FACT SHEET
HUDSON RIVER
RESTORATION PLANNING

HUDSON RIVER TRUSTEES
ASSESSING AND RESTORING YOUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Upper Hudson Freshwater Mussel Restoration Planning Pilot Study

Past and continuing discharges of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have contaminated Hudson River natural resources. While the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is continuing with cleanup activities, federal and state trustee agencies – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and New York State (the Trustees) – are assessing how releases of PCBs from the General Electric Company (GE) plants at Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, New York may have harmed the Hudson River's natural resources.

The Trustees are studying the effects of the PCB contamination through a process known as Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). In a NRDA, the Trustees use scientific studies to measure the ways hazardous substances can injure natural resources. Restoration is the goal of NRDA.

This fact sheet provides information on a freshwater mussel restoration planning pilot study being conducted as part of the Hudson River NRDA. Mussels are important components of the Hudson River ecosystem; mussels filter the water, cycle nutrients, stabilize sediments, enhance habitat complexity, and are food for wildlife.

Dredging activities in the Upper Hudson River are destroying mussel beds and mussel habitat, which are not being replaced as part of the remedy for the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site. The proposed pilot study would collect information about mussels in areas where dredging has not yet occurred (for example: Fort Miller Pool, Stillwater Pool) starting as soon as possible, likely in late summer 2013. Other areas may be surveyed, in consultation with the Trustees, depending on dredging schedules and timing of mussel surveys. This information will serve to inform restoration planning relating to mussels adversely impacted by remedial work. Results should inform the determination of impacts of the remedy upon natural resources, spatial/temporal recovery of impacted mussel beds, and establishment of (replacement) mussel beds.

Depending on the results of this pilot study, the Trustees may conduct additional investigations focused on mussels.

Eastern Elliptio (*Elliptio complanata*); photo credit: Phillip Westcott; http://digitalmedia.fws.gov/cdm/singleitem/collection/natdiglib/id/9733

More Information

The following Trustee websites contain a variety of additional reports and documents relating to the overall Hudson River NRDA:
http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/restorationplans/HudsonRiver/ index.html
http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/25609.html
http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/northeast/hudson/

To add yourself to the **Hudson-NRDA** listserv:
1. Send a message to: requests@willamette.nos.noaa.gov
2. Write in subject: Subscribe hudsonnrda

If you have questions about natural resource damages, or want to submit a restoration project proposal, please contact one of the individuals listed below:

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