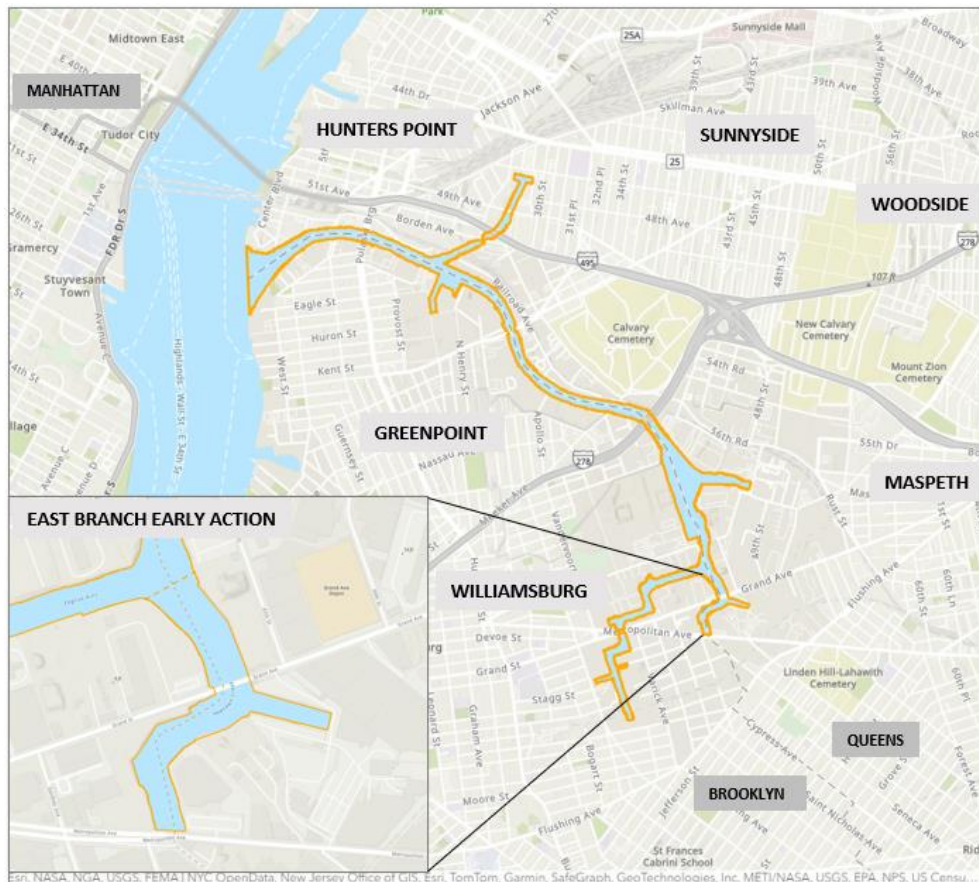


Good morning, and welcome to another installment of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) monthly Newtown Creek Superfund site update! We are pleased to present this communication and hope that it will clarify what is currently happening at Newtown Creek and what is planned for the near future.

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?

This summer, EPA expects to release a **Focused Feasibility Study (FFS)** and **Proposed Plan** for addressing contamination in the East Branch portion of the creek.

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 for review once the Proposed Plan is released this summer.

The **Proposed Cleanup 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 EPA’s preferred cleanup option
- **Status:** EPA expects to release the Proposed Plan for the 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).

The following will happen with release of the Proposed Cleanup Plan:

- Notification of the availability of the Proposed Plan will be made in several ways, including newspaper ads, a press release, a community update fact sheet, and social media posts
 - All that receive this monthly email will be directly notified
- Release of the Proposed Plan starts a *minimum* 30-day public comment period (this can be extended)
- The notification from EPA will include details of a formal public meeting
 - EPA can receive comments on the plan during the public meeting or at any point during the public comment period
- Links to all documents that support the Proposed Plan, including the FFS and other site related documents 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.

June CAG meeting: At the request of the CAG, EPA continued to present on the FFS alternatives. EPA focused on the criteria that will be used to select an alternative, the type of sampling and monitoring that will happen after the cleanup is completed to assure it remains effective, and a projected timeline.

July CAG: EPA will provide an overview of the data that has been collected in the East Branch, which will include information on sediment thickness, water depths, and contaminant concentrations.

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) that was approved by EPA in April 2023.
- A Baseline Human Health Risk Assessment (BHHRA) that was approved by EPA in June 2017.
- A Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment (BERA) that 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 site 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 cleanup 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 fall, as well as post it to [EPA's site profile page](#).

NYC has begun **CSO-related sampling**.

- 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](#).
- Since CSO-related sampling is tied to rainfall, NYC and EPA continue to track the weather and mobilize for sampling when the conditions meet certain criteria

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, to continue preparing the FS for the rest of OU1, and to refine our understanding of the site overall.
- This data informs the models that help us 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 later this summer. 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, at the end of the comment period for the proposed plan, EPA will review comments received, compile a Responsiveness Summary, and write the Record of Decision.
- Documents supporting the cleanup of the site will continue to be developed, including the OU1 Alternatives Memo.
- OU2 sampling began the week of 6/3/24.
- 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 Wednesday, July 17**.
- To receive the CAG's email updates, please subscribe to the mailing list here: <https://newtowncreekcag.org/>

- This month, EPA will continue to discuss each of the potential cleanup alternatives for the East Branch, and the criteria used in selecting an alternative.
- 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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