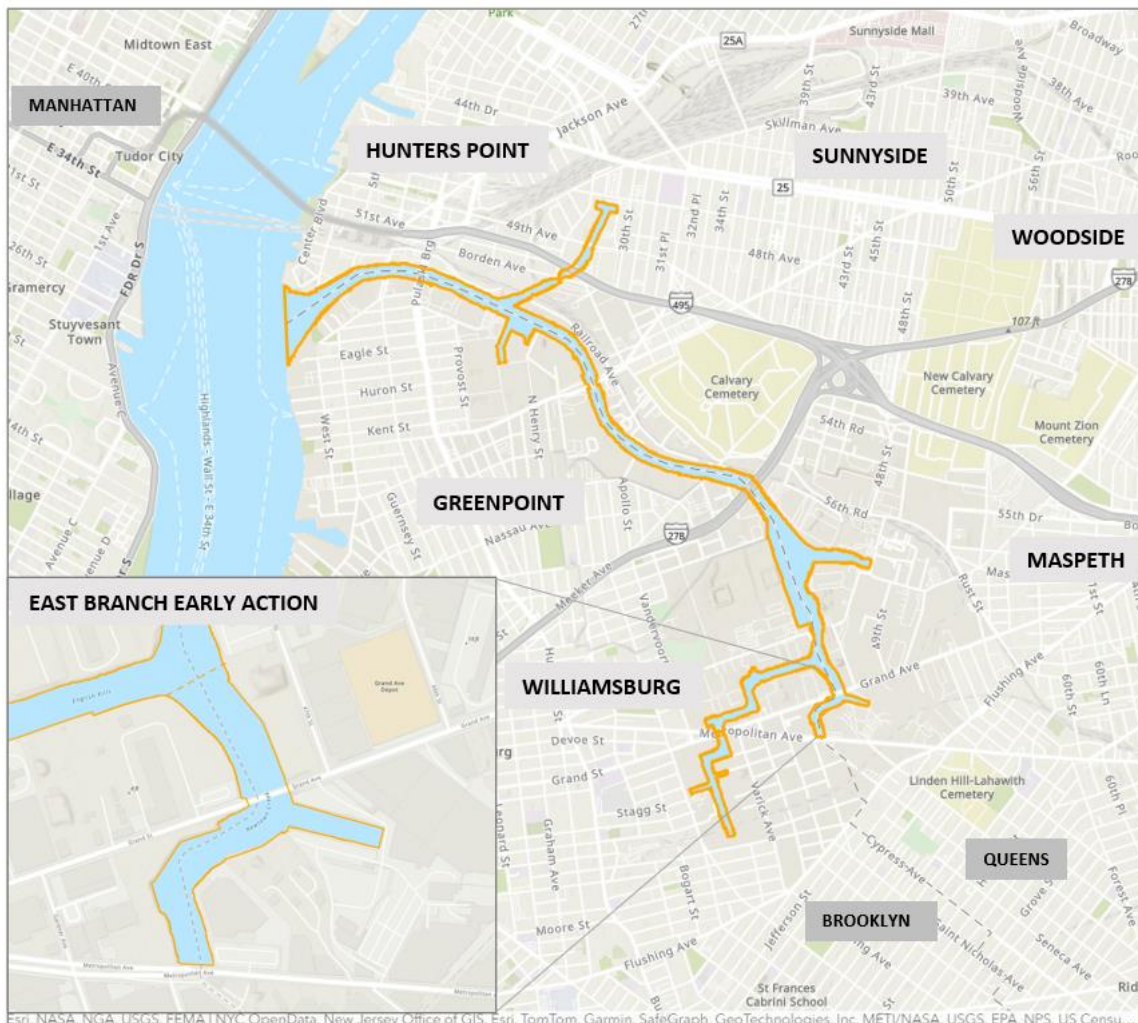


Good afternoon, and welcome to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) monthly Newtown Creek Superfund site update! We are pleased to present this new communication format and hope that it will clarify what is currently happening at Newtown Creek and what is planned for the near future.

Community participation has been, and continues to be, essential to the success of this project. We encourage feedback on this new format, and we will continue to adjust as we receive suggestions.

For site background information or to read previously published materials in English, Polski, Español, and 中国人, please see our [Newtown Creek Superfund Site Profile](#) page. We will also use EPA’s web page and/or the [Newtown Creek Community Advisory Group \(CAG\) website](#) to keep a record of these monthly updates.

For your convenience, we have attached a **list of acronyms** that may be helpful.



What and where is the East Branch?

The East Branch is approximately 0.5 miles long and constitutes approximately 10% of Newtown Creek. It is a tributary between the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, nestled in East Williamsburg, Ridgewood, and Maspeth.

The East Branch cleanup (Early Action) will begin while EPA continues working towards developing cleanup plans for the remainder of the creek. We refer to this as an “Early Action” because it will be completed while we continue investigating and developing a remedy for the entire creek.

What are the current East Branch activities?

EPA expects to release a **Focused Feasibility Study (FFS)** and **Proposed Plan** for cleaning up the East Branch portion of the creek this summer.

The **Focused Feasibility Study (FFS)** includes:

- an overview of the site
- cleanup options that EPA considered for the East Branch
- **Status:** the FFS is currently being revised and will be available this summer.

The **Proposed Plan** includes:

- an overview of the site
- cleanup options that EPA considered for the East Branch
- EPA’s preferred cleanup option for the East Branch
- reasoning for preferred cleanup option
- **Status:** EPA expects to release a Proposed Plan for East Branch this summer and will invite the public to review and comment on the Plan, including all of the supporting documents (such as the FFS).

Release of the Proposed Plan will include:

- a notification from EPA to all who receive this monthly email
- notification from EPA to the community regarding a formal public meeting where EPA can receive comments on the plan
- notifications to the community, including newspaper ads, a press release, a community update fact sheet, and social media posts
- beginning of a *minimum* 30-day public comment period (this can be extended)
- links to all documents that support the Proposed Plan, including the FFS, for consideration during the review. Hard copies of the Proposed Plan can be provided upon request to EPA, and hard copies of all documents will be available for review at EPA’s Record Center at 290 Broadway, New York NY.

April CAG meeting: EPA provided a high-level overview of the contents of the FFS and process for getting to a Proposed Plan.

May CAG meeting update: EPA will present a more detailed overview of the alternatives described in the FFS.

We are very excited to be approaching this major milestone! Release of the Proposed Plan will bring us one step closer to being able to start cleaning up the creek. There are more details to come, and we will continue to keep you posted on progress.

What about the rest of the creek?

Overall Study Area (aka Operable Unit 1):

The entire creek, including the East Branch, is also known as Operable Unit 1 (OU1). The OU1 Study Area is defined, generally, as the water and sediment of the creek and its tributaries up to and including the landward edge of the shoreline.

The major milestones achieved for OU1 thus far include:

- A Remedial Investigation (RI) was approved by EPA in April 2023.
- A Baseline Human Health Risk Assessment (BHHRA) was approved by EPA in June 2017.
- A Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment (BERA) was approved by EPA in November 2018.

The approved reports are currently available on [EPA's site profile page](#).

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Discharges (aka Operable Unit 2):

Operable Unit 2 (OU2) relates to the volume of **CSO discharges** to the creek and the impact these overflows are having on the concentration of contaminants of concern for the creek.

- As part of the OU2 ROD, NYC will monitor point source discharges and combined sewer overflows (CSOs) to the creek.

What are the current overall creek activities?

EPA is in the process of developing the **Feasibility Study (FS)** for the full Study Area. The FS addresses cleanup options for the entire creek.

- One of the first steps in the FS process is to develop an **Alternatives Memorandum**. This memo will evaluate various remedial alternatives for the entire creek and is currently in development.

EPA is conducting a **field study of shallow groundwater** adjacent to Newtown Creek.

- This study will further characterize shallow groundwater that is entering the creek from nearby properties.
- As part of this study, EPA installed and sampled groundwater monitoring wells from multiple locations around the creek.
- EPA is compiling the results from this study into a data summary report and will share an overview of the results with the CAG this summer, as well as post it to [EPA's site profile page](#).

NYC will begin **CSO-related sampling** this year.

- In April, EPA approved the work plan prepared by NYC to collect the samples.
- During the April CAG meeting, NYC presented their sampling plan. This presentation can be found on the [CAG's website](#).

Supplemental data collection is an ongoing process.

- All of the newly collected data will be used to help develop the design of the remedy for the East Branch portion of OU1, complete the FS for the rest of OU1, and refine our understanding of the site overall.
- This data helps us develop and evaluate cleanup options.
- EPA is overseeing the collection of surface water samples in the East River and the effort will be completed later this year. Several rounds of data have already been collected.
- EPA oversaw the collection of surface sediment samples in the lower 2 miles of the creek last fall and the data is being evaluated. A full report is expected to be available in spring 2025.

EPA has been working to develop a **3D visualization tool**.

- The tool will allow us to better illustrate the extent of contamination in the creek, including Non-aqueous Phase Liquid (NAPL).
- We plan to present this to the CAG soon, tentatively at the June meeting. Stay tuned!

EPA is in the process of replacing damaged or faded **fishing advisory signs** at locations around the creek. These locations were selected with the aid of the Newtown Creek CAG.

We continue to coordinate with New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) on the **Grand Street Bridge** replacement in relation to the early action for the East Branch portion of OU1.

We continue to coordinate with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) on **upland properties**.

What happens next?

2024 Anticipated Schedule:

- Once the Proposed Plan for the East Branch portion of OU1 is released, EPA will review comments received, compile a Responsiveness Summary, and write the Record of Decision.
- The draft OU1 Alternatives Memorandum should be developed by late summer/early fall of 2024.
- OU2 sampling is expected to begin late spring/early summer 2024.
- The overall project schedule and approach is reviewed on an ongoing basis, and we will continue to provide updates.
- EPA plans to share the findings of the shallow groundwater study later this summer/early fall of 2024.

Stay in the know!

- EPA will attend the next **Newtown Creek CAG meeting on May 22** at 6:30 p.m. at Queens Landing Boathouse and Environmental Center, 57-28 2nd St Unit 105, Queens, NY 11101.
 - To receive the CAG's email updates, please subscribe to the mailing list here: <https://newtowncreekcag.org/>
 - This month, EPA plans to present information about each of the potential cleanup alternatives for the East Branch.

- We regularly post about our work at the site on EPA Region 2's [X](#) and [Facebook](#) pages. Please check us out and share our posts!
- Visit [EPA's website](#) to learn lots more about Superfund program in general, and don't forget to check out [EPA's site profile page for Newtown Creek](#) for more detailed site-specific information.

For further questions or if you'd like to know about EPA's long-term activities at the site, please [contact us!](#)

We appreciate hearing from you!

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Acronyms:	
CAG	Community Advisory Group
CFT	Contaminant Fate & Transport
COCs	Contaminants of Concern
CSOs	Combined Sewer Overflow
CSTAG	Contaminated Sediment Technical Advisory Group
EA	Early Action
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FFS	Focus Feasibility Study
FS	Feasibility Study
LTCP	Long Term Control Plan
LTE	Long Term Equilibrium
NAPL	Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid
NCA	Newtown Creek Alliance
NCG	Newtown Creek Group
NRDA	Natural Resource Damage Assessment
NYC	New York City
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
OU	Operable Unit
PRAP	Proposed Remedial Action Plan
PRGs	Preliminary Remediation Goals
PRPs	Potentially Responsible Parties
PS	Point Source Model
RAO	Remedial Action Objectives
RA	Remedial Action
RD	Remedial Design
RI	Remedial Investigation
ROD	Record of Decision
ST	Sediment Transport Model
SWPH	Saltwater Pumpouse
WRDA	Water Resources Development Act