Lyndhurst Public Information Sessions

Investigation & Cleanup of Contaminated Sediment in the Lower Passaic River

May 9, 2012
Lyndhurst, New Jersey

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Agenda

• Sampling results from Passaic River mud flat: Lyndhurst
• Sampling results from Riverside County Park
• Public awareness & involvement
• EPA plans for mud flat cleanup
• Big Picture: Study & cleanup of the Lower Passaic River
Study of Lower Passaic River Contamination

• EPA overseeing the Cooperating Parties Group in conducting a detailed study of contaminated river sediment from Newark Bay to Garfield

• Study revealed elevated concentrations of contaminants in river sediment at River Mile 10.9 in Lyndhurst
River Mile 10.9 River Sampling Locations
Sampling of Riverside County Park: North & South Areas

- North Area sampling performed by EPA in late January 2012
- South Area sampling performed by EPA in late September 2011 following flooding from Hurricane Irene/Tropical Storm Lee
Approx 1.2 mile

Belleville Township

Lyndhurst Township

North Arlington Borough
Riverside Park: North Area
Public Awareness

Lyndhurst Area

River & Mud Flat

Park
Mud Flat vs. Park
Park Use Recommendations

• EPA evaluated sample data from the park
• Results are well below levels of concern for children and adolescents playing in the park and for workers maintaining the park
• If you use the park, continue doing what you normally do
Mud Flat Risks

- Contaminants in the mud flat do not pose a risk to users of the park
- Risks have been evaluated by EPA using sample data
- Under certain long-term scenarios risks from contact with the mud flat are slightly above levels of concern
Mud Flat Recommendations

• Try to avoid contact with mud flat sediment
• But if contact does occur, take the following actions:
  – Wash your hands and feet
  – Brush mud off your shoes
  – Wipe off your pets paws
  – Use gloves and wear long sleeves and pants if you are part of a park trash cleanup effort
Mud Flat Cleanup

Cleanup Goals:
- Reduce exposure to contaminants in mud flat
- Prevent migration of contaminants from mud flat to other areas of the river
Mud Flat Cleanup

Cleanup Components:
- Remove approximately 2 feet of sediment from the mud flat area
- Place a cap over the excavated area to isolate underlying sediment
- Monitor the effectiveness of the cap over time to assure it remains effective until a final cleanup plan can be selected
What EPA is Doing to Address River Sediment Contamination

• Finalizing a legal agreement with the parties potentially responsible for the contamination to pay for and perform the cleanup
• Contacting, informing and consulting with local officials, the community and river users
• Collecting additional data needed to design the cleanup
Designing the Mud Flat Cleanup

- Legal agreement: Cooperating Parties Group would submit a proposal for removal and capping.
- EPA and New Jersey DEP will review, EPA approves work proposals and design plans
- Decisions need to be made on key design features:
  - How sediment removal will be conducted (e.g., in-river removal vs. land-based removal)
  - Whether & how to enclose the mud flat work area
  - Type of cap to be placed
Tentative Mud Flat Cleanup Schedule

• Summer 2012: collect additional information
• Fall 2012: EPA review of pre-final design plans
• Spring/Summer 2013: conduct mud flat cleanup
  ➢ Potential impacts of mud flat cleanup on Riverside County Park undetermined at this time
Big Picture: Study & Cleanup of the Lower Passaic River

- Study of contamination in the Lower Passaic River is part of the Diamond Alkali Superfund Site in Newark
- Interim cleanup of land portion of Diamond Alkali site (plant property in Newark) was completed in 2001
Big Picture (cont.)

• Removal of contaminated river sediment next to plant property is currently underway
• EPA completing a study of contamination in an 8-mile stretch of the Lower Passaic River (Newark Bay up to Belleville) & developing potential cleanup options
  – Proposed cleanup plan for 8-miles due this Fall/Winter
Big Picture (cont.)

EPA overseeing comprehensive study of the Lower Passaic River by Cooperating Parties Group

– 17 mile stretch of the Passaic River
– Conducted under a 2007 legal agreement between EPA and the Cooperating Parties Group
– Collecting sediment, water, fish, crab, biota, & other river data
– Study should be completed in 2013
– Includes detailed investigation of Lyndhurst mud flat & other potential areas of concern
Superfund Process

Site Studies & Development of Cleanup Options

Propose Cleanup to Community → EPA Selects Cleanup Plan

Design Cleanup / Perform Cleanup

Public Involvement

Restoration / Reuse
Next Steps After Completing 17-Mile Study

- Feasibility Study
  - After defining where the contamination is and how it moves in the environment EPA identifies options for addressing the contamination
- Proposed Plan
  - Public Input on the preferred cleanup plan (Proposed Plan) and other options considered in the Feasibility Study
- Selection of Cleanup Plan (Record of Decision)
How to Be Involved

• Attend public information sessions
• Provide input to EPA and local officials
• Attend meetings of the Passaic River Community Advisory Group
  - second Thursday of the month
  - generally held in Newark, adding a meeting in Lyndhurst
Where to Get Information

- [www.ourpassaic.org](http://www.ourpassaic.org)
- Subscribe to the Lower Passaic River listserv
- David Kluesner, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator at 212-637-3653 or [kluesner.dave@epa.gov](mailto:kluesner.dave@epa.gov)
- Stephanie Vaughn, EPA Project Manager, at 212-637-3914 or [vaughn.stephanie@epa.gov](mailto:vaughn.stephanie@epa.gov)
- Follow EPA Region 2 on Twitter [http://twitter.com/#!/EPAregion2](http://twitter.com/#!/EPAregion2)
Questions