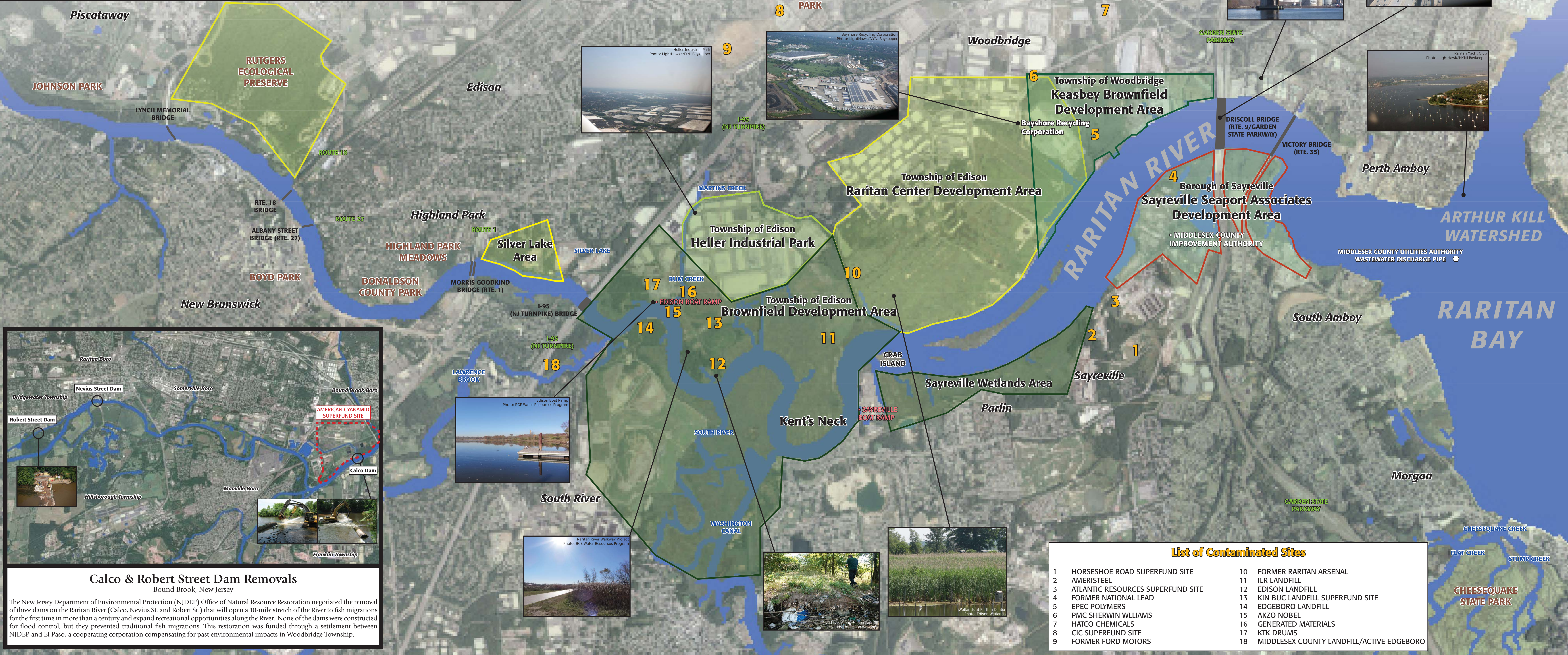


INTRODUCTION

The Raritan River - called the “Queen of Rivers” – is the longest river solely in New Jersey. The Lower Raritan River Watershed is a rich ecological system that hosts hundreds of wildlife and marine species including Osprey, Cooper’s hawk, Bald Eagle, Striped Bass, Fluke, Weakfish, Bluefish, Flounder, Blue Claw Crabs and other shellfish. This incredible natural resource also hosts a variety of public recreational opportunities. Many people enjoy fishing, crabbing, boating, kayaking, bird watching and hiking along the river.

However, the Lower Raritan River, formally deemed the “Chemical Belt” due to its rich industrial past during the Industrial and Technological Revolutions, is severely impacted by industrial and chemical pollution. There are numerous unremediated toxic waste sites that line its coast that continually contribute to the tainted water quality of the river. Because of the past and present contamination, the consumption of fish, crabs, and other seafood from this area is restricted due to associated public health risks. Redevelopment of these sites generally requires onerous remediation.





PROGRESSIVE REDEVELOPMENT

KEASBEY REDEVELOPMENT (WOODBIDGE)

Two recently approved redevelopment areas provide sharply contrasting visions for the fate of the Lower Raritan River. One provides a balanced path to a thriving estuary and vibrant regional economy, the other for a minimal toxic cleanup and sprawling overdevelopment.

Progressive Redevelopment: Keasbey Brownfields Development Area (Woodbridge)

The 665-acre balanced redevelopment in Woodbridge Township removes contamination, constructs economically sustainable waterfront development, and incorporates the preservation of a significant amount of natural habitat, including a 100-acre waterfront park with freshwater wetland creation, tidal wetland enhancement, two miles of hiking trails, and public access to the Raritan River for the first time in 100 years.

This successful redevelopment plan was guided by a diverse stakeholder group including Woodbridge Township, Edison Wetlands Association, local businesses, and property owners. The total Brownfields Area encompasses multiple site cleanups including the EPEC site, Viridian site, Morris Properties, and Gentempo Landfill. Moreover, the industry and construction are based on meeting regional needs for cost effective manufacturing and environmental sustainability through the efficient reuse of resources and waste minimization.

The Keasbey Brownfields Development Area applies the Eco-Industrial Park approach that is designed to bring together groups of businesses that share resources including materials, water, energy infrastructure, natural habitat and information. Wastes from one industry will be used as byproducts for others. It also incorporates an integrated resource recovery facility for reuse, recycling, compost, processing, manufacturing and retail in a central facility that is also available to the public.



ECOLOGICALLY DESTRUCTIVE REDEVELOPMENT

SAYREVILLE SEAPORT ASSOCIATES (SAYREVILLE)

Conversely, the Sayreville Seaport Associates project on the 400-acre former National Lead toxic site is a poorly planned project where thousands of units of housing will be densely packed around a giant mall and retail shop, wasting millions of taxpayer dollars. This recipe is similar to that of the failed Xanadu Mall in the Meadowlands that has also been costing taxpayers millions of dollars. Additionally, the biased redevelopment planning process included only one stakeholder, Sayreville Economic Redevelopment Agency.

Despite containing hundreds of acres of habitat at the mouth of the Raritan River, the Sayreville plan lacks the preservation of a significant portion of natural habitat and open space. Worse, the limited amount of open space obligated to be preserved within this private redevelopment was acquired using State and County tax dollars.

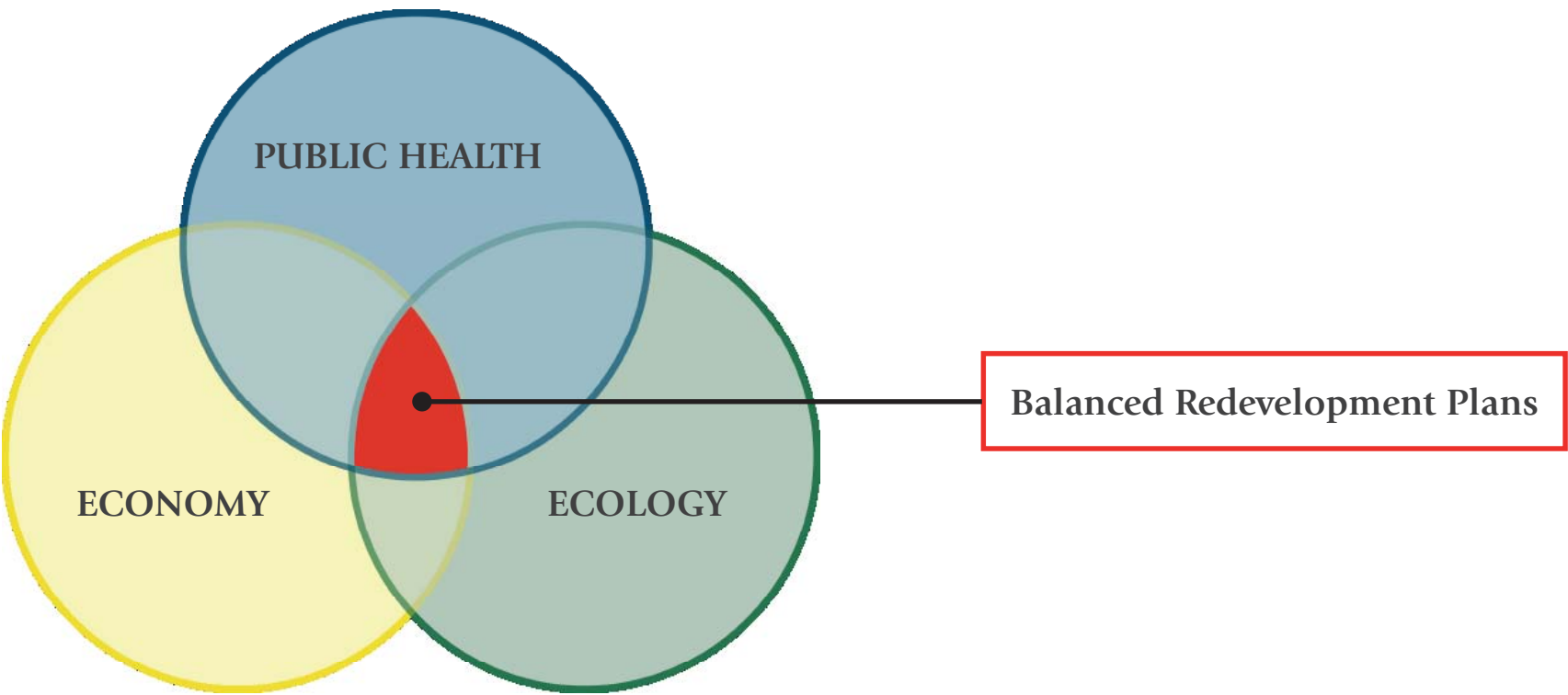
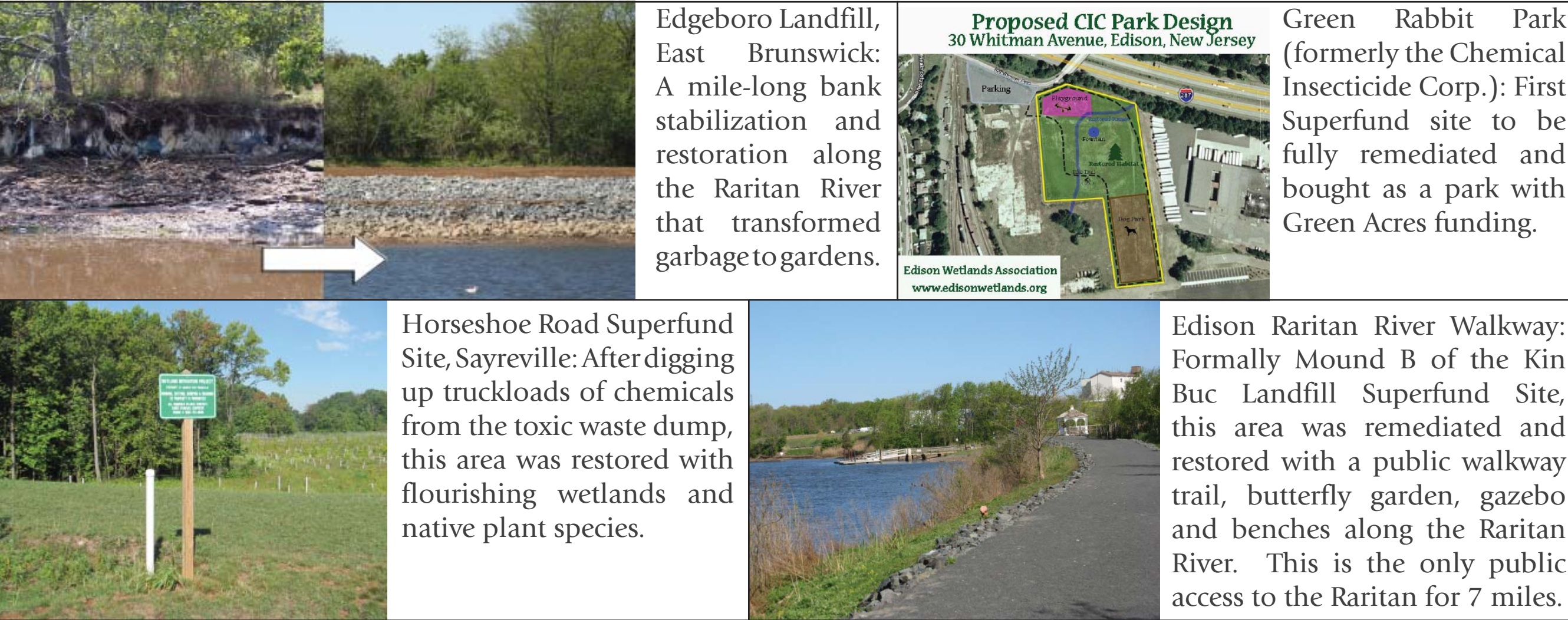
This redevelopment provided the loophole for National Lead, the party legally responsible for polluting the River in front of the site, to shift the cleanup burden onto the taxpayer if it is ever to occur.



BALANCED APPROACH

PRINCIPLES OF THE FUTURE

Good examples of the past, which the future can be modelled from...



Typical development along the Lower Raritan River and elsewhere is ugly and frustrating. Too common is the New Jersey development scenario where large litigious corporate polluters, well paid lobbyists, parochial and self-serving politicians, and bureaucratic agencies overdevelop one of New Jersey's great natural treasures while dropping the tab on the taxpayer.

Despite significant challenges, there is reason for optimism about the revitalization of the remaining redevelopment sites along the Lower Raritan River. Developers, government entities, municipal and regional planners, and conservationists can and will work together using local public input to bring about positive ecological and economic restoration. The balanced sustainable approach to redevelopment should be fostered and supported. It should be the approach used to improve the 3,200 acre former Raritan Arsenal, the huge swath of land surrounding the Kin Buc Landfill and other landfills, and the numerous smaller redevelopment sites along the river that have yet to be planned and approved.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To get involved or download a copy of the map, please visit:  
**www.BlueRaritan.org**

For more information about the Lower Raritan River and entities that protect it please visit:  
NY/NJ Baykeeper  
www.nynjbaykeeper.org

Technical Assistance & Funding Provided By:  
Edison Wetlands Association  
www.edisonwetlands.org

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www.water.rutgers.edu

