



2020 Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
Environment Division

Remediation & Restoration Program Updates

Kanien'kéhaka people fished, hunted, gathered and harvested traditional foods and medicines on the local rivers since time immemorial. *Akwesashró:nón* recognize these ancestral lands based on mutual respect and responsibility.

These resources and their traditional uses were impacted by industry chemicals, and the remediation and restoration projects are a positive step towards restoring this relationship.

01

Tsi nitewakierà:ne Project Updates



Grasse River - Alcoa/Arconic

The Grasse River site has had another busy year. Activities include dredging, capping, restoration and monitoring activities. Weather permitting, work will wrap up at the end of *Kentenhkó:wa*/November.

General Motors - Racer Trust

Projects are winding down and the site is in the final stages of activity. All of the dredging and capping remediation projects have been

completed. Final site restoration has just been completed this year. The site will enter into long-term monitoring to ensure the remedies remain effective.

Reynolds Metals - Arconic

All of the remediation and restoration activities have been completed. The site has entered into long-term monitoring to ensure the remedies remain effective.

02

Tsi Ní:tsi letewahawíhtha' tsi Nahò:ten lo'táksen Remediation



Grasse River - Alcoa/Arconic

An *Explanation of Significant Difference* (ESD) was approved in *Enniskó:wa*/March to conduct additional dredging of approximately 85,000 cubic yds of contaminated material in the Snug Harbor area. It is being performed to accommodate the larger draft of a new Seaway Development Corp tug boat that had the potential to damage the capping layers that are proposed to be placed in this area in 2021. This work started the first week of *Ohiarí:ha*/June after a short delay due to COVID 19.

Armored capping (sand filtration, rocks and gravel) is being placed from the old Massena Power canal to the Route 131 bridge. Several six-inch layers will be placed until a thickness of 25 inches is reached.

General Motors - Racer Trust

All remediation activities for this site have been completed.

Reynolds Metals - Arconic

All remediation activities for this site have been completed.



Grasse River - Alcoa/Arconic

The site has many restoration activities planned over the next several years. All fish, wildlife and plants need appropriate habitat that provides the basic needs of food, water, shelter, space and air.

Habitat and species assessments have been conducted to re-establish appropriate conditions for identifying and supporting the fish, wildlife and plants disturbed by contamination and remediation. Beginning in 2019, replanting of Mohawk culturally significant species took place on the banks of the Grasse River in an area we know as the Indian Meadows. In late *Ohiari:ha*/June, a seed ceremony was held to start this year's replantings. Replantings are taking place on shore, on the shoreline and in the shallow water. If any plants do not survive through the winter, they will be replanted again next year.

Freshwater mussels serve a vital ecological purpose by filtering our rivers which provide cleaner waters for drinking, swimming and fishing. The SRMT and NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation and other agencies are collaborating to propagate and relocate thousands of mussels from areas proposed for capping in 2021.



The 10-million gallon lagoon was excavated in 2018

General Motors - Racer Trust

The final site restoration activities have been completed this year. Several buildings have been demolished and half the property has been graded and backfilled to increase storm water permeation across the site.

The perimeter chain link fence has been expanded to run along State Route 37 connecting it with the existing fence at the Cove.

The large water treatment system has been downgraded to treat only groundwater. There is no longer any need to treat surface water since the contaminated on-site sources have been removed.

Reynolds Metals - Arconic

All restoration activities for this site have been completed.



Craig Arquette, SRMT Environmental Specialist, maintained a constant presence on-site at GM during both remediation and restoration. He is currently organizing the fall monitoring project.



Grasse River - Alcoa/Arconic

Air monitoring for PCBs, dust and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) continues. 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.

Water monitoring for PCBs and turbidity continue at the project and are conducted twice daily; day and night shifts. Community members have expressed concern about the murkiness (turbidity) of the water. The sand filtration layer, rocks and gravel being placed daily into the river to cap the dredged areas is the cause. The capping material is clean and there is no cause for concern.

Air and water sampling sites remained the same as last year. Air and water monitoring results are available online at: <http://www.thegrasseriver.com>. Two noise monitoring stations were added; one located by the staging area and another just east of County Route 131.

The Results: No issues required corrective action this season.

General Motors - Racer Trust

Sampling for PCBs in soil and sediment will take place this fall on Raquette point near the former dump site, Turtle Creek and Turtle Cove. Over 400 samples will be collected by Racer's contractor and SRMT Technicians and contractors over a three-week period. The samples will be 'split' and sent to two different labs to ensure the accuracy of the results.

No air monitoring is currently taking place.

The water treatment system will be monitored on a regular basis.

Reynolds Metals - Arconic

Long-term monitoring includes sampling for contaminants in the sediment, vegetation, benthic organisms and fish and evaluating the physical condition of the cap.

All

Since 2012, no consumption of fish is advised from the lower Grasse River to Raquette Point due to PCBs. A comprehensive fish monitoring program continues in the waters near all sites. When contaminants drop to acceptable levels, updates will be 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



SRMT Environmental Specialist Jay Wilkins provides oversight on the Grasse River Cleanup.

05

Tsi nitewaiehrà:ne Next Steps



Five-Year Review reports are documents prepared by the USEPA to evaluate the implementation and performance of site remedies to determine if they remain protective of human health and the environment. They contain a record of all activities that took place at each location over the past five years. The 2020 General Motors-Racer Trust report is available to the public on the Tribe's website at <https://www.srmt-nsn.gov/environment>.

The reports for each of the Superfund sites will be published in the timeframe below.

- 2020 General Motors - Racer Trust
- 2021 Reynolds Metals - Arconic
- 2022 Grasse River - Alcoa/Arconic

06

For more information



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This document was funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Great Lakes Restoration Initiative



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