

Restoring Natural Resources Impacted by the Sutton Brook Disposal Area Superfund Site



Background

The Sutton Brook Disposal Area Superfund Site (Sutton Brook Site) is a 100-acre former landfill located in Tewksbury, Mass. Releases of volatile organic compounds, semivolatile organic compounds, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and inorganic elements (e.g., arsenic, mercury, lead, copper, and zinc) from the Sutton Brook Site caused injury to groundwater resources, freshwater stream and forested wetland habitats, as well as to the fish and wildlife that rely upon these habitats.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program

Releases of hazardous substances pose a serious threat to our nation's natural resources. Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA or "Superfund"), and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacted the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 21E to ensure that the responsible parties – not taxpayers – pay for cleanup and restoration of natural resources that are injured as a result of hazardous substance releases into the environment. CERCLA authorizes states, federal agencies and American Indian Tribes to serve as Trustees for the nation's natural resources. Trustees seek to identify the natural resources injured, determine the extent of the injuries, recover damages from those responsible, and plan and carry out natural resource restoration activities.

Settlement Overview

- \$825,000 for ecological restoration
- \$825,000 for groundwater restoration



Great blue heron, FWS.

The Trustees

The Trustees for the Sutton Brook Site are the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, represented by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Trustees received a \$1.65 million settlement for past assessment costs, and to plan, oversee and implement projects to restore both ecological (\$825,000) and groundwater resources (\$825,000) that were injured by the release of hazardous substances from the Sutton Brook 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, replace, or acquire the equivalent of the ecological and groundwater resources that were injured by the release of hazardous substances from the Sutton Brook Site. 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 Restoration Plan.

Projects To Be Considered

A wide range of projects will be considered, including wetland and stream habitat restoration, floodplain restoration, culvert replacement, stormwater management, water conservation, and land protection projects. When evaluating projects, Trustees consider proximity to the injured resources along with a variety of other factors.

Timeline

Trustees anticipated timeline includes hosting a public informational meeting in Fall 2018, exploring project ideas during Winter/Spring 2019, and publishing a Draft Restoration Plan for public review and comment in Summer 2019. The Draft Restoration Plan will propose restoration projects for funding. The Trustees will consider all comments and publish a Final Restoration Plan in Fall 2019. This timeline is approximate and subject to change.



Sutton Brook Site, MassDEP.

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