

McLouth Steel Superfund Site Community Advisory Group (CAG)

TECHNICAL MEETING SUMMARY

May 12, 2022 | Virtual Meeting No. 7

MEETING IN BRIEF

The May 12, 2022 meeting of the McLouth Steel Superfund CAG took place online in a Zoom webinar. The objectives of the meeting included receiving updates on:

- The remedial investigation
- Clean-up of the northern portion
- The draft CAG website
- The Monguagon Creek Upper Trenton Channel Site
- The Coastal Resilience Needs Assessment for Trenton

Please see **Appendix A** for a list of CAG members, alternates, and agency representatives who were present. The recordings for this and previous CAG meetings have been posted on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/id3i1bXLFSc>.

ACTION ITEMS

Responsibility	Item
CAG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide feedback to improve the accuracy of this Draft May Meeting Summary• Disseminate Final May Meeting Summary to community members• Jim Wagner – follow up with Rep. Dingell’s office on a replacement CAG representative
US EPA/EGLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share updates on remedial investigations on the NPL site and RTRR portion at future meetings• Share updates on the MCUTC project with CAG members
CBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce and distribute the Draft February Meeting Summary, integrate CAG feedback to refine, and send final for CAG dissemination and EPA posting• Coordinate with Leadership Board on agenda for August meeting and internal CAG business• Continue work on the CAG website

DECISIONS REACHED & PROPOSED TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Decisions reached

- CAG and public questions or concerns about cleanup or investigation activities at the McLouth site should be sent to EPA, EGLE, and/or Stacie Smith, CAG facilitator (stacie@cbi.org), and information or responses will be sent to the CAG to disseminate to the public.
- The next meeting will be held on August 11, 2022.

Proposed topics for future discussion

- Updates from MDHHS on the Human Health Risk Assessment
- Updates on Remedial Investigation
- Updates on the Monguagon Creek Upper Trenton Channel Site Lakes Legacy Act Project
 - Management of boundaries with the NPL and RTRR sites
- More detailed presentation on regional/Coastal Resilience work
- Shoreline stabilization and maintenance projects
- Review of draft CAG website

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Consensus Building Institute (CBI) facilitator, Stacie Smith, welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting agenda and ground rules. Slides used by the presenters can be found on the EPA McLouth Superfund website here: www.epa.gov/superfund/mclouth-steel.

Updates on the remedial investigation

Greg Gehrig, US EPA Region 5 Remedial Project Manager, introduced himself and shared that he is managing the overall remediation of the southern portion of the former McLouth Steel property.

He shared that contracting of a firm for the remedial investigation (RI) is ongoing, and there are several bidders at the moment. EPA intends to award a contract to a firm with experience handling investigations and planning for the remediation of large former steel mill facilities like the McLouth Steel site. He anticipates awarding a contract by the end of the federal fiscal year in September 2022. He expects that sampling would begin in the winter, with more in-depth planning commencing in the spring of 2023.

He also shared that he spoke recently with Crown, who are in the process of “shopping” the site for redevelopment, though they do not yet have a plan in place. Crown is open to having a good line of communication with the EPA to be able to coordinate redevelopment with EPA’s investigation and remedial work.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*). [Note: some of these questions or comments were made during later parts of the agenda – they are documented here to promote clarity. Some answers have been expanded in order to ensure that all the member’s questions have been addressed.]

- **Carrying out investigations and remediation alongside profit-making activities deserves care as one might conflict with the other. How will these be coordinated?**
 - *EPA: I would not want to get into speculation or hypotheticals, but in other parts of the country EPA and state agencies work with owners to coordinate investigation, remediation, and redevelopment. It is not easy, but it can be*

done and we will try. Redevelopment activities cannot interfere with EPA's investigation and clean-up.

- **I am worried about instances where capital investment is made on in particular places, then EPA determines they need to investigate or clean up those places. Such instances would place EPA in a difficult position.**
- *EPA: The settlement agreement stipulates that Crown would investigate and conduct samples on whatever area they plan to use, and then EPA would determine whether the proposed activity would or would not interfere with whatever the remedy may be.*
- **Could you provide an outline or timeline of investigation activities? If characterization begins in the spring, how long will that go on for?**
 - *EPA: It would likely take a couple of years, likely with 2 seasons of sampling, including sediment sampling in the channel. After that process, EPA will issue a remedial investigation (RI) report, then begin a feasibility study (FS) to select a remedy. EPA will coordinate the process with Crown's redevelopment timeline and will consider Crown's plans for redevelopment when designing a remedy. The RI could take about 3 years, with a further 1-2 years to complete the FS. There will then be a public comment period for the selection of a remedy, then EPA will issue a record of decision. (An estimated timeline is available on page 3 of [this document](#).)*
- **Would the environmental consultant be selected from a list of preapproved EPA firms? Would local firms or national firms with local offices be considered?**
 - *EPA: The firms have been preselected for their qualifications. Using a local firm is a consideration, but larger national firms could also be selected. We are more interested in firms with the particular expertise desired. At the same time, lots of work will need to be subcontracted, much of which goes to local firms.*
- **Have funds been allocated for the RI/FS process?**
 - *EPA: Yes, though exact dollar amounts would depend on procurement negotiations.*
- **There have been several studies done on the site to date. Will EPA use those studies to reduce sampling requirements or approach sampling as a "clean slate"?**
 - *EPA: We will use historical data, but at this point the goal is to characterize and understand the quantity of contaminants remaining on the site now to be able to design an appropriate remedy.*
- **The MCUTC project is currently conducting in-water sampling. How far south along the shoreline would sampling be done?**
 - *EPA: We are working with the Great Lakes National Program Office to develop a sampling plan. We are more interested in downriver sediments, where impacts from the site could have flowed. My understanding is that sediment along the channel is light. We have a comprehensive sampling workplan ready to go.*

- **The Old Black Lagoon would be the first point where sediment would go. Sampling data to date suggests that there may be material that has risen to the surface.**
- *EPA: That is an area we will be investigating.*

Jacob Runge, EGLE engineer and project manager, then gave an overview of progress on the northern portion of the site. He shared that he had completed an enforcement referral out of the phase I corrective action consent order (CACO), which EGLE management will review then forward to their enforcement staff. Once that takes place, he will be able to conclude phase I and issue a CACO for phase 2.

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- **There has been an issue with liquids with irregular pH levels spewing out of the Northern portion and moving into the road. Do you have any updates on that matter?**
 - *EGLE: Yes, Wayne County Department of Public Works has commenced work on repaving the road, which I am told will include stormwater sewer repair. I do not have a timeline, but Wayne County DPW assured me that they could not resurface the asphalt without addressing the stagnant water.*
 - **The concrete docks are onsite for the drain to be installed.**
- **Does EGLE only have jurisdiction onshore or does it extend offshore?**
 - *EGLE: It is onshore, though if there are groundwater issues at a groundwater surface water interface (GSI) compliance point then we will have to address those.*
 - **I am curious about the need to reshape the shoreline, given the boundary of your and EPA’s projects. I hope the remedy will not require a steel wall. We want to maintain as much quasi-natural shoreline as we can.**

Review of the draft CAG website

CBI presented a rough mock-up of the draft CAG website for review. Key features include a calendar of upcoming meetings, a table containing resources such as meeting materials, and other relevant content. The website is also run through Wordpress, which should be easy to use should CAG members manage the site in the future. The goal is to have a final draft for review by the August CAG meeting.

OTHER SITE AND MEMBER UPDATES, FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPIC IDEAS, AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Updates on the MCUTC project

Amber Falkner, US EPA Great Lakes National Program Office, provided a brief update on the Monguagon Creek Upper Trenton Channel (MCUTC) Site Lakes Legacy Act Project. The project is separate from the McLouth Steel Superfund Site, though they share a boundary. The remedy for the MCUTC site has been selected, and entails dredging 40,000 cubic yards of sediment. EPA and partners completed the pre-design investigation in 2021. The pre-design investigation involved geotechnical, sediment thickness, bathymetric, topographic, structure, utility, hydrographic and sediment transport surveys.

The remedial design has now commenced, and is being led by project partner Bridgestone American Tire Company. The design process is expected to be completed in fall 2023.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*).

- *EPA Region 5: Members of the public are aware that MCUTC sediment will be barged downstream as part of the remedy. However, what is unclear is what will be done with the sediment for the project north of the MCUTC site.*
 - *EPA GLNPO: I am not aware of the plans for that site (the Upper Trenton Channel project). The project manager for that site would be Heather Williams.*
 - **I believe they will be addressing the sediment onshore; perhaps some will be pumped into bags.**
- **What is the plan for the Upper Trenton East area?**
 - *EPA GLNPO: That area is undergoing habitat restoration at the moment.*
 - **The area (which involves the South Hennepin Marsh project) was initially included because Bridgestone was potentially going to support habitat restoration. It is essentially a separate and unconnected area at the moment. No cleanup has been proposed for that area.**
- **Is attention being given to subsurface contaminants and groundwater flows that could move to the islands in the river?**
 - *EPA GLNPO: The project is mainly concerned with sediments. I am not aware of any work on groundwater in particular.*
- **I have concerns about where the boundary line is for the Northern portion of McLouth and the MCUTC project. If there is any movement of contaminants through leaching that would take place along that boundary. Do we know of any leaching from land sources out into the water area?**
 - *EGLE: We cannot tell the facility how to avoid it, but they cannot discharge contaminated water into the creek or river. There would be GSI points of compliance that cover 100% of groundwater along the perimeter on the site. If GSI levels were to exceed thresholds, potential options would include a network of groundwater monitoring wells that inform where the site is at on points of compliance, and an inward gradient system can be built. Early data suggests nothing unexpected – iron and manganese are present. The site could also apply for a mixing zone, which would allow for site-specific GSI criteria (assuming some dilution). These site-specific criteria would depend on the contaminant in question (for example, mercury would not be eligible for a mixing zone). Extraction well systems are also an option. Essentially, contamination caused by*

source material cannot reach surface water under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

The MCUTC sampling report will also be published in the near future. Though it would be difficult to trace contamination to the RTRR site, it would be interesting to see what the data end up showing.

- **Are there active monitoring wells along the shoreline?**
- *EGLE: Yes, there are a couple. I believe they were high for lead and high for pH, but not chlorinated solvents. The Groundwater Monitoring Report is available on our website (see [here](#)).*

Updates on coastal resilience needs assessment for Trenton

Jim Wagner shared that communities along the Detroit riverfront, in collaboration with the Downriver Community Conference (DCC), Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, have been working collaboratively to address soil erosion, flooding, and pollution in the communities. The communities include River Rouge, Ecorse, Wyandotte, Riverview, Grosse Ile, Trenton, Gibraltar, Rockwood, and Brownstown. The communities are hoping to build the foundation to be able to access federal funding under the CARES Act and other funding streams for coastal resilience projects along the riverfront. The cities of Wyandotte and Riverview have applied for funding for a project related to the Arkema site.

He also shared that DCC is working with the University of Michigan Economic Growth Institute and Taubman College to apply for \$2.2 million in funding for studies on environmental issues and economic impacts of the closing of the DTE River Rouge coal-fired plant.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*).

- **In regards to the Arkema property and other brownfield sites, I assume they are still industrial zones. Is there an interest in pursuing zoning changes?**
 - *J. Wagner: Yes, the crux of the DCC application is to address redevelopment and future use of the McLouth, Arkema, and River Rouge sites.*
- **Are you hearing anything from the communities about what the best use for those properties might be?**
 - *J. Wagner: We are not hearing much at the moment because US Steel has not been very cooperative. Crown has been more cooperative with our staff. The City of Riverview and Wyandotte have had discussions with the owners of the Arkema property, along with EPA Region 5 and the Congresswoman, about potential future uses. They appear to be handling that property similar to the Eastman site and have been pursuing environmental investigations. They have not shared much about whether they will develop the property or not. Some have indicated that they want to do something with the properties, but several would like to pass on environmental liability. Part of our funding application involves hiring consultants to bring forward proposals for future redevelopment.*
 - *B. Kelly: Wyandotte's master plan has their portion of the Arkema property as a greenway.*

- **There has also been talk of Riverview lobbying to have the portion of the Arkema property that will be dredged designated as a waterfront.**

Other updates

Jim Wagner shared that Bryan McMurrin is no longer working for Rep. Debbie Dingell's office, and he will enquire about a replacement. Haile Brown, field representative for Rep. Dingell's office, shared that she was present and taking notes. She also shared that there is currently an opening for their Downriver position, but that she would be covering McLouth CAG meetings in the meanwhile.

WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS

Ms. Smith thanked the CAG, presenters, and members of the public for their participation, questions, and comments. She reminded CAG members that the next meeting will take place on August 11.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

Appendix A. CAG Stakeholder Representatives in Attendance

Primary and Alternate CAG representatives present at the **May 12, 2022** meeting are listed below.

Affiliation	Representative
City of Trenton	Jim Wagner
City of Riverview	Chuck Norton
Grosse Ile Township	
Riverview Brownfields Authority	Brian Webb
City of Trenton Brownfields	Robert Howey
Trenton Visionaries	
Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy	Doug Thiel
Grosse Ile Civic Association	Bill Heil, alt.
Friends of the Detroit River	Robert Burns
DownRiver Waterfront Conservancy	Paul Frost
Past Employees of McLouth Steel	
Abutters	Robert Johnson
At-large Community Representatives	Emily Hornbeck Ryan Stewart Edie Traster
Liaison for Rep Debbie Dingell's Office	
Downriver Community Conference	

Agencies represented

Amber Falkner, US EPA Great Lakes National Program Office

Greg Gehrig, US EPA Region 5

Brian Kelly, US EPA Region 5

Diane Russell, US EPA Region 5

Kirstin Safakas, US EPA Region 5

Jacob Runge, EGLE

Courtney Fung, EGLE