

2012

## KALAMAZOO RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

# FACT SHEET: DRAFT RESTORATION PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, PORTAGE CREEK AND OPERABLE UNIT 1

*This fact sheet describes the Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment (RP/EA) for the Portage Creek and Operable Unit 1 – Allied Paper Property, Allied Paper, Inc./Portage Creek/Kalamazoo River Superfund Site that was completed in April 2012 by the Natural Resource Trustees for the Kalamazoo River Environment and is now available for public comment.*

### Background

**PCBs:** Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are a class of organic chemicals that accumulate in living creatures over time, are very resistant to degradation, and pose a health hazard to humans and wildlife even at low concentrations. Starting in the 1950s, paper company facilities along Portage Creek and the Kalamazoo River discharged PCB-contaminated paper waste into Portage Creek and the Kalamazoo River. Because of the resulting PCB contamination of sediments, floodplain soils, fish and wildlife, three miles of Portage Creek and 80 miles of the Kalamazoo River were declared a federal Superfund Site.

**Natural Resource Trustees:** The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Attorney General, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration serve on the public's behalf as Trustees of natural resources. Through a process called natural resource damage assessment (NRDA), the Trustees are working to achieve environmental restoration that will offset the environmental effects of the PCBs over time.

**NRDA:** The purpose of the NRDA is to conduct environmental restoration that will compensate the public for the past, present, and future natural resource injuries caused by the PCBs. The NRDA is authorized by both federal and state laws, and it supplements the Superfund cleanup process which focuses on cleaning up the PCBs to reduce future risks to human health and the environment.

### Draft RP/EA Summary Available for Public Review and Comment

**Portage Creek and OU1:** Operable Unit 1 (OU1) of the Kalamazoo River Superfund Site consists of the former Bryant and Monarch paper mills along Portage Creek in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The mills discharged paper waste that contained PCBs into the area of OU1 and Portage Creek and contaminated the natural resources there with PCBs.

**Funding for Restoration:** The Trustees received approximately \$2 million to conduct natural resource restoration from a bankruptcy settlement with LyondellBasell Industries (the parent of Millennium Holdings, LLC, the primary responsible party for OU1). These funds are distinct from funds recovered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for cleanup under the Superfund program.

**RP/EA:** A Draft RP/EA has been prepared by the Trustees for natural resource restoration for OU1 and Portage Creek using the \$2 million NRDA settlement. The RP/EA describes the potential restoration projects that could compensate for injuries to natural resources, notifies the public about these potential projects, solicits public comments and input, and helps with coordination among agencies to ensure that the proposed restoration actions will not conflict with proposed remedial actions. Trustees are required by federal law to issue an RP/EA for public comment.

**Proposed Projects:** The Trustees are proposing a set of restoration projects in the Kalamazoo River watershed that can be implemented with the available funding. These projects include restoring floodplain habitat, dam removal in Portage Creek, and preservation of riparian and upland habitat. These projects were screened to ensure that they are feasible, comply with applicable laws and regulations, and restore the same or similar kinds of resources as those that were injured. The projects were prioritized into three tiers based on the Trustee's previously published restoration criteria. Priority was given to projects that would improve or protect habitat to benefit resources that were impacted by the PCBs.

## Information on Submitting Comments on the Draft RP/EA

**Public Review and Comment:** Members of the public are being asked to review and provide comments on the RP/EA. The deadline for comments is June 1, 2012. Please see the box below for where to obtain a copy of the Draft RP/EA and where to send your comments.

### Where can I find the Draft RP/EA?

The Draft RP/EA is available to the public for review and comment.

It can be downloaded from three websites:

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/es/ec/nrda/KalamazooRiver>

<http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/greatlakes/kalamazoo/>

[http://www.michigan.gov/deg/0,4561,7-135-3311\\_4109\\_4217-84646--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deg/0,4561,7-135-3311_4109_4217-84646--,00.html)

It is also available on compact disc at the following locations:

Allegan Public Library  
331 Hubbard Street  
Allegan, MI 49010

Kalamazoo Public Library  
315 South Rose Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Otsego District Public Library  
219 South Farmer Street  
Otsego, MI 49078

Saugatuck-Douglas District Library  
10 Mixer Street at Center Street  
Douglas, MI 49406

Waldo Library  
Western Michigan University  
1903 West Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

Charles A. Ransom District Library  
180 South Sherwood Avenue  
Plainwell, MI 49080

### Where can I submit comments?

Judith Alfano  
Michigan Department of  
Environmental Quality  
PO Box 30426  
525 West Allegan Street  
Constitution Hall 4S  
Lansing, MI 48933  
Alfanoj@michigan.gov

Lisa Williams  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
2651 Coolidge Road, Suite 101  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
lisa\_williams@fws.gov

Todd Goeks  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration  
77 W. Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Todd.Goeks@noaa.gov