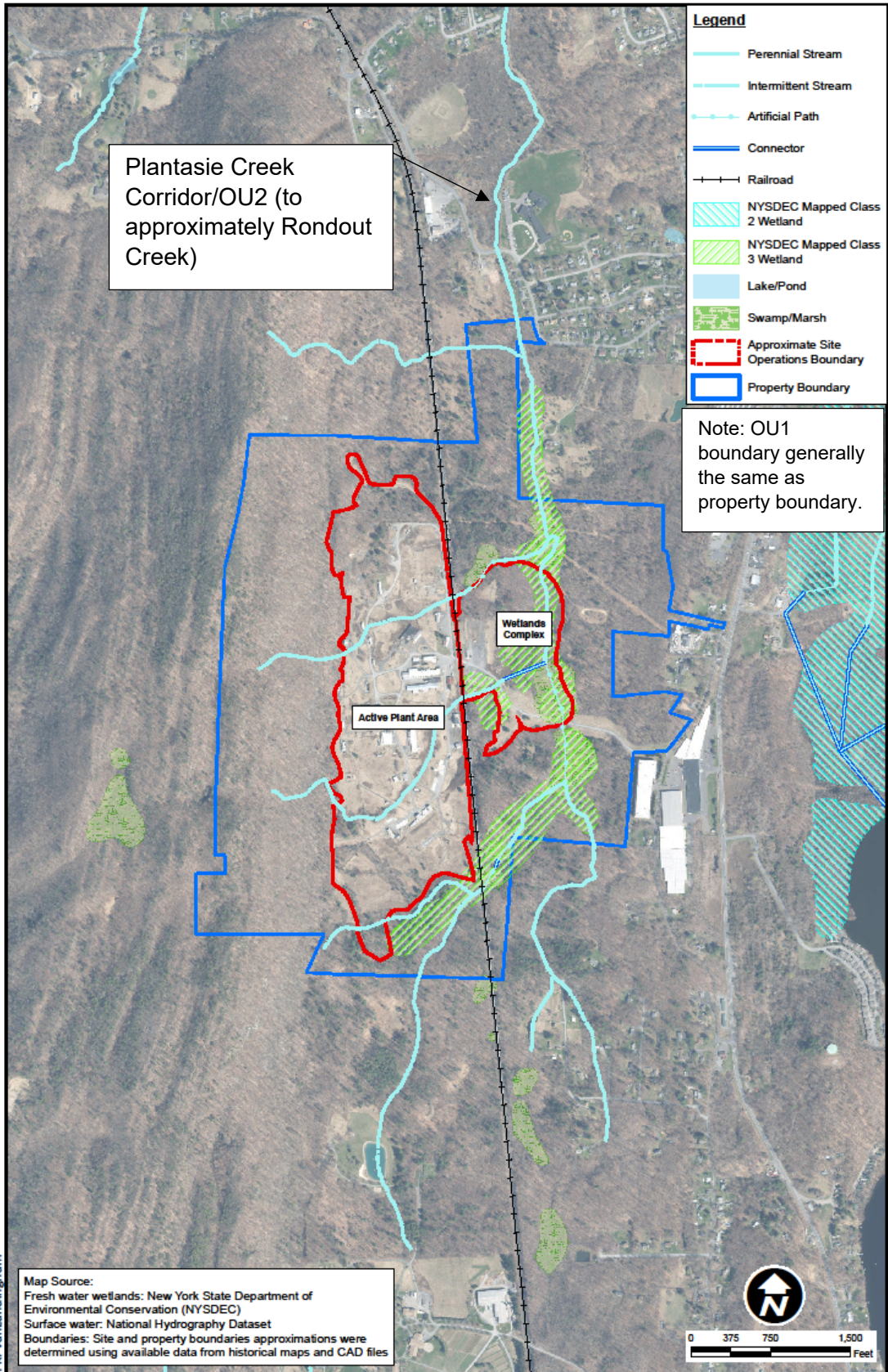
DEC and DOH experts will continue to be available to answer questions from the community. Please see “Who to Contact” below for key points of contact.

## WHO TO CONTACT

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

**Project-Related Questions**  
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