

# McLouth Steel Superfund Site Community Advisory Group (CAG)

## TECHNICAL MEETING SUMMARY

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Thursday, May 14, 2026 | Virtual Meeting No. 22

### Meeting in brief

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share updates on the remedial investigation & feasibility study (RI/FS) for the Superfund site; and
- To share findings and next steps for investigations and corrective actions in the northern portion of the site.

See **Appendix A** for a list of CAG members, alternates, and agency representatives who were present. Links to summaries, presentations, and recordings from this and previous CAG meetings can be found at the CAG website here:

### Action items

| Responsibility | Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CAG members    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Review the March Meeting Summary</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                 |
| US EPA/EGLE    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Continue to share updates on RI/FS for the NPL site and corrective action on the RTRR portion at future meetings</li><li>● Share OU1 Tech Memorandum with the CAG when available</li></ul> |
| CBI            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Update the CAG website with meeting materials</li><li>● Distribute the draft meeting summary for review</li></ul>                                                                          |

### Summary of Discussions

Consensus Building Institute (CBI) facilitator Stacie Smith welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting agenda.

#### Updates on the NPL site (Southern Portion)

Megan Cynar (EGLE) presented an overview of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and the three Operable Units (OUs) on behalf of Nilia Moberly Green (EPA Region 5). Megan reminded attendees of completed Year 1 and 2 field work for Source Areas (OU1) and Groundwater (OU2) including most recently the deployment of passive flux meters, water level sensors in selected monitoring wells, and the disposal of soil and water generated during the investigation.

Ernest Ashley (CDM Smith) then shared results from the OU1 Year 1 and 2 investigations of site geology and soil quality. Ernest described the key features of each geological layer at the site: non-natural fill and native fill, clay, and bedrock. The OU1 investigation found that the bedrock elevation was lowest at the southeast corner of the site and highest along W. Jefferson Avenue. The clay's thickness ranged from 2–20 feet, trending thinner from west to east through the center of the site and from north to south along the shoreline; the top of the clay surface was highest along W. Jefferson Avenue. Ernest also presented historic topographic maps that illustrate the development of the site from 1936-1952 and a current model of the ratio of urban fill, fill, clay, and dolomitic limestone on the site.

Soil quality was the other focus of the OU1 Year 1 and 2 investigations. Ernest noted that Project Action Limits (PALs) are derived from the lower of the potentially actionable Human Health Screening Criteria and Ecological Screening Criteria. The investigation tested for Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals. Ernest shared the following findings:

- Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs): Concentrations are fairly low. Detections were generally near the surface and a few detections deeper down in an area that had been a hazardous waste storage area. There is one detection of 170 parts per million (ppm) in an area where we knew some PCBs had been stored.
- Volatile Organic Compounds (PCE & TCE): Levels are generally low, but there is one area with concentrations in the thousands of micrograms per kilogram (ug/Kg) at depth, where there was an oily product material found in the soil.
- Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs): Naphthalene, a component of fuels and oils, and Benzo[a]pyrene, a byproduct of combustion, are mostly detected at the surface, with a few detections at depth near the oily product material.
- Metals:
  - Manganese: Associated with steelmaking, there were elevated concentrations mostly at the surface and near the surface soils.
  - Antimony: Associated with steel plants, these concentrations are mostly below the action limit. There were a few areas that slightly exceeded the action limit.
  - Arsenic: Detected in higher concentrations at the surface. Detection levels drop with depth.
  - Lead: Detections were scattered. Several elevated samples were found on the surface and occasionally at depth.

The full presentation is available on the CAG website linked [here](#).

Ernest shared the next steps at the McLouth Steel Superfund site. The technical memo for OU1 will be released during the summer of 2026. The completion of the OU2 technical

memorandum is anticipated for summer 2026 and quarterly groundwater sampling will be initiated. The remaining Trenten Channel (OU3) Year 2 field work includes collection of sediment traps and analysis of the sediment; resampling surface sediment for porewater analysis; and resampling of the surface and subsurface sediment samples for oil and grease analyses. This sampling will take place this summer. The technical memo for OU3 will be released in the late Fall 2026 once the sediment sampling analysis has been evaluated.

**CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*).**

- **Are the contaminants moving through the clay layer or moving around within that fill material areas?**
  - *CDM Smith: It depends on the contaminant. For the most part, detections have been above the clay layer and we observed lower concentrations when we sampled through to the bottom of the clay. There are some places where the clay is somewhat thinner.*
- **At this point, can you tell how polluted this site is compared to other sites?**
  - *CDM Smith: It is too early to tell. Consistent with most steel plants, there are elevated metal concentrations. In order to give a final answer, these results will need to go through the Risk Assessment process and be evaluated by the EPA and EGLE.*
- **What is a passive flux meter?**
  - *CDM Smith: A passive flux meter is a tool that we install within selected monitoring wells to directly measure groundwater flow velocity.*
- **Are metals or contaminants above PALs moving off the site and in the direction of the quarry?**
  - *CDM Smith: Based on the two rounds of measurements, there is a component of westward groundwater flow in the shallow groundwater. The groundwater has some elevated metal concentrations. We will know more when we present the OU2 results.*

### Updates on the Northern Portion (EGLE)

Marc Messina (EGLE) announced EGLE's updated [webpage for the McLouth Steel site](#) and highlighted the section dedicated to the northwest area of the site where there was pooling at the ground surface and seeping into Monguagon Creek. Marc provided an update on the Interim Measure Report. In the report, RTRR proposed using a CO<sub>2</sub> sparging technique to create a barrier wall that would react with calcium hydroxide to lower the groundwater's pH. Marc shared EGLE's concerns with this approach, noting that it would require halting the groundwater extraction well. Instead, EGLE proposed piloting the method in an area farther from the seep to test its feasibility and continuing pumping into the frac tank throughout the

pilot phase. EGLE is preparing a response to the proposed interim measure, emphasizing that the groundwater extraction system must remain in place until EGLE and RTRR reach a final solution.

During a site visit in March, EGLE observed that the frac tank was not on site and the groundwater extraction system was not operating. Marc shared that the RTRR had halted the system in December without notifying EGLE. EGLE told RTRR the interim pumping system must stay active until a permanent solution is in place. If the system remains offline, EGLE will consider enforcement action.

**CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*).**

- **Has the transition to the new consultant introduced additional challenges?**
  - *EGLE: No, the new consultant has not resulted in more issues.*
- **Is the 24-hour camera still operating?**
  - *EGLE: Yes, but EGLE does not have access to it. There have been delays in receiving the daily photo updates due to personnel shifts.*
- **EPA previously installed a subsurface barrier wall. The RTRR's plan should incorporate the existing wall and prevent migration around it. The interim measure must consider precipitation and the resulting rises in groundwater elevation.**
  - *EGLE: The barrier wall and rain are factors we will keep in mind.*
- **Has the CO<sub>2</sub> injection technique been used successfully at other superfund sites as a containment method?**
  - *EGLE: I am unfamiliar with it being used at other sites. The consultant said it has been used before and will share a study of the technique with EGLE.*
- **Has EGLE given RTRR a deadline to resume the pumping?**
  - *EGLE: The pumping must resume immediately; RTRR has not provided a firm date for when the system will be reinstated.*
- **Is this primarily a pH issue?**
  - *EGLE: The immediate issue is the pH.*
- **Have you recently tested pH near the seep or observed any dead wildlife?**
  - *EGLE: As of last week there was no visible seep but I have not conducted testing. I have not seen any dead fish or wildlife since our initial observation of dead fish around 3 years ago.*

### Updates on Monguagon Creek – Upper Trenton Channel

Amber Falkner (US EPA GLNPO) outlined the final design for a remediation project on the lower Monguagon Creek and western shoreline of the Upper Trenton Channel South of Grosse Ile Bridge. Amber shared contaminant levels found in the remedial investigation and predesign investigation. The primary contaminants of concern (COCs) are PAHs and PCBs resulting from

the area's industrial history. The planned remediation approach involves dredging contaminated material and backfilling the area with a sand cover and armor stone to protect the shoreline. Dredged sediment will be transported via barge to Pointe Mouillee CDF. Amber shared a timeline for the remainder of the project; contracts will be awarded in September 2026, with removal and cover and backfill placement running Fall 2026 through Winter 2027, and upland restoration concluding by Spring 2028.

**CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*).**

- **This was an outstanding presentation. Thank you for the time and work.**
- **I heard that the Army Corps of Engineers needs to remove soil from some of the CDFs in order to make space for all the dredging.**
  - *GLNPO: The CDF is getting very full; we have space reserved within cell 5 for the contaminated material from this project. EPA, along with EGLE, local stakeholders, and Army Corps, are looking for ways to make more room within the CDF or find other disposal facilities.*

## Wrap Up & Next Steps

Stacie Smith thanked the CAG members for their participation and reminded the CAG that the next meeting will take place on August 13th.

## Appendix A. CAG members and agency representatives in attendance

| Affiliation                             | Representative            |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Trenton                         | Jim Wagner                |
| Grosse Ile Township                     |                           |
| Riverview Brownfields Authority         | Brian Webb                |
| City of Trenton Brownfields             |                           |
| Trenton Visionaries                     | Wendy Pate                |
| Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy  | Doug Thiel                |
| Grosse Ile Civic Association            |                           |
| Friends of the Detroit River            | Robert Burns              |
| DownRiver Waterfront Conservancy        |                           |
| Past Employees of McLouth Steel         |                           |
| Abutters                                | Robert Johnson            |
| Liaison for Rep Debbie Dingell's Office | Mackenzie Gabriel-Lazette |
| At-large Community Representatives      | Judith Maiga              |
|                                         | Edie Traster              |
| Downriver Community Conference          | John D'Addona             |
|                                         |                           |

### Agencies & consultants represented:

Amber Falkner, US EPA GLNPO  
 Kirstin Safakas, US EPA  
 Megan Cynar, EGLE  
 Christina Hebert, EGLE  
 Marc Messina, EGLE  
 Jennifer DePaulis, Wayne County  
 Joost van 't Erve (MDHHS)  
 Ernest Ashley, CDM Smith  
 Jim Morrison, CDM Smith  
 Chris Vandegrift, CDM Smith  
 Meira Downie, Consensus Building Institute  
 Stacie Smith, Consensus Building Institute