

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Weston & Sampson, on behalf of the Village of Valley Falls (Village), has prepared this Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Report for the Former Thompson Mill property (the Site), located at 273 Poplar Street, Valley Falls, New York. This Phase I ESA was completed in accordance with ASTM Standard E1527-13 and to meet EPA's All Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) Rule. This ESA was funded by a Cooperative Agreement between the Village and the EPA through a Brownfields Assessment Grant (96267417-0). Any exceptions to, deletions from, this practice are described in **Sections 1.6 and 1.7**.

Findings of the Phase I ESA are as follows:

- The Site is owned by Rensselaer County. The 23.43-acre Site is developed with one approximately 13,000 square feet (sq. ft.), three-story brick former mill building with a partially submerged and partially slab-on-grade foundation. The Site was utilized as a textile mill and manufacturing location since its construction in the early 1800's. Currently, the Site buildings are derelict and abandoned. The Site's former mill building is significantly damaged due to a fire in 2009. The Site was originally serviced with private sewer and water and is currently connected to public water and sewer. It not known when the current public systems were connected. Originally the mill utilized coal, but most recently the mill was reportedly heated with fuel oil. It is unknown when the mill switched fuel sources.
- The central portion of the Site is developed with the Valley Falls wastewater treatment facility (WWTF). Various WWTF structures are within a fenced area. An outfall structure is located north of the WWTF discharging to the Hoosic River. The remaining portions of the Site are either wooded upland areas or wet areas with a less dense canopy.
- The earliest identified development of the Site was as a portion of a textile mill complex in the late 1800's. The various mills identified historically on-Site included a knitting mill, grist mill, flax mill, and pulp mill, were operated by James Thompson & Co, Inc. Site uses prior to the late 1800s were not identified during the historical review.
- The various mill operations including machining, washing, preparing, knitting, finishing, storage, dyeing, drying, spinning, coal storage, and pulp, yarn, and twine manufacturing occurred as late as the 1980s. The majority of the Site buildings were destroyed by fire in 2009. The building remains vacant to date. Weston & Sampson is of the opinion that the former operation of the Site as a mill, and the major fire at the Site likely resulted in the release of multiple contaminants including incomplete combustion by products (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs), oils, solvents and/or metals. In addition, releases of hazardous building materials may have occurred during the fire and subsequent building collapse. These materials could include polycyclic chlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), lead and asbestos. These releases may still be occurring as the building deteriorates.

This assessment has revealed no evidence of recognized environmental conditions (RECs) in connection with the Site except for the following:

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- Likely releases associated with the former operation of the Site as a textile mill, including beneath the former on-Site above ground storage tanks (ASTs).
- Likely releases of hazardous building materials during building collapse and deterioration.
- The release of materials affecting the soil, air, and/or surface water associated with the 2009 fire (Spill No. 0900815).
- Several areas of solid waste disposal on-Site, nearby and distal to the mill structure.
- The potential presence of a groundwater plume at the Site from an off-Site release of tetrachloroethylene (PCE) associated with the Valley Falls drycleaner property.
- The environmental conditions associated with the Former Jim's Auto facility which may be resulting in the presence of hazardous substance and/or petroleum impacts to the Site.
- The active use of the railroad line adjacent to the Site since the late 1800s has the potential to impact environmental media at the Site.

The following historical recognized environmental condition (HREC) exists at the Site:

- The Site spill record associated with 2 fuel oil ASTs (Spill no. 8906784) indicates that cleanup was completed on December 31, 1997 met standards and indicates that the tanks and soil were removed. The release was reportedly addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable regulatory authority and is therefore considered a HREC.

This following Areas of Concern (AOCs) have been identified at the Site associated with the RECs above:

- AOC-1 Former Mill Building Footprint.
- AOC-2 Former AST Area adjacent to Mill Building.
- AOC-3 Property Line Adjacent to Railroad.
- AOC-4 Solid Waste Disposal Areas.
- AOC-5 Shallow Groundwater migrating onto Site from Upgradient Release (Jim's Auto)
- AOC-6 Bedrock Groundwater migrating onto Site from Upgradient Release (Valley Falls drycleaner).

The following data gaps were identified during this Phase I ESA:

- Data failure was encountered during historical document review related to the "5-year interval."
- Data failure was encountered during historical document review related to the identification of Site use back to the date of the original development.
- Inability to access former mill building interior for inspection.

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It is Weston & Sampson's opinion that the data gaps associated with historical document review do not represent "significant" data gaps as defined by ASTM E1527-13 because other information was identified to define the continuity of Site use and to identify potential RECs in connection with the Site.

It is Weston & Sampson's opinion that the inability to enter the former mill building on Site does not represent a "significant" data gap as defined by ASTM E1527-13 because: a) other information was identified to define the continuity of Site use and b) a substantial portion of the interior could be observed from the exterior and via drone. Also, the long history of mill use allows us to identify potential RECs in connection with the Site.

No other data gaps, as defined by ASTM Practice E 1527-13, were noted during the Site reconnaissance and records review that would significantly affect the ability of Weston & Sampson to identify RECs in connection with the Site.

Based upon the findings, opinions and conclusions of this Phase I ESA, Weston & Sampson recommends that a Phase II ESA be completed to address the identified RECs and to characterize the Site for redevelopment and reuse.

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