

ULSTER COUNTY LANDFILL SITE SELECTION STUDY

Findings from the
Cornerstone Report
And Executive Director
Recommendations

How Did We Get Here?

Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (the Agency) was created in 1986 by state legislation at the request of the Ulster County Legislature, in part to site a county-wide landfill.

Almost 40 years later no county-wide landfill site has been identified

In 2021 the Agency engaged HydroQuest to conduct a GIS Analysis and Hydrogeological study to identify potential sites

How Did We Get Here?

After receiving the HydroQuest Study the Agency Board of Directors determined a more comprehensive study was needed

In 2023 the Agency released a Request for Proposals for an Ulster County Landfill Selection Study and selected Cornerstone Engineering and Geology, PLLC

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What is the Cornerstone Study?

- The Cornerstone Study has three specific tasks:
 1. Review HydroQuest's Landfill Site Selection Study in Ulster County, New York Report dated January 5, 2022
 2. Review existing closed Ulster County landfill sites for potential landfill reclamation
 3. Review potential groupings of adjacent properties within Ulster County which in aggregate would provide 100 or more acres suitable for landfill development

What the Cornerstone Study is not

The Cornerstone Study has not identified a site for a future landfill, rather it has identified five sites that need further evaluation

The Cornerstone Study has not determined the availability of any parcels for which they have identified for further evaluation; that will be done as part of further due diligence

Cornerstone has not provided the engineering services that would be required to begin the permit process with the DEC; those type of services could be hundreds of thousands of dollars per site

Setting Expectations and Context

The landfill siting process typically takes approximately 10 years

Any landfill permitted in Ulster County will be constructed to the highest standards when it comes to environmental stewardship

The Agency is committed to diverting as many materials as possible and keeping these materials out of a landfill, regardless of whether the landfill is sited in Ulster County or not

Why Site An Ulster County Landfill?

Each year the Agency receives and disposes of roughly 140,000 tons of municipal solid waste and construction and demolition debris

Currently, the Agency transports that waste to Seneca Meadows Landfill about 250 miles away, generating over 4,000 tons of CO2 emissions per year

Seneca Meadows Landfill's permit and capacity is scheduled to end in December of 2025, and even with a permit extension is slated to close by 2040

Why Site An Ulster County Landfill?

There are 26 active landfills in New York State

As of 2020 data, the most recent available, the total annual permit capacity of all 26 landfills is 10,940,983 tons and New Yorkers currently send 8,946,113 tons a year to those landfills

As of 2020: 202,168,019 tons of total lifetime permit capacity exist at those 26 landfills

If NY residents continue to send 8,946,113 tons a year to existing landfills, there will be enough capacity for 22 years from 2020, or through 2042



Why Site An Ulster County Landfill?

Facility Name	County	2020 Waste Quantity (tons)	Existing Annual Permit Limits (tons/year)	Existing & Planned Capacity Under Permit
Albany City SWMF	Albany	97,859	275,100	1,335,998
Allied/BFI Niagara Falls Landfill	Niagara	417,084	800,000	2,699,101
Chautauqua Landfill	Chautauqua	263,624	408,000	7,152,155
Green Ridge RDF	Saratoga	268,545	375,500	3,532,557
Ontario County SLF	Ontario	774,415	920,693	5,456,523
Seneca Meadows LF	Seneca	1,738,844	2,190,000	8,520,432

- Although there are 26 active landfills in NY State only 6 have the additional capacity needed to accept waste from the Agency

Results of Cornerstone Study

64 Sites were evaluated by Cornerstone through the 3 Tasks

Task 1

Task 1 sites recommended for further evaluation

- Site E (SBL 94.2-1-3) Gardiner- **Candidate Site E in Task 3 This site was eliminated in Task 3**
- Site H (SBL 95.3-4-36.1) Plattekill **Candidate Site G in Task 3**
- Site I (101.2-2-12.92) Plattekill **Candidate Site H in Task 3**

Task 2

Task 2 sites recommended for further evaluation

- Site 42 Town of Rosendale Landfill **This is Candidate Site J in Task 3 This site was eliminated in Task 3**
- Site 43 Williams Lake Dumpsite 4 Rosendale **This is Candidate Site J in Task 3 This site was eliminated in Task 3**
- Site 44 Environmental Landfill Inc. (Hertel) Plattekill **Candidate Site G in Task 3**
- Site 45 Hercules, Inc Esopus **Candidate Site H in Task 3**

Results of Cornerstone Study

64 Sites were evaluated by Cornerstone through the 3 Tasks

Task 3

Task 3 sites recommended for further evaluation

- Candidate Site A: Wawarsing: Adjacent Road Milk Rd 247 Acres
- Candidate Site B: Wawarsing: Adjacent Road Brown Rd 596 Acres
- Candidate Site G (Site H from Task 1): Plattekill: Adjacent Road Route 44/55 127 Acres
- Candidate Site H (Site I from Task 1): Plattekill: Adjacent Road Camp Sunset Rd 86 Acres
- Candidate Site I: Esopus: Adjacent Road Hercules Dr 196 Acres

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Executive Director Recommendations

3 Tiers of Sites

- Tier 1 sites recommended for further evaluation
- Tier 2 sites with complex environmental concerns which must be resolved prior to further evaluation
- Tier 3 sites not recommended for further evaluation

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Tier 3

Sites Not Recommended for Further Evaluation

- Candidate Site G: This site includes the former Hertel Landfill in the Town of Plattekill
 - Ulster County Legislature Resolution 200.2 of 2023 opposes a County Wide Landfill in the Town of Plattekill
 - The overall usable size of this parcel will not allow for necessary expansion, and it is surrounded by wetlands
 - There are over 50 residences that are in close proximity to this site. Although, they are beyond the required buffer area needed to make the site feasible, this will make permitting more difficult
 - The footprint of the actual usable space for the landfill is not ideal and will make construction and maintenance difficult

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Tier 3

Sites Not Recommended for Further Evaluation

Candidate Site H: This site is on Camp Sunset Road in the Town of Plattekill

- Ulster County Legislature Resolution 200.2 of 2023 opposes a County Wide Landfill in the Town of Plattekill
- This site is too small as it only has 86 usable acres and no ability for expansion
- There are at least three dozen residences that are in close proximity to this site. Although, they are beyond the required buffer area needed to make the site feasible, this will make permitting more difficult
- This site is constrained by a powerline corridor, large wetland area, a lake and is a tributary of the Hudson River via the Black Creek.

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Tier 2

Sites With Complex Environmental Concerns Which Must Be Resolved Prior To Further Evaluation

Candidate Site I: This is the former Hercules Inc Landfill on Hercules Drive in Esopus

- This is a superfund site with many known hazardous contaminants on site. This will require coordination with the DEC and EPA prior to any further additional evaluation can be made
- The site was used to manufacture explosives, which may be buried in the soil onsite
- There may be funding available for environmental studies and remediation
- This site does have rail infrastructure which makes receiving/sending waste much more cost effective
- This site is centrally located between UCRRA's current transfer stations and is in close proximity to Route 9w
- This would take a coordinated effort between the Town of Esopus, Ulster County, UCRRA, DEC, EPA, and those responsible for the superfund site cleanup to remediate this site in order to make it possible as a county-wide landfill

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Tier 1 Sites Recommended For Further Evaluation

- Candidate Site A: Wawarsing Adjacent to Milk Road
 - 247 Acres
 - Access from State Rte 52
 - Fewer than 20 residences near the site
 - Located on the Sullivan County border which could be useful for regionalization
 - Other parcels available in Sullivan County for expansion
 - This site is made up of only 8 parcels

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Tier 1 Sites Recommended For Further Evaluation

- Candidate Site B: Wawarsing Adjacent to Brown Road
 - 596 Acres
 - Located in close proximity to Sullivan County
 - Main access roads are Ste Rte 52 and 55, however travel on smaller roads will be necessary for direct access to site
 - Four parcels are currently for sale totaling 191 acres
 - 20 residences in close proximity to site
 - This site is in a Potential Environmental Justice Area, therefore further evaluation will determine if siting a landfill at this site meets all 360 permit requirements

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Likely Questions

- How did Site B's inclusion in a community with a designation as a Potential Environmental Justice Area affect this recommendation?
 - I take this designation very seriously and it weighed heavily on my decision-making process. Ultimately, I decided that the correct process to determine whether the potential benefits to the community would outweigh any environmental impacts, would be further evaluation by a consultant with expertise in this analysis.

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Likely Questions

- Isn't all of Wawarsing designated as a Potential Environmental Justice Area and/or Disadvantaged Community?
 - No, Site A is not in a Potential Environmental Justice Area or Disadvantaged Community as designated by New York State.

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Likely Questions

- What are the next steps?

1. There is a resolution before the Board to authorize the Executive Director to procure the necessary engineering services to conduct further evaluation on sites that the Board selects. If the resolution is approved, we move to step 2 below.
2. The Executive Director will solicit proposals for those services through an RFP process. The services will be provided and contracted in stages, which will include:
 1. Procuring agreements with landowners to conduct necessary studies to determine site feasibility.
 2. Conduct studies that will determine whether the hydrology and soil makeup of the site is appropriate for a landfill and conduct traffic studies to determine the same, along with other appropriate studies as required by NY DEC Regulations Part 360.
 3. Public meetings will be held with communities where the landfill site is selected.
 4. If a suitable site is identified, the Agency and consultants will apply for permits with the DEC and Town and will begin a SEQRA process.

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Likely Questions

- What happens if none of the sites in the Cornerstone report are deemed feasible upon further evaluation?
 - The Cornerstone report has identified all properties in Ulster County that could feasibly be the site of a landfill. If none of the sites are feasible after further evaluation, the focus of the Agency will be on regionalization and working with companies that provide advanced technology solutions for managing materials discarded as waste.