



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Cleanup Nears Completion in Little Menomonee River

Moss-American Superfund Site
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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For More Information

If you are interested in the Little Menomonee River cleanup, please contact:

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Project documents are available at the site information repository:

Mill Road Public Library
6431 N. 76th Street
Milwaukee
or
www.epa.gov/region5/sites/mossamerican

What are PAHs?

PAHs are a group of chemicals that occur naturally in coal, crude oil and gasoline. PAHs enter water through discharges from industrial and wastewater treatment plants and can remain in the environment for months or years.

People can be exposed to PAHs by breathing smoke, eating foods that have been grilled or by coming into contact with soil or water containing PAHs. Some PAHs may cause cancer and may affect the eyes, kidneys and liver.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency along with state partner Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is proposing a change to the cleanup plan for the Moss-American site in Milwaukee. The original cleanup plan was approved in 1990 and called for several actions including a new channel for six miles of the Little Menomonee River. The pollutants of concern consist primarily of a group of chemical compounds known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs.

Most sediment (mud) decontamination has been accomplished through new channel construction. However, it hasn't always been possible to create a new channel at all locations of the Little Menomonee River. EPA, DNR and Tronox, the company responsible for the cleanup, agree that this was due to bridges, overpasses and other physical barriers stretching over the river. For certain limited areas of the river, sediment cleanup goals (15 parts per million) have been accomplished through dredging and off-site disposal of contaminated sediment, not through new channel construction. This is why a change in the river cleanup plan is necessary.

The changes are detailed in an EPA document called an explanation of significant differences. To view this and other site-related information, please visit the information repository noted to the left.

Cleanup process and revisions

Portions of the river that will not be rerouted include about 4,300 feet in the areas known as segments 4 and 5 that run from south of Mill Road to the confluence with the Menomonee River. This change will provide equal or better environmental protection (in the cases of preserving valuable wildlife habitat) and will cost less than the original cleanup. This change will save time and allow cleanup goals to be met sooner than if the original cleanup plan was followed.

Specific areas of the river not rerouted include:

- Near a railroad bridge next to Bradley Road in the last 100 yards of segment 1
- Around bridges over the stream at Good Hope Road and Fond du Lac Road in segments 2 and 3
- Near some high-value wetlands in segments 2 and 3
- Approximately 1,000 feet of sharp river bends near Mill Road at the beginning of segment 4

The first three segments and part of the fourth segment of the river closest to the former Moss-American site have been cleaned up. Since the remaining fourth and fifth segments of the river have not yet been cleaned up, intermittent dredging of "hot spot" areas of contaminated sediment (above the cleanup goals) and off-site disposal is planned for segment 4. For segment 5, only one sampling point about 300 feet south of the Silver Spring Road bridge revealed high levels of PAHs, so there will be no rerouting of segment 5.

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What's next?

EPA, WDNR and Tronox are reviewing further cleanup options for segments 4 and 5 from Mill to Hampton roads. They are discussing what parts of the segments still need to be dredged, how much contaminated sediment needs to be removed and how to take samples to ensure that cleanup goals will be met. Decisions on how to handle those portions of the river are expected to be made in early 2008. Since only 4,300 feet of river in segments 4 and 5 need to be cleaned up, samples will be taken there to see where PAH-contaminated sediment remains after decisions have been made. The river beyond this 4,300-foot area is clean and won't require more work.

Cleanup of segments 4 and 5 is expected to be done in 2008. At that time, the entire site cleanup will be deemed complete.

EPA's new remedial project manager

Ross del Rosario was recently named the new remedial project manager for the Moss-American site. He has worked with EPA for 21 years, including 10 years in Superfund. His experience includes hazardous waste cleanup in all six states for EPA Region 5. Prior to coming to the Superfund program, he worked in EPA's water division.