

Grasse River Remediation Project 2019 Project Update Massena, New York



The *Kanien'kéha* name for Grasse River and Massena Village is *Nikentsiá:ke* meaning “full of big fishes.” *Kanien'kéhaka* people fished, hunted, and harvested traditional foods and medicines here, while using it as a transport route. *Akwesashró:non* recognize ancestral land on both banks of the lower Grasse River, known as the Indian Meadows or *Tsi iehontakwáhtha* meaning “where the grass is picked.”

Historically, *Akwesashró:non* maintained a reciprocal relationship with *Nikentsia:ke* and *Tsi iehontakwáhtha* based on mutual respect and responsibility. These resources and their traditional uses were impacted by industry chemicals, and the remediation project is a positive step towards restoring this relationship.

01 Tsi nitewakierà:ne

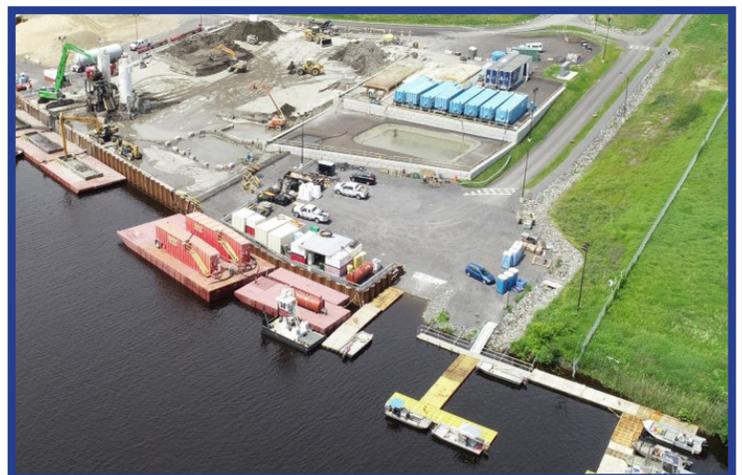
Project Update



Dredging of approximately 100,000 cubic yards of sediment containing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) from the near shore areas in a 7.2 mile stretch of the Grasse River is complete. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is the lead Agency, with involvement from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) Environment Division. The overall goal of the project is to reduce PCB levels in fish and other organisms for the long-term protection of human health and the environment.

2019 remediation activities:

- Near shore sediment and floodplain soil removal
- Material processing at the staging area
- Disposal of materials at the secure landfill
- Near shore backfill & restoration
- Cap material placement



02

Kaie:ri nikawera:ke

The Four Winds



Air monitoring for PCBs, dust and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) started on *Onerahtókha*/April 14, 2019. Up to 18 air monitors were placed around work areas and near dredging activities (see map below.)

Per approved plan, continuous air sampling was conducted by Arconic’s consulting team, Arcadis. The SRMT received daily data updates and reviewed to ensure appropriate levels to continue work.

The Results: Corrective actions were taken at the secure landfill site to address potential issues.

Air and water monitoring results are available online at:

<http://www.thegrassriver.com>



03

Ohneka’shon:a

The Waters

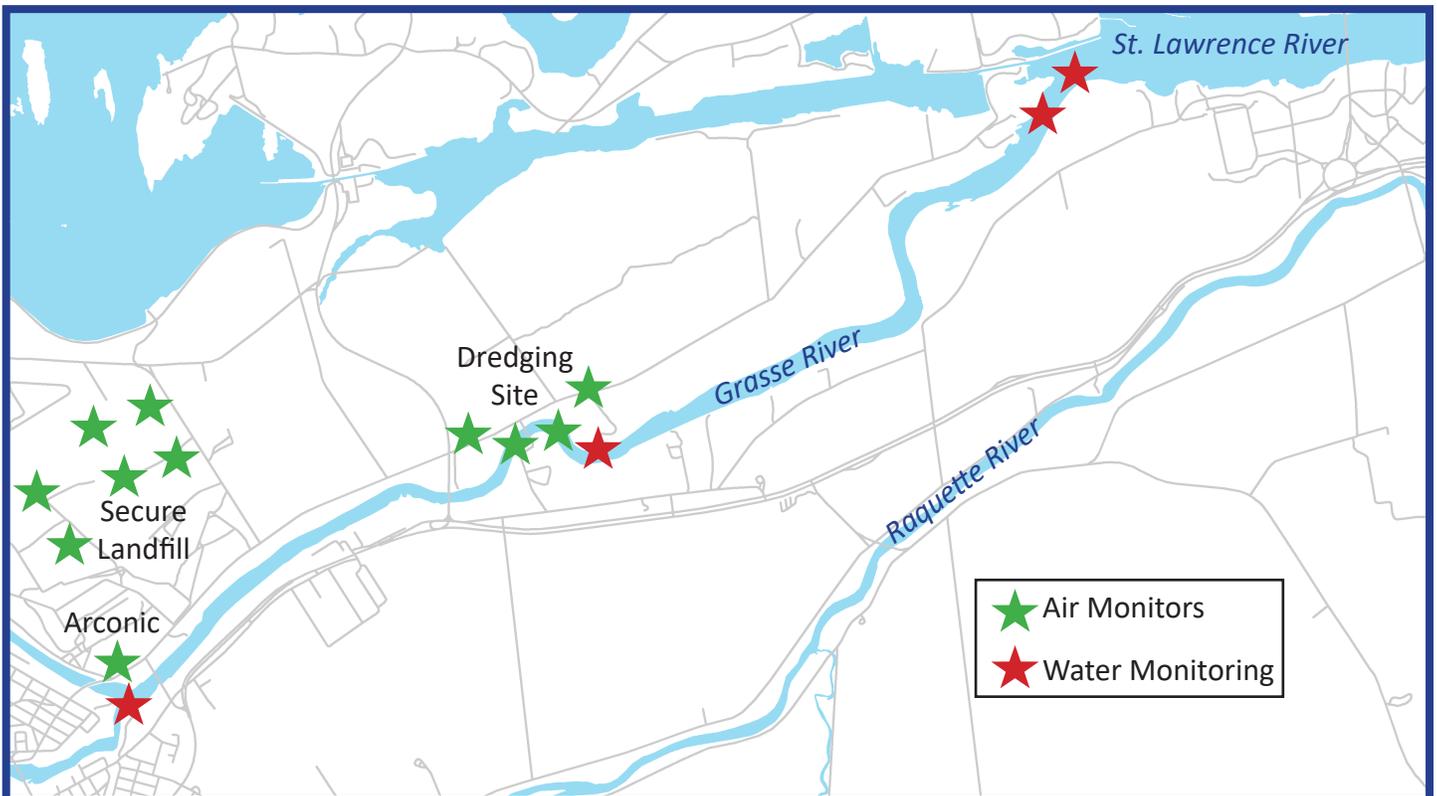


Water monitoring for PCBs and turbidity started on *Onerahtókha*/April 18, 2019.

This included four in-river stations, upstream and downstream from the dredging site. Two drinking water intake sites in the St. Lawrence River were monitored; SRMT intake (both raw and filtered water) and Alcoa East intake (see map below.)

Per approved plan, daily water sampling was conducted by Arconic’s consulting team, Arcadis. The SRMT received daily data updates and reviewed to ensure appropriate results to continue work.

The Results: PCBs were not detected or were detected well below levels requiring action.



04

Ononhkwa'shon:a

The Medicines



Prior to construction start, a habitat assessment was conducted by Arconic's team that included a plant survey in nearshore, floodplains, and wetland habitats of the Grasse River. Plant surveys done by SRMT in 2017 identified at least 139 plant species as culturally significant to Mohawks in the lower Grasse River, Indian Meadows. After remedy, there will be a USEPA approved habitat reconstruction plan to replace habitat and plants. The plans include plants and seeds that are culturally important such as Solomon's seal



(*Kit kit aoéhta*), Jewelweed (*Kahne:ki*), Purple-stemmed Angelica, (*Ohnahsén:ra*) and Sweet flag (*Ononnó:ron*), pictured above.

05

Kentsio'shon:a

The Fish



The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe has had fish consumption advisories since 1986. In 2012, they were updated to specify no consumption of fish from the lower Grasse River to Raquette Point due to PCBs.

The Grasse River is designated a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat, supporting cool and warm water fish, including muskellunge, smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye, bullhead, yellow perch, and lake sturgeon. A comprehensive fish monitoring program will continue after the project is done and, if applicable, updates made to the State and Tribal advisories.

For more information on fish consumption advisories and guides for the Grasse river and Akwesasne, visit these links:

www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/regional/st_lawrence.htm

www.srmt-nsn.gov/uploads/site_files/FishAdvisory_WebFinal.pdf



06

Tsi nitewaiehrà:ne

Next Steps



Remediation activities will resume in the spring of 2020 with main channel capping, habitat reconstruction, re-plantings, and construction of a clean material handling area.

Activities to be conducted in 2021 and beyond include finishing main channel capping, reconstruction of habitat, re-plantings, and continuing to monitor fish contaminant levels.

Postal Patron

For more information

Reach out to
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Project information is available on Arconic's Grasse River website at: www.thegrasseriver.com.

U.S. EPA information about the Grasse River Superfund site is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/alcoa-aggregate>.

This document was prepared by SRMT Environment Division and MCA Environment Program from information provided by Arconic and the USEPA.