



JOINT NEWS RELEASE FROM

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Federal Agencies and Industry Work Together to Restore New Jersey's Passaic River

The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service recently signed agreements with 23 companies to cooperatively assess the lower 17 miles of the Passaic River and develop and implement a restoration plan to restore damaged habitat.

"It's a first, for New Jersey, that such a diverse group of companies came together with federal agencies to restore natural resources," said John H. Dunnigan, NOAA's Assistant Administrator of the National Ocean Service. "These agreements provide the framework to cooperatively assess injury to, and initiate restoration of, natural resources for the Passaic, from Dundee Dam to Newark Bay."

"This is the first significant step for federal trustees to work together with these 23 companies. Other potentially responsible parties will have opportunities to join discussions in the future," said Regional Director Marvin E. Moriarty of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Northeast Region. "We will be seeking common understandings of fish and wildlife injuries, of lost recreational services, and of early restoration options that will ultimately benefit fish, wildlife, and residents of the local communities along the 17-mile Lower Passaic River below Dundee Dam."

The highly industrialized and urbanized region surrounding the Lower Passaic River has a long history of degraded water quality, sediment contamination, loss of wetlands, and abandoned or underused properties along its shores. Dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and other contaminants in this ecosystem have impaired fish, shellfish, and wildlife, as well as their habitats and human use of these resources.

These agreements provide \$600,000 for payment of a portion of NOAA and DOI/USFWS past assessment costs, as well as up to \$1 million for future efforts. The agreements can be found at <<http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/northeast/passaic/admin.html>>

The first of two sets of agreements was reached by Maxus Energy Corporation and Tierra Solutions, Inc. on behalf of Occidental Chemical Corporation and will be implemented and funded by Maxus and Tierra. The second set of agreements was reached with the "Cooperating Companies Group" which includes Alcatel-Lucent USA Inc.; BASF Corporation, on behalf of itself and BASF Catalysts LLC; Benjamin Moore & Co.; Celanese Ltd.; Chemtura Corporation; Chevron Environmental Management Company, on behalf of itself and Texaco Inc.; Croda Inc.; DuPont Company; Franklin-Burlington Plastics, Inc.; General Motors Corporation; ISP Chemicals LLC; Linde, Inc., formerly known as The BOC Group, Inc.; Millennium Chemicals, Inc., Affiliated Entities MHC, Inc., on behalf of itself and Walter Kidde & Company, Inc., Millennium Petrochemicals, Inc. formerly known as Quantum Chemical Corporation, and Equistar Chemicals LP; News Publishing Australia Ltd.; Novelis

Corporation, formerly known as Alcan Aluminum Corporation; NPEC Inc.; Pharmacia Corporation, formerly known as Monsanto Company; Public Service Enterprise Group; Purdue Pharma Technologies Inc.; Safety-Kleen EnviroSystems Company by McKesson, and McKesson Corporation for itself; Teval Corporation, and Vertellus Specialties Inc..

As a principal trustee for the public's coastal natural resources, NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program restores habitats and communities that have been harmed by oil spills, hazardous substance releases, and ship groundings. Through the program, NOAA works with other agencies, industry, and communities to protect and restore these coastal and marine resources. Since its inception in 1992, the program has successfully protected natural resources at more than 500 waste sites. As of 2008, the program had settled almost 200 natural resource damage assessment cases, generating almost \$450 million for restoration projects. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>

The DOI/USFWS is a principal trustee under the federal Superfund law for the public's natural resources, including DOI-managed lands, as well as migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, inter-jurisdictional fishes and certain marine mammals. When hazardous substances enter the environment, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources can be injured. The Department of the Interior, along with State, Tribal and other federal partners, act as "trustees" for these resources. DOI/USFWS works to identify the natural resources injured, determines the extent of the injuries, recovers damages from those responsible, and carries out restoration activities, through its Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program. Visit <http://www.doi.gov> and <http://www.fws.gov>.

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