Cleanup of riverfront marshes and other wetlands at the Marathon Battery Corp. Superfund site in Cold Spring, New York, has created recreational opportunities, preserved historic artifacts, and protected public health and the environment.

The 70-acre area includes a former nickel-cadmium battery plant that produced military- and commercial-grade batteries from 1952 to 1979. Wastewater from the facility poured into the Hudson River. In 1965, Marathon Battery Corporation built a wastewater treatment plant that sent water into Foundry Cove, a nearby wetland. The treatment plant operated with limited success. State officials observed high levels of cadmium in wetland sediments, vegetation and wildlife. In 1972, the company began cleanup. Despite these early efforts, contaminants spread into nearby Constitution Marsh, a designated wildlife sanctuary. EPA added the site to the Superfund program’s National Priorities List (NPL) in 1983.

Cleanup included dredging contaminated sediments in Foundry Cove and the Hudson River; addressing contaminated soil at the former battery facility; demolishing all buildings on the former battery facility grounds; placing a clay cap over excavated marsh areas and restoring wetlands. Cattails, bull rush, arrow arum and other upland shrubs now cover and stabilize wetland buffer areas. During cleanup, workers also recovered over 145,000 Native American and Civil War-era artifacts in Foundry Cove and adjacent areas, which are part of the West Point Foundry National Historic District. The Village of Cold Spring and the Putnam County Historical Society successfully preserved the recovered artifacts and documented the area’s rich history. After cleanup, EPA deleted the entire Marathon Battery Corp. Superfund site from the NPL in 1996. Monitoring to ensure the long-term protectiveness of the remedy is ongoing.

Today, Foundry Cove is a wildlife sanctuary and publicly accessible recreational area where residents and visitors enjoy the restored riverfront. In 1996, the Scenic Hudson organization acquired Foundry Cove. It is now part of the West Point Foundry Preserve, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Preserve reopened with new trails and facilities in 2013. Visitors walk and hike along trails that pass areas of historic and archeological interest. A dock offers a launching point for recreational canoeing and kayaking. Waterfowl and migratory birds also frequent the Preserve, which has become a popular spot for wildlife observation.