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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Peterson/Puritan, Inc. Superfund Site
Preliminary Reuse Assessment

Blackstone River Bikeway, Lincoln, RI

U.S. EPA, Region I
Offices of Site Remediation and Restoration
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PURPOSE

EPA-New England is responsible for the cleanup of over 100 Superfund sites throughout New England. Although protecting human health and the environment is the primary objective of those cleanups, EPA also recognizes the value in helping to return Superfund sites to beneficial reuse. Understanding the current and likely future uses of a site is fundamental to achieving both of these objectives.

To establish cleanup standards and design a protective remedy, it is necessary to first determine how the site and immediate surroundings will be used. That information is then used to make reasonable assumptions about potential exposures to contaminants. For this reason, the types of site use, as well as the level of certainty regarding those uses, can have a dramatic impact on the final remedy and associated project costs.

This Preliminary Reuse Assessment summarizes information about current and future land uses at the Peterson/Puritan, Inc. Superfund Site (site) that was readily available to the EPA case team. It is not purported to be a comprehensive reuse assessment. Instead, the document is intended to be the basis for working with local communities, property owners and other stakeholders to develop a more complete and realistic understanding of site use. This collective information will help support EPA's decisions regarding appropriate response actions at the site.

As long as the protectiveness of the remedy is not compromised, it may be feasible for EPA to make reasonable accommodations in the design and implementation of the remedy to support current and planned site uses. These can conceivably include the placement of utility corridors, temporary roads, treatment stations, etc.; adjustments in surface contouring; project scheduling and a host of other activities. All of these can sometimes be an important factor in facilitating site use. However, for information on site reuse to be effectively considered, it must be available early in the remedial process, and be known with sufficient detail and certainty. Where uncertainty regarding potential reuse options exists, EPA hopes to encourage and assist, as practical, local efforts to resolve those uncertainties.

In assessing likely site uses, EPA also believes it is important to consider both short-term and longer-term time horizons. In some cases, there may be reasonable steps that can be taken in the context of site cleanup to expedite the reuse of some areas. An existing example is the Blackstone River Bikeway that was recently built on the site by various Rhode Island agencies and partnering organizations. Without EPA's cooperation and flexibility, this key section of the bike path would have experienced significant implementation delays.

The Preliminary Reuse Assessment is presented in three sections:

- **Section 1 - Site Background**: Describes the physical, environmental, and historical context of the site, particularly as it applies to current and potential future uses;
- **Section 2 - Reuse Status**: Summarizes the current uses and identifies some potential reuse issues and considerations associated with individual areas of the site; and
- **Section 3 - Site-Specific Planning & Implementation Support**: Identifies some specific actions EPA plans to take to work with stakeholders and other parties to resolve remaining questions about future site use.

SECTION 1- SITE BACKGROUND

General Description

The Peterson/Puritan, Inc. Superfund Site is located along the Blackstone River within the towns of Cumberland and Lincoln, Rhode Island. The site occupies 500 acres and runs approximately two miles in a generally north to south direction and 2,000 feet to the east and west of the main river channel. The Ashton Dam and the Pratt Dam are located at the northern and southern extremities, respectively. For remediation purposes, the site is currently divided into two operable units (OUs) and EPA may possibly designate a third (see Figure 3). In general, the northeast portion of the site sits at a higher elevation. Groundwater generally flows towards the Blackstone River in the southwest direction. Approximately two thirds of the site is located in the 100-year flood plain.

The site contains over 40 separate parcels owned by private parties and by local and state governments. The current uses include an industrial park, commercial/office buildings, a ballfield, an on-going sand and gravel operation, a well field, a state park, and a bike path. The site is also inter-dispersed with wetlands and other open space areas.

Other significant features include the historic Blackstone Canal which runs roughly parallel to the river and extends over the lower two thirds of the site. A segment of the active Providence & Worcester Railroad is also located on the site.

Land uses surrounding the site are predominately commercial and residential to the north and west, residential to the east and commercial to the south. There are over 1000 residences within a one-mile radius, 12,000 residences within a four-mile radius, and the nearest residence is within a quarter-mile of the site.

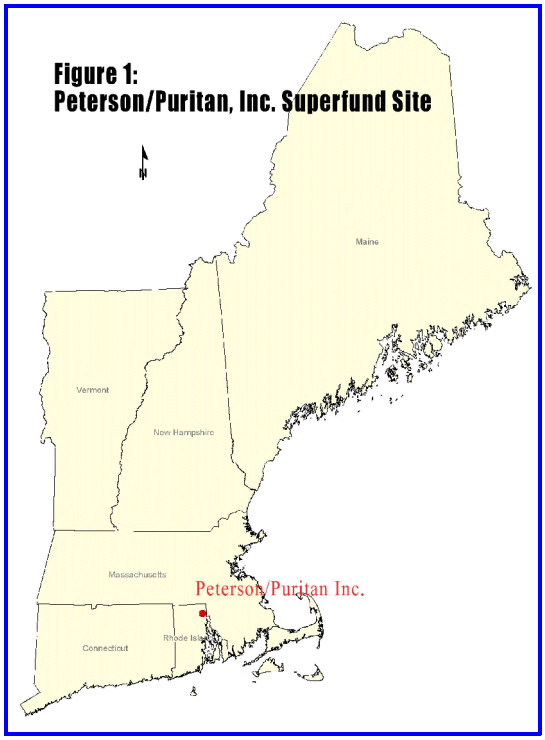


Figure 1:
Peterson/Puritan, Inc. Superfund Site

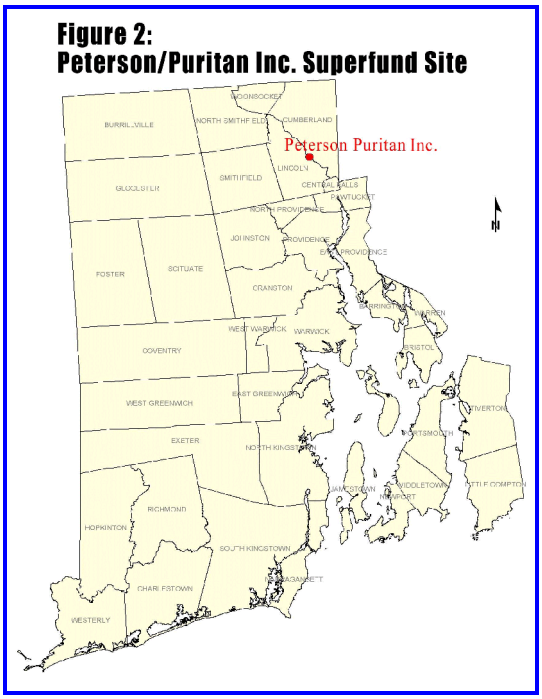
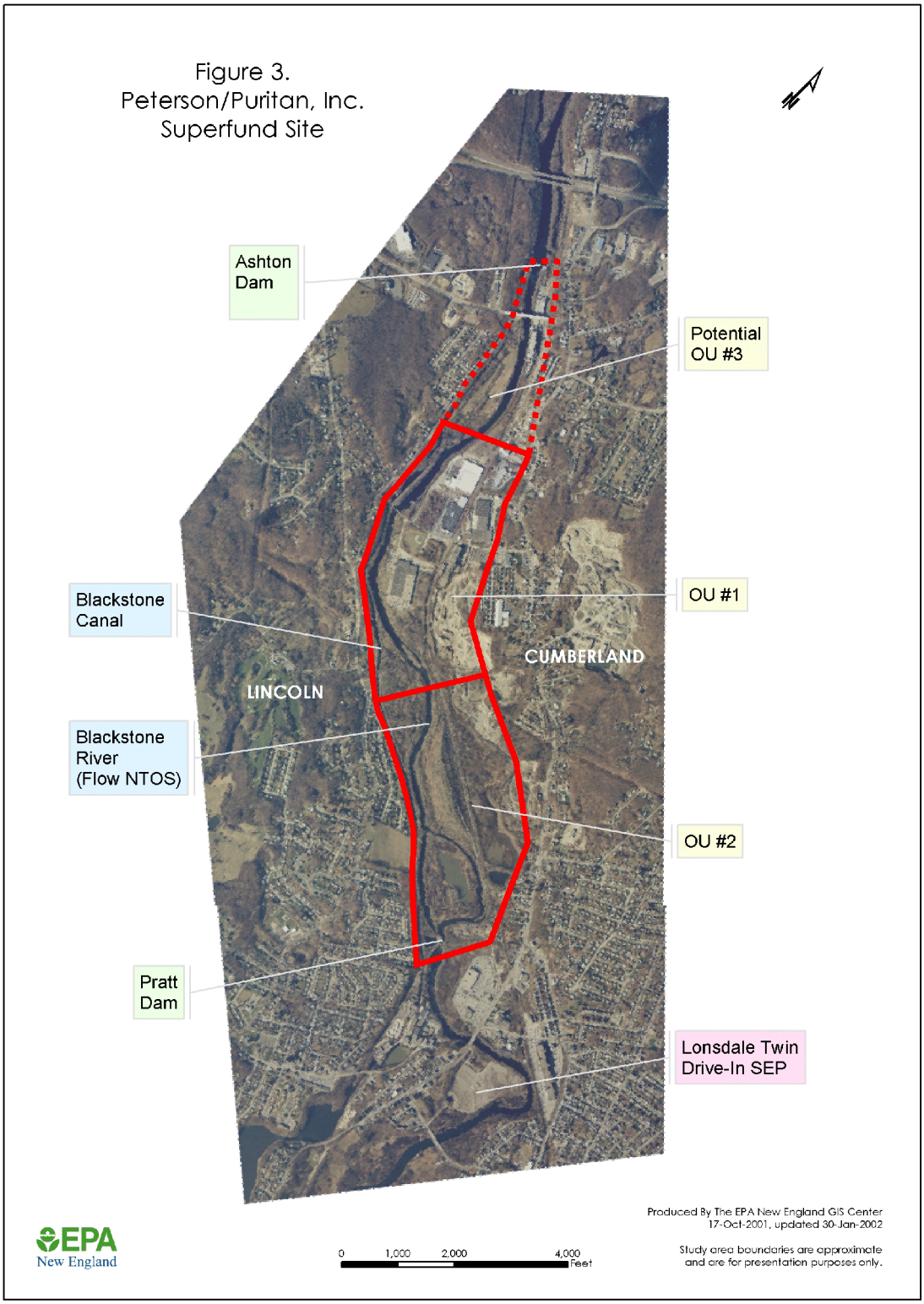


Figure 2:
Peterson/Puritan Inc. Superfund Site



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