



**Berkshire & Eastern Railroad  
Pellet Reporting/Information Hotline &  
Email  
888-413-4113  
PASCommunity@gwrr.com**

# FACT SHEET

**Derailment Pollution Cleanup**

**Hoosic River**

**Valley Falls, NY**

**At Railroad Mile Post 457.5**

**March 2024**

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## **Berkshire & Eastern Railroad Valley Falls Derailment Site Cleanup**

On February 7, 2024 at approximately 9:15 p.m., a Pan Am Southern LLC train operated by Berkshire & Eastern Railroad (BERX) traveling eastbound derailed at railroad mile post 457.5 in Valley Falls, New York. A total of 10 cars were affected by the derailment including two box cars (upright), one empty gondola, two hopper cars carrying grain, one Department of Transportation (DOT) 111 Tank Car carrying rapeseed oil and three hopper cars carrying polypropylene plastic pellets.

Of the cars derailed, two hopper cars came to rest partially in the Hoosic River. Polypropylene plastic pellets were released. Grain was also released onto the banks of the Hoosic River, and some material entered the river. A small amount of rapeseed oil was released when the vapor line on the car was damaged as a result of the derailment. HEPACO, an environmental response contractor to the BERX, plugged the vapor line during the initial response.

The cleanup activities are being performed by Miller Environmental Group and HEPACO with consultation from TRC Environmental. The NYSDEC has been providing oversight of the project since the incident occurred.

### **Highlights of the Site Cleanup:**

- Rapeseed Oil – Vapor line plugged
- Initial Boom Deployment – Boom deployed downstream of derailment at the railroad bridge located at Fishermans Lane in Schaghticoke, NY (2/8/24)
- Vacuum Extraction of railcars – Removal of plastic pellets from railcars (2/8-2/11)
- Secondary Boom Deployment – Boom Deployed downstream of Broad Street on Hudson (2/8/24)
- Vacuum Extraction of spilt grain (2/10-2/12)
- Plastic pellet collection in Hoosic River near affected dam water intakes
- Plastic pellet collection along the Hoosic and Hudson Rivers by Miller Environmental Group including near the Fishermans Lane rail bridge, the Brookfield Power Dam in Schaghticoke, state and private lands near Lock 4 in Schaghticoke, Quack Island, eastern shoreline near River Road in Troy.

### **Polypropylene Plastic Pellets**

Polypropylene plastic pellets are one of the most commonly used thermoplastics in the world and are used to make plastic packaging, used in auto manufacturing, medical devices and food packing among other uses. The pellets are small, nearly white to clear and round in shape. They float in water and have a tendency to

accumulate along shorelines. According to the manufacturer's information, there is no known cancer causing or reproductive toxicity exposure levels for the materials used to make the pellets (See Heartland Regulatory Statement- February, 2024).

**How to Comment:** Berkshire & Eastern Railroad is accepting calls and emails reporting pellets relating to the Valley Falls Derailment for the foreseeable future. Updates will be shared as they become available. Contact information is located on this fact sheet.

**Comments or Concerns for NYSDEC**

Division of Water NYSDEC Region 4  
1130 N. Westcott Road  
Schenectady, NY 12306  
(518) 357-2045  
[DOW.R4@dec.ny.gov](mailto:DOW.R4@dec.ny.gov)

**Next Steps:** Berkshire & Eastern Railroad will investigate all reported sightings of potential pellet accumulation. If evidence of pellets is found, cleanup will be performed at those locations.

The rail cars onsite will be scrapped and the remaining pellets at the Site will be removed at that time.

**Site Description:** The location of the spill is at railroad mile post 457.5 north of State Route 67 in Valley Falls, NY and is bordered by the Hoosic River. The pellets have been primarily identified along the Hoosic River between the point of derailment and the confluence with the Hudson River. Additionally, pellets have been identified along the Hudson River from Lock 4 primarily to the downstream boom located south of Broad Street Bridge between Waterford and Troy. Minor amounts of pellets have been reported as far south as Athens, New York.

**Summary of the Current Status:** The primary concern at the Site is the recovery of the polypropylene plastic pellets. The pellets were spilled into the Hoosic River and have traveled downstream into the Hudson River. Berkshire & Eastern Railroad is coordinating with its environmental consultants and contractors to identify areas of pellet accumulation, removal of the pellets and ensure proper disposal.

Some examples of polypropylene plastic pellets accumulated on land for reference are included below.

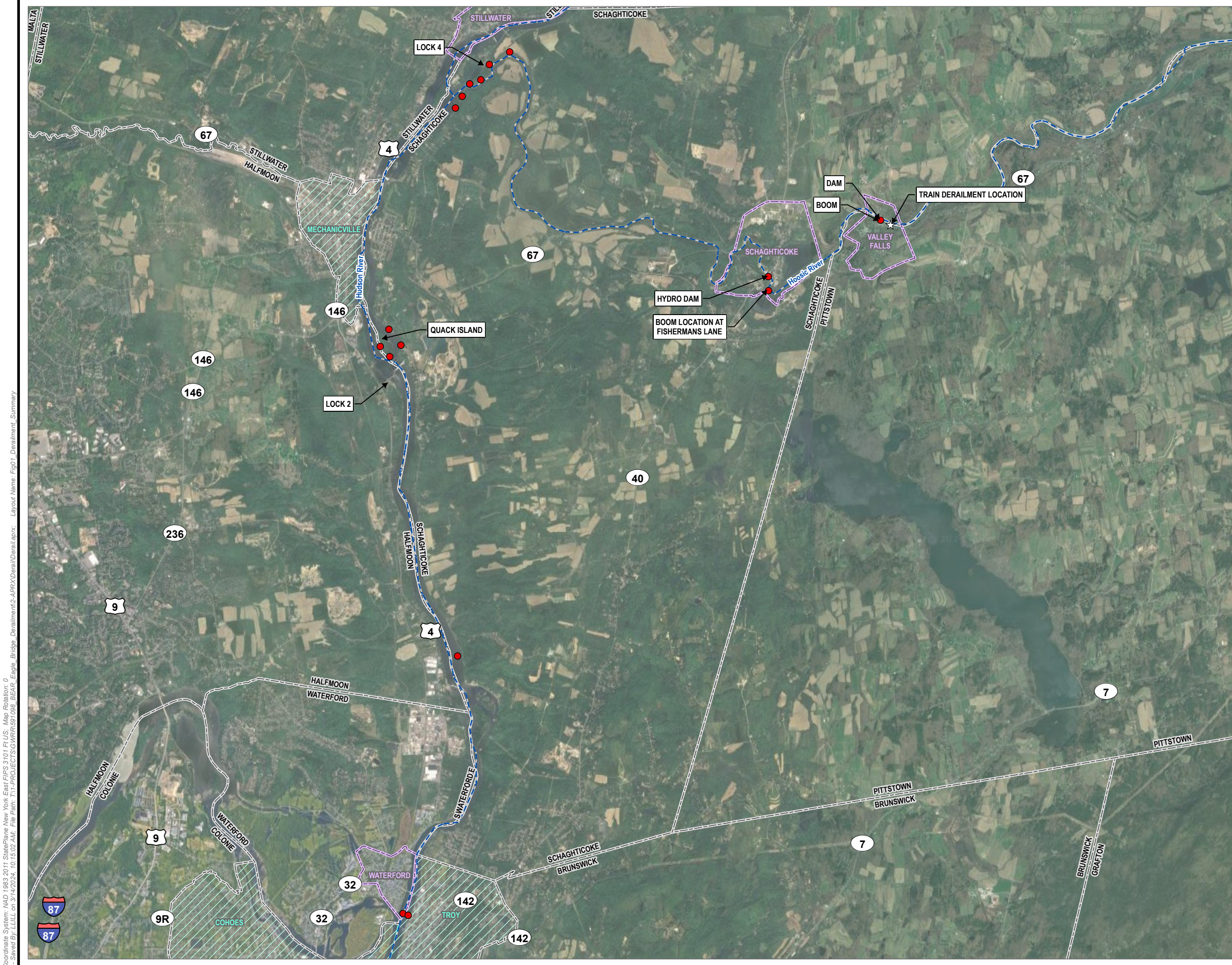


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***We encourage you to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for others to see.***

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# **Site Location Map**

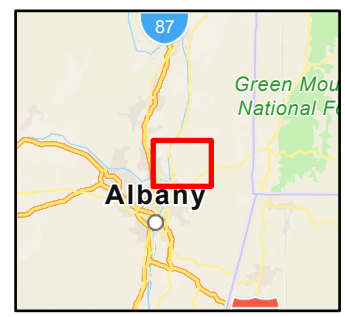


**LEGEND**


- ☆ TRAIN DERAILMENT LOCATION
- AREA OF COMPLETED PLASTIC PELLET CLEANUP
- RIVER
- ▭ VILLAGES
- ▭ TOWNS
- ▭ CITIES

**NOTES:**

1. LOCATIONS AND DIMENSIONS OF PHYSICAL FEATURES AND BOUNDARIES ARE APPROXIMATE.
- BASE MAP: GOOGLE EARTH SERVICE LAYER  
 DATA SOURCES: TRC, ESRI, NYGIS



1:72,000  
 1" = 6,000'  
 0 3,000 6,000 FEET

PROJECT: <b>BERKSHIRE &amp; EASTERN RAILROAD VALLEY FALLS DERAILMENT</b>	
TITLE: <b>PLASTIC PELLET LOCATION/CLEANUP AREAS</b>	
DRAWN BY: L. LILL	PROJ. NO.: 591098.0000.0000
CHECKED BY: J. LAROCK	<b>FIGURE 1</b>
APPROVED BY: J. LAROCK	
DATE: MARCH 2024	
	
3 CORPORATE DRIVE SUITE 202 CLIFTON PARK, NY 12065 PHONE: 518.348.1190	
FILE:	Derail.aprx

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 2011 StatePlane New York East FIPS 3101 F.U.S.; Map Rotation: 0  
 - Saved By: L.LILL on 3/14/2024, 10:15:02 AM; File Path: T:\PROJECTS\GWR\191098\_DERAIL\BEPAR\_BEAR\_Engle\_Bridge\_Derailment2-APRX\Derail\Derail.aprx; Layout Name: Fig01\_Derailment\_Summary