

# Situation Assessment

## Burrows Sanitation Superfund Site



Burrows Sanitation Superfund Site  
Hartford, Michigan  
January 2010  
FINAL

U.S. EPA Region 5

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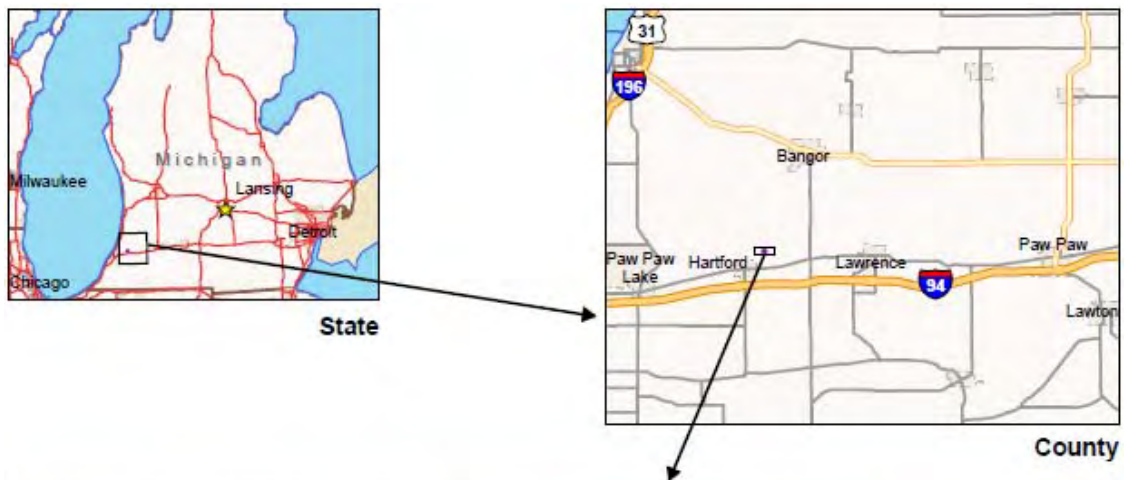
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*EPA's primary responsibility at Superfund sites is to ensure the protection of human health and the environment. Consideration of a site's potential future use is an important part of this responsibility under the National Contingency Plan (NCP). The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) was created by EPA in 1999 to help communities and stakeholders in their efforts to return environmentally impaired sites to protective and productive use. Conducting a reuse assessment that engages site owners and other stakeholders in evaluating future use options for a site can help facilitate site stewardship and support the long-term effectiveness of the remedy.*

## Executive Summary

The Burrows Sanitation site is situated within a rolling landscape of farms and forest in rural Hartford Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, on a portion of property owned by local resident Douglas Mackinder. The property was contaminated under the control of the previous site owners who agreed to allow Burrows Sanitation, a small septic hauler, dispose of industrial waste on a remote portion of the property. EPA completed cleanup and remedy construction on the property in 1993 and has determined the site is protective for unrestricted use. MDNRE however, does not concur due to presence of a few inorganic parameters that exceed the state's unrestricted residential ground water criteria. The current owner's reuse goal is to continue to use the site for personal recreation, such as hunting, hiking and cross-country skiing. Both EPA and MDNRE agree the site is safe for this recreational use. MDNRE will support delisting the site from the National Priority List (NPL) when the site is further characterized and the ground water criteria for inorganic contaminants are met. MDNRE may pursue additional site characterization in the future, but the time frame and source of funding is uncertain.



Source: Sarah Backhouse, EPA Region 5

Site

## Introduction

At the request of EPA Region 5, E<sup>2</sup> Inc. conducted a site visit of the Burrows Sanitation site in Hartford, Michigan on December 2, 2009 to determine site reuse potential and assess the need for reuse planning services. E<sup>2</sup> Inc. participated in a tour of the site and surrounding area with the site owner, representatives from EPA Region 5 and MDNRE. E<sup>2</sup> Inc. spoke with a local government representative and reviewed local planning documents. The purpose of the site visit was to discuss reuse goals for the property, to identify relevant planning initiatives for the area and outline preliminary reuse considerations and recommendations for additional reuse planning activities.

### *Meeting participants included:*

- Jeff Gore, Remedial Project Manager, EPA Region 5
- Jon Peterson, Reuse Project Coordinator, EPA Region 5
- Wally Wagaw, Senior Project Manager, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Environment
- Douglas Mackinder, Burrows Sanitation Site Owner, Hartford, Michigan

## Summary of Site Conditions

The Burrows Sanitation site covers approximately 10 acres of land in a rural area approximately one mile north of Hartford, Michigan. The heavily wooded site runs along 54th Avenue and is bordered by two intermittent wetland areas to the east and northwest of the site. A drainage canal known as Doyle Drain runs along the base of the hillside at the northern boundary of the site and directs runoff into the northwest wetland, an artificial wetland created by the construction of an earthen dam. The Paw Paw River runs less than a mile south of the site, and residential wells are located near the site.

### *History of the Site*

The Burrows Sanitation site was owned privately by Duane and Evelyn Funk, who agreed to allow Burrows Sanitation, a small septic hauler, to dispose of waste on a remote portion of their property. Burrows Sanitation used the property as a dewatering site from 1970 to 1977 and disposed of wastes it collected from Du-Wel Products Inc., Auto Specialties Manufacturing Company (AUSCO), and Whirlpool Corporation. The wastes were primarily by-products of metal finishing and plating operations, including hydroxide sludges, waste coolant and soluble oil. The metal hydroxide wastes were deposited in six unlined lagoons and onto three areas adjacent to the lagoons.

## At a Glance: Site Info

**Location:** Hartford, Michigan

**Size:** approximately 10 acres

**Site Owner:** Doug Mackinder

**Remedial Phase:** Construction Complete

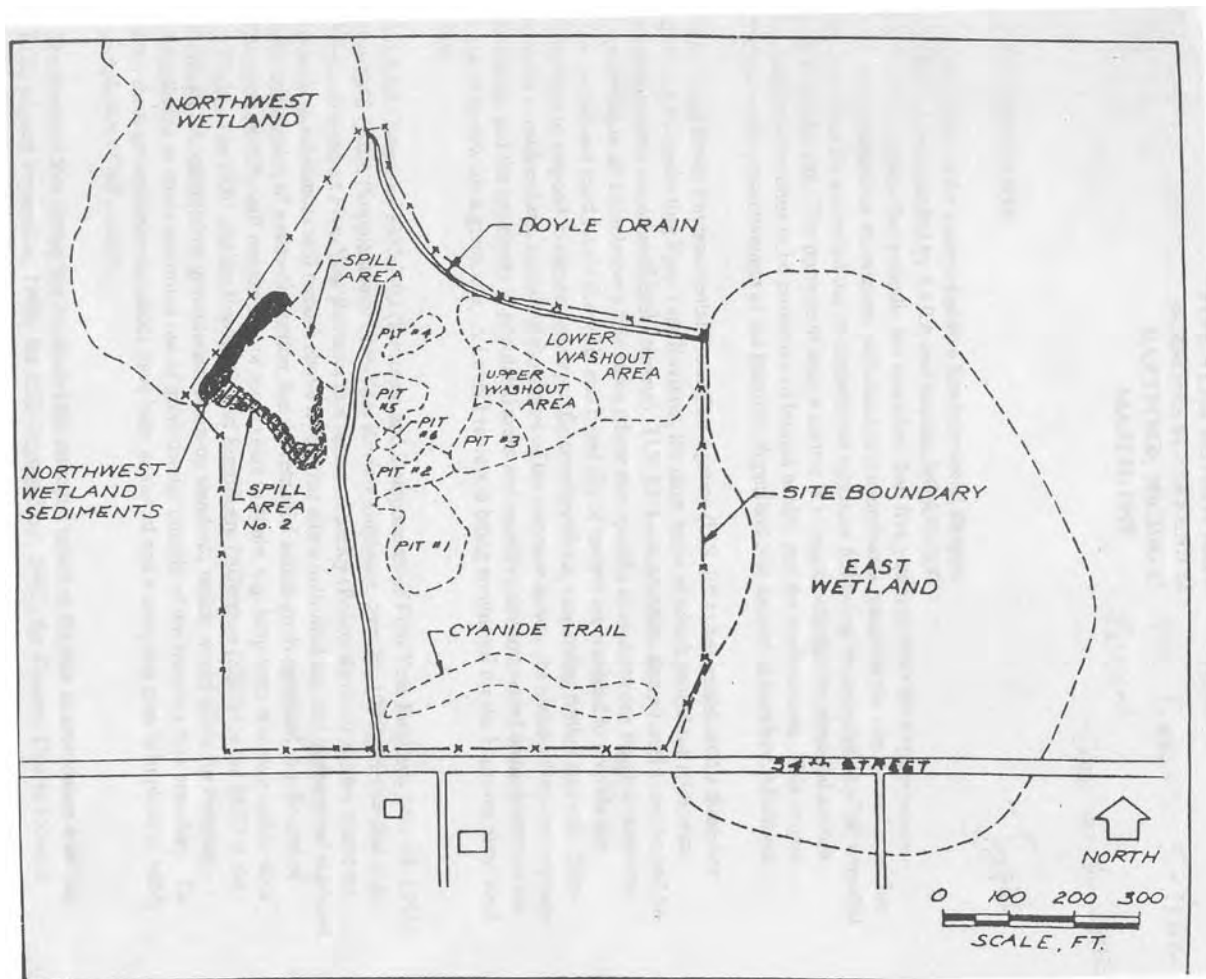
**Lead:** PRP

**Former Contamination:** Organic and inorganic contaminants in soil and groundwater

**Restrictions:** None presently

**EPA RPM:** Jeff Gore

**EPA Reuse Project Coordinator:** Jon Peterson



**Historical Site Map**

**History of Response Actions**

- Remedial planning began as the Burrows Superfund site was proposed for the National Priorities List (NPL) in September 1983. The site became a final NPL listing in September 1984.
- EPA prepared a Record of Decision (ROD) in September 1986 that outlined soil removal, drainage of the northwest wetland and a ground water purge and treatment system. A Consent Decree (CD) was entered in court in December 1990.
- In 1990 the Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) performed additional monitoring of the ground water at the site to determine if contaminants still remained above cleanup levels stipulated in the ROD. Based on the monitoring results, EPA determined that the extent and concentration of contaminants was much less than originally estimated. In 1991, EPA issued an Explanation of Significant Difference (ESD), which reduced the size

of the ground water extraction system and changed the location of the treatment system from on-site to off-site.

- An amended CD was entered in court in July 1992 requiring the PRPs to operate the extraction system until the cleanup levels stipulated in the ROD were achieved. The PRPs operated the ground water extraction and treatment system between August 1992 and December 1993.
- EPA Remedial Action construction activities officially concluded in April 1993 with the completion and signing of the Preliminary Close-Out Report for the Burrows site.
- The Post-ROD ground water monitoring conducted by EPA determined that the ground water met the drinking water standards outlined in the decision documents and the Amended CD. EPA sent a letter notifying the PRPs of completion of remedial action in October 1999. All monitoring wells and the ground water extraction well were removed or abandoned between January and March 2000. The site surface was also graded and landscaped. No remedial components remain.
- Other than the residential well sampling by Van Buren County, no other activities are planned for the site. Five-Year Reviews were completed in March 1998, March 2003 and February 2008. The Five-Year Reviews concluded that the Burrows site is protective of human health and the environment. The Five-Year Reviews noted that historical monitoring data have shown a few inorganic parameters exceed the state's unrestricted residential criteria for ground water.

### *Stakeholder Considerations*

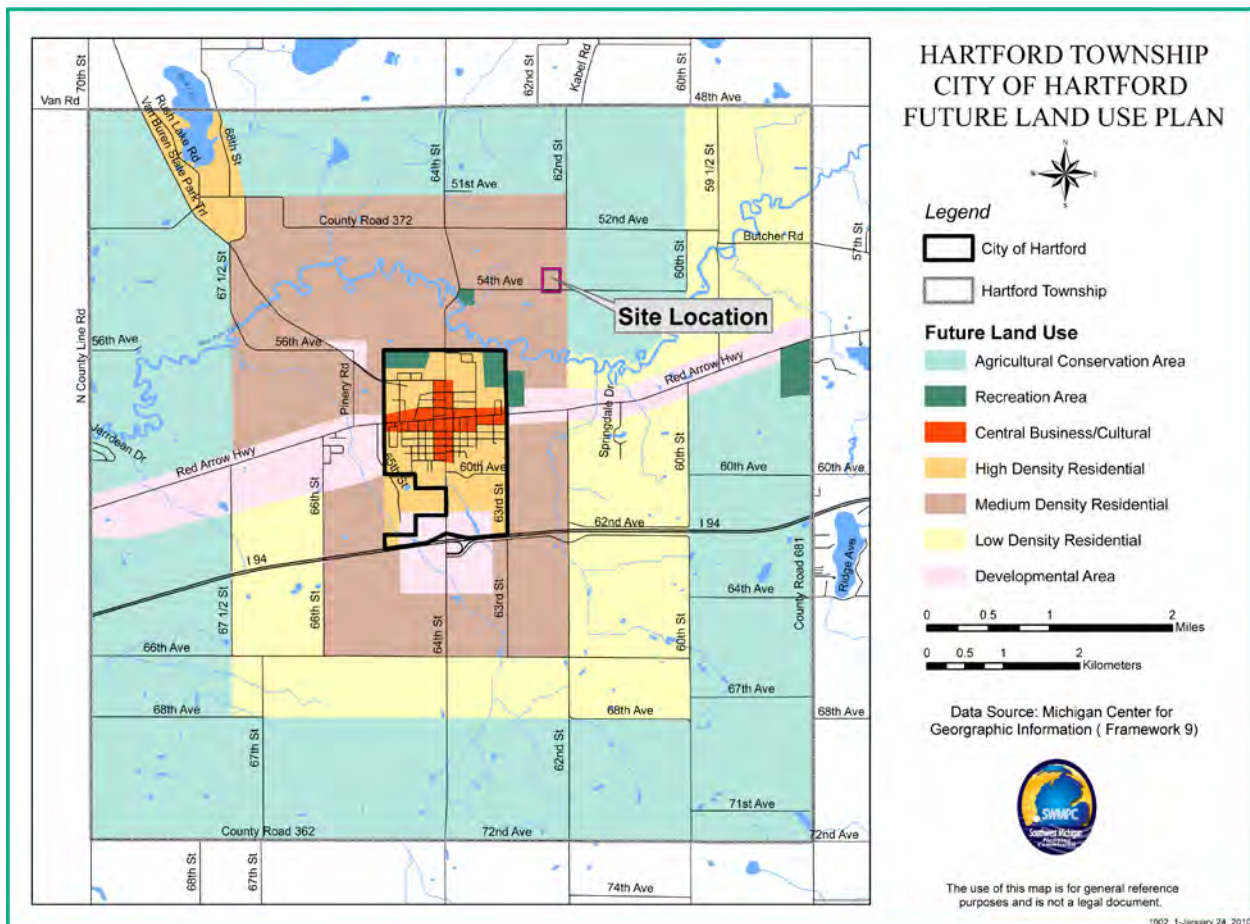
Below is a set of considerations based on initial discussions with the site owner and local government representatives.

- Doug Mackinder purchased the Burrows site as part of a 100-acre piece of property in the mid-1970s with the intention of establishing a multigenerational family home. He and his family currently use the property for recreation. They allow a select few to hunt on the property, as evidenced by a handful of tree stands constructed throughout the site. Mr. Mackinder indicated he is neither interested in developing nor selling the 10-acre Burrows Sanitation site proper, but maintaining it for recreational purposes such as hunting, hiking and cross-country skiing.



*A view through the trees to the northwest wetland.*

- It is possible that the owner’s children could decide to sell portions of the site in the future. In this case, MDNRE would recommend the developer conduct a Baseline Environmental Assessment (BEA) for liability protections. The purpose of a BEA is to establish the means to distinguish a new release from pre-existing contamination so a new owner or operator is not held liable for responding to releases caused by others. A BEA also determines potential limitations on property use to prevent unacceptable exposures.
- Representatives from the Hartford Township expressed the desire to maintain the agriculture land use along 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They consider the agrarian character of the gently undulating countryside in this area as an asset to the community. The future land use plan for the Hartford community, as presented in the 2006 *Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plan* for the Hartford area, reflects the community’s interest in residential housing mixed with rural, agricultural and natural resource protection in this area. The Burrows site falls just within the zone designated “Medium Density Residential” and on the border of the “Agricultural Conservation Area” on the Future Land Use Plan (below).



*Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan, March 2006*

### *Remedy Considerations*

- EPA has determined that the remedy is protective of human health and the environment and allows for unlimited access and unlimited exposure to all areas of the site. MDNRE, however, does not concur due to presence of a few inorganic parameters that exceed the state's unrestricted residential ground water criteria.
- Based on 1999 monitoring samples that exceeded the Michigan Part 201 cleanup criteria, MDNRE recommends placing deed restrictions on the property prohibiting the use of ground water before proceeding with limited, non-intrusive development on the site.
- MDNRE may pursue additional site characterization in the future to ensure the state's Part 201 criteria for environmental remediation are met, but the time frame and source of funding is uncertain.
- There are approximately 150 people living in residences further west along 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue in a trailer park and a small number of homes. The residents obtain water from private wells that vary in depth up to 100 feet. The State's ongoing sampling of nearby residential wells is a precautionary measure only.



*Photo: Jon Peterson, EPA Region 5*

### *Land Use Considerations*

- The site is subject to zoning by Hartford Township, and the site is currently zoned for agricultural use. The Township has no current plans to rezone the land use.
- The 2006 *Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plan* for the Hartford area does not identify any public recreational needs in the vicinity of the Burrows site.
- The site owner and surrounding neighbors obtain their drinking water from private wells.



## Recommendations and Next Steps

The Burrows Sanitation site does not pose any immediate reuse challenges. At this point, the desired future use of the site is compatible with the site remedy. The site could be used in the future to support active agriculture and forestry practices consistent with the historic land use in the area. The site could also be managed to support wildlife habitat and provide the community with additional environmental and educational benefits.

Restoration of the two adjacent wetland areas could re-establish and add important ecological functions to the landscape, including the creation of new wildlife habitat, increased flood storage, and the enhancement of water quality. Voluntary wetland restoration efforts on private lands reflect a proactive, non regulatory approach to wetland protection and conservation. The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, MNDRE and several non-profit conservation organizations, including Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, and the National Wild Turkey Federation, have programs designed to assist landowners who wish to voluntarily restore wetlands on their property.

The property owner could expand the functions of the site by creating additional recreational uses for private guests or the greater community. The adjacent wetland areas could be managed to serve as a designed wildlife refuge or an outdoor classroom for local environmental education programs. Depending on the owner's ambitions, there is the potential to improve the walking trails, establish wildlife viewing sites and create boardwalks through the wetland areas.

Ecosystem restoration and management efforts could expand the owner's long-term stewardship and recreational use of the site. Electing to put a restrictive covenant on ground water use, pursuing further site characterization and cleanup, and delisting the property from the NPL may improve restoration funding and technical assistance options. For example, the Van Buren County Department of Land Services could provide funding for environmental assessment work, such as the BEA, if and when the site is deleted from the NPL.



*A deer skull decorates a trail leading through the Burrows site.*

## Stakeholder Contacts

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