

Restoring Natural Resources Impacted by the Blackburn & Union Privileges Site



Background

The Blackburn & Union Privileges Superfund Site includes 22 acres of land and water in Walpole, MA. The operations of various industrial facilities dating back to the 19th century contaminated the site with asbestos, arsenic, lead and other hazardous substances. Surface waters (streams and wetlands) and soil and groundwater resources were contaminated, which in turn impacted the fish and wildlife that rely upon these habitats.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program

When hazardous substances enter the environment, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources can be injured. States, American Indian Tribes and the Federal government act as “trustee” for these resources on behalf of the American people. Trustees seek to identify the natural resources injured and determine the extent of the injuries. Trustees then work with the responsible parties to carry out restoration activities, or recover funds from responsible parties to restore natural resources. These damage assessment and restoration efforts are authorized under provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (the Superfund Law) and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (Chapter 21E).

Restoration Funds

- \$575K for ecological restoration
- \$300K for groundwater restoration
- \$125K for ecological + groundwater restoration



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The Trustees

The Trustees in this case are the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, represented by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The Trustees have received \$1 million from the responsible parties to implement restoration projects in the vicinity of the Blackburn & Union site.

Developing a Restoration Plan with Partners

Trustees are now working with the public and other partners to develop a plan that identifies projects to restore ecological and groundwater resources. Local community members can assist the Trustees in developing a draft and final restoration plan by participating in public meetings, providing restoration project ideas and commenting on the draft plan.

Projects To Be Considered

A wide range of projects will be considered, including wetland and stream restoration, native plant restoration and land protection projects. When evaluating projects, Trustees consider proximity to the injured resources along with a variety of other factors. Groundwater restoration projects will be located in the Head of the Neponset Sole Source Aquifer.

Timeline

Trustees will host a public information and scoping meeting and develop a draft restoration plan in 2016. The draft plan will be made available for public comment. Based upon those comments, a final plan will be published in 2017.

Stay Updated

To stay updated on the restoration plan, visit <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/cleanup/nrd/massachusetts-nrd-case-settlements.html>



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