

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has signed a Record of Decision (ROD) for an interim cleanup plan for the Berry's Creek Study Area, which is part of the Ventron/Velsicol Superfund site.



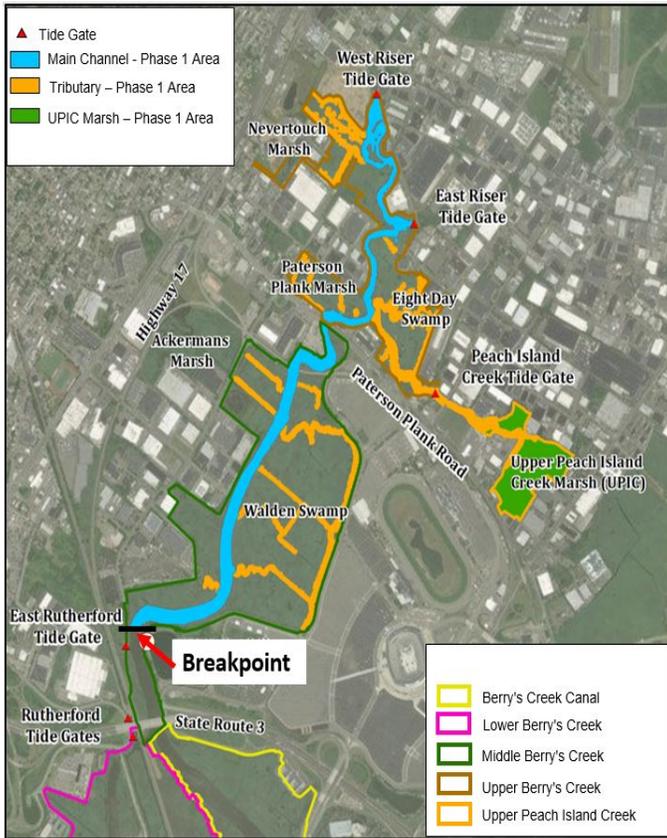
A long history of industrial discharges, landfiling, sewage discharges and urban runoff, have contaminated sediment and water within the Berry's Creek Study Area (BCSA), which have in turn contaminated fish and animals via the food chain. The area is contaminated with mercury (including methyl-mercury), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and chromium at levels that pose an unacceptable risk to people and wildlife. The primary risk to people is from eating contaminated fish and crabs from the creek.

Berry's Creek is in Bergen County, New Jersey with portions located in the Boroughs of Teterboro, Moonachie, Wood-Ridge, Carlstadt, Rutherford and East Rutherford. The creek is approximately 4.5 miles long, from the West Riser tide gate to the Hackensack River. The creek is a tidal estuary and most of the water in the creek typically comes in with the tide. The extent of tidal influence is controlled by tide gates across major tributaries to the creek. Berry's Creek is a part of the New Jersey Meadowlands, and includes approximately 750 acres of marshes. A common reed called Phragmites and tidal mudflats are signature characteristics of the BCSA.

The BCSA has been divided into five geographic segments, segregated by infrastructure and/or confluences with other waterways.

STUDY SEGMENT	LOCATION
Upper Berry's Creek (UBC)	Extends from the West Riser tide gate south to Paterson Plank Road
Middle Berry's Creek (MBC)	Extends from Paterson Plank Road south to Route 3
Berry's Creek Canal (BCC)	Extends from Route 3 to the Hackensack River
Lower Berry's Creek (LBC)	Extends from MBC and BCC at its northern end through culverts near Route 3 to the Hackensack River at its southern end
Upper Peach Island Creek (UPIC)	The reach of Peach Island Creek located above the Peach Island Creek tide gate

The EPA has elected to take an interim action to control the release of contamination from the sediments in Upper and Middle Berry's Creek. It is the first action to address Berry's Creek sediments. EPA will continue to assess the need for additional cleanup work to address sediments in Upper and Middle Berry's Creek, and to select remedies for the marshes as well as Lower Berry's Creek and Berry's Creek Canal. The cleanup plan is sensitive to ongoing flood mitigation efforts in the Meadowlands and EPA coordinates regularly with the NJ Rebuild by Design project team.



Breakpoint is a location in Middle Berry's Creek where changes in the physical system result in a step-wise change of contaminant concentrations upstream and downstream of this point.

Project Contacts and Weblinks:

Doug Tomchuk
EPA Remedial Project Manager
212-637-3956
tomchuk.doug@epa.gov

Carsen Mata
EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
212-637-3652
mata.carsen@epa.gov

To read the Record of Decision visit:
<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/ventron-velsicol>
<http://berryscreekstudyarea.com>

EPA's Cleanup Plan

Upper Berry's Creek and Middle Berry's Creek Waterways (including major tributaries):

- Bank-to-bank removal of 2 feet of soft sediment within the proposed remediation footprint (plus 6 inches of over-dredge). Where less than 2 feet of soft sediment is present, all the soft sediment will be removed.
- Backfill/capping of the areas where sediment is removed. The backfill thickness will be equal to the thickness of sediment removed. In areas where contaminated soft sediment remains below the excavation depth, the backfill will serve as a cap to physically isolate this material.
- The work will include mitigation of the disturbance to habitat caused by the remedial action.

Upper Peach Island Creek (UPIC) Marsh:

- Removal of marsh sediments to a depth of 1 foot for most of the marsh, with removal of 2 feet of sediment within a 10-foot strip along the marsh edge at the waterway banks.
- The excavated sediment will be replaced with backfill to maintain marsh surface elevations, isolate underlying marsh sediment, and re-establish the marsh habitat.
- A thin-layer cover of clean material (six inches) will be placed over the existing marsh in the area surrounding the radio towers in the southern portion of UPIC marsh.

Dewatering and Off-Site Disposal: The excavated/dredged sediment will be dewatered, stabilized as necessary, and transported off site for disposal at a permitted facility. Water from the process will be treated and returned to the creek.

Marsh Demonstration Project: A marsh demonstration project will evaluate potential cleanup options for marshes not addressed in this action, and monitor the response of the marshes to the waterway cleanup.

Long-Term Monitoring: Long-term monitoring will be conducted to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the cleanup as well as providing information to make future decisions for the BCSA.

Institutional Controls: Institutional controls (ICs), such as the existing New Jersey fish and crab consumption advisories will remain in place. Additional restrictions will be put in place to preserve the caps, if necessary.



In May 2017, EPA established a task force to restore the Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's core mission to protect health and the environment.

epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force