

This fact sheet is part of a series that illustrates the services provided by U.S. EPA's Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) program.

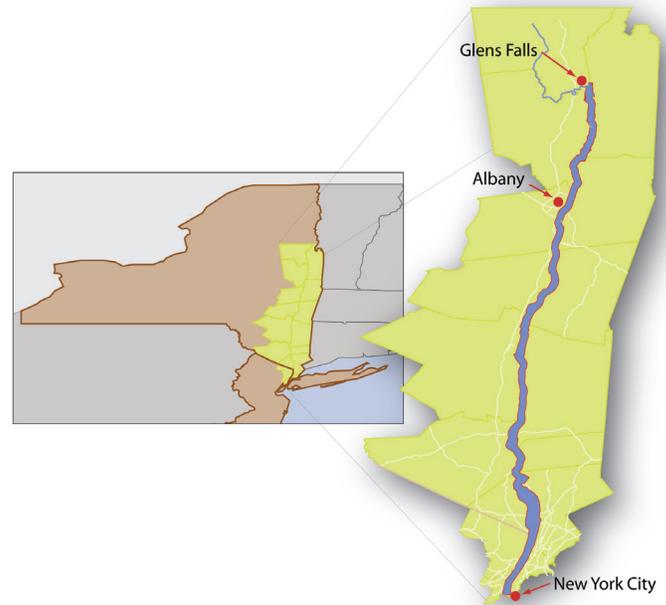
## Community Technical Assistance Needs

The Hudson River PCBs site is one of the largest Superfund sites in the country, encompassing a 200-mile stretch of the Hudson River between New York City and Hudson Falls in upstate New York. Over three decades, the General Electric Company discharged as much as 1.3 million pounds of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from two capacitor manufacturing plants into the Hudson River. Because PCBs can accumulate in fish tissues and contribute to negative health effects, U.S. EPA listed the site on its National Priorities List of contaminated sites in 1984. The upper 40 miles of the river were most heavily impacted; cleanup of this area is ongoing.

Communities located along the Hudson River have been very engaged in the cleanup process. The Hudson River Community Advisory Group (CAG) was formed in 2004 to:

- promote broad, balanced representation of communities and stakeholders along the entire Hudson River;
- encourage more routine and consistent communications and coordination between EPA and the community;
- solicit ongoing recommendations about ways to enhance community involvement;
- provide an avenue for the community to voice its needs and concerns; and
- provide for a consistent source of dialogue for EPA to gauge interests and needs.

The CAG contacted EPA Region 2 in early 2008 to request technical assistance. The CAG's technical assistance priority was to ensure that CAG members were well-informed regarding the findings of a recently released technical report, which described the General Electric Company's second-



phase plan to dredge part of the Hudson River. The report proposed an approach that might remove less sediment and extract more PCBs than had been previously planned. The CAG sought an independent review of the approach's feasibility and anticipated outcomes, presented in a manner appropriate for a community audience.

## The TASC Response

EPA Region 2 contacted TASC on May 22, 2008 with a formal request for assistance. With EPA's presentation date for the report scheduled for June 4, 2008, TASC moved rapidly to address the CAG's priority. TASC selected a Technical Assistance Specialist with the requisite background in sediment geochemistry. The specialist reviewed the report and prepared a PowerPoint presentation outlining the report's major sections and information highlights. The specialist presented the information to the CAG and participated in a question-and-answer discussion session at the June 4, 2008 CAG meeting. The specialist used specially created diagrams to explain how the proposed dredging approach could feasibly remove less sediment and more PCBs than previously identified approaches.

## Process Outcomes: Community Benefits

TASC services ensured that CAG members were well-informed regarding the findings of a key technical report, addressing the CAG's priority.

- The Technical Assistance Specialist's analysis of the report's proposed dredging approach confirmed the feasibility of the approach and its anticipated outcomes.
- The specialist's presentation to the CAG built community understanding regarding the report's proposed dredging approach.
- The subsequent question-and-answer session provided an opportunity for CAG members to discuss the report with an independent technical expert.

## What are PCBs?

According to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are a mixture of individual chemicals which are no longer produced in the United States, but are still found in the environment. Health effects that have been associated with exposure to PCBs include acne-like skin conditions in adults and neurobehavioral and immunological changes in children. PCBs are known to cause cancer in animals. PCBs have been found at more than 500 Superfund National Priorities List sites.

*For more information on PCBs and other toxic chemicals, please visit:*  
[www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html)

## What is the TASC Program?

[www.epa.gov/superfund/community/tasc](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/community/tasc)



**For more information  
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### Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC)

is a U.S. EPA program that provides educational and technical assistance to communities affected by hazardous waste sites regulated by the Superfund and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act programs. TASC provides independent technical advisors to explain hazardous waste issues and to interpret plans for cleaning up contamination. TASC offers assistance to help communities better understand local hazardous waste issues and engage in the cleanup process.

