

Celebrating Success: Asbestos Dump Millington, New Jersey



Superfund
Redevelopment
Initiative



An aerial view of emergent wetlands, streams and ponds at the Dietzman Tract. (Source: EPA)

“Thanks to EPA’s efforts, the risk from the asbestos at this site has been addressed and now the site can come off the Superfund list...”

EPA Regional Administrator Judith Enck



Wetlands at the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (Source: USFWS)

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Eastern painted turtles basking on a log at the Refuge. (Source: USFWS)

Special consideration given to remedial design at the Dietzman Tract portion of the Asbestos Dump Superfund site (the Site) has facilitated ecological restoration within the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Morris County, New Jersey. Other site-related cleanup activities have provided additional wildlife habitat for the Refuge.

A succession of owners operated an asbestos products manufacturing plant at the Site’s Millington property, beginning in 1927. Dumping, burning and waste disposal took place on the property until on-site disposal reached capacity and owners began sending waste and materials containing asbestos to three satellite disposal areas: New Vernon Road, White Bridge Road and Dietzman Tract. The 7-acre Dietzman Tract served as a waste and asbestos disposal area for almost 40 years prior to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) taking possession of it in 1968 as part of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. EPA placed the Site, which includes the Millington property and three satellite disposal areas, on the National Priorities List (NPL) in 1983. The Site’s potentially responsible party, National Gypsum Company, conducted immediate cleanup actions at three of the properties to address erosion and runoff problems, and to control the spread of asbestos contamination.

Following the National Gypsum Company’s bankruptcy in 1990, the USFWS took over remedial design and cleanup actions at the Dietzman Tract. EPA and the USFWS designed a remedy that would restore the ecological integrity of the area and maintain connectivity with the surrounding Refuge. Cleanup activities contoured the landfill to the surrounding topography and included planting of native grasses on the landfill cap to provide wildlife habitat. The USFWS made the borrow area, which was dug to provide soil for the landfill cap, into a large open water pond, a habitat absent from the Refuge.

Wetlands once choked by asbestos waste now thrive at the Dietzman Tract within the Refuge thanks to efforts to combine cleanup and ecological restoration activities. The USFWS also helped the Great Swamp Watershed Association obtain an EPA Technical Assistance Grant to increase public awareness of the restoration project. In 2002, part of the New Vernon Road property also was transferred to the USFWS to expand the Refuge. EPA, the USFWS and the state have since completed cleanup and deleted all portions of the Site from the NPL.