

# Public Health Assessments for the Torch Lake Superfund Site and Surrounding Area

Michigan Department of Community Health

June 20, 2012

# Housekeeping

- Introductions
  - Agencies
  - Government officials
- Meeting ground rules
  - Presentations
  - Questions and comments

# Meeting Outline

- Public Health Assessment process
- MDCH and Torch Lake area
- Physical Hazards
- Drinking Water
- Next steps
- Future documents
- Questions/comments

# Public Health Assessment process

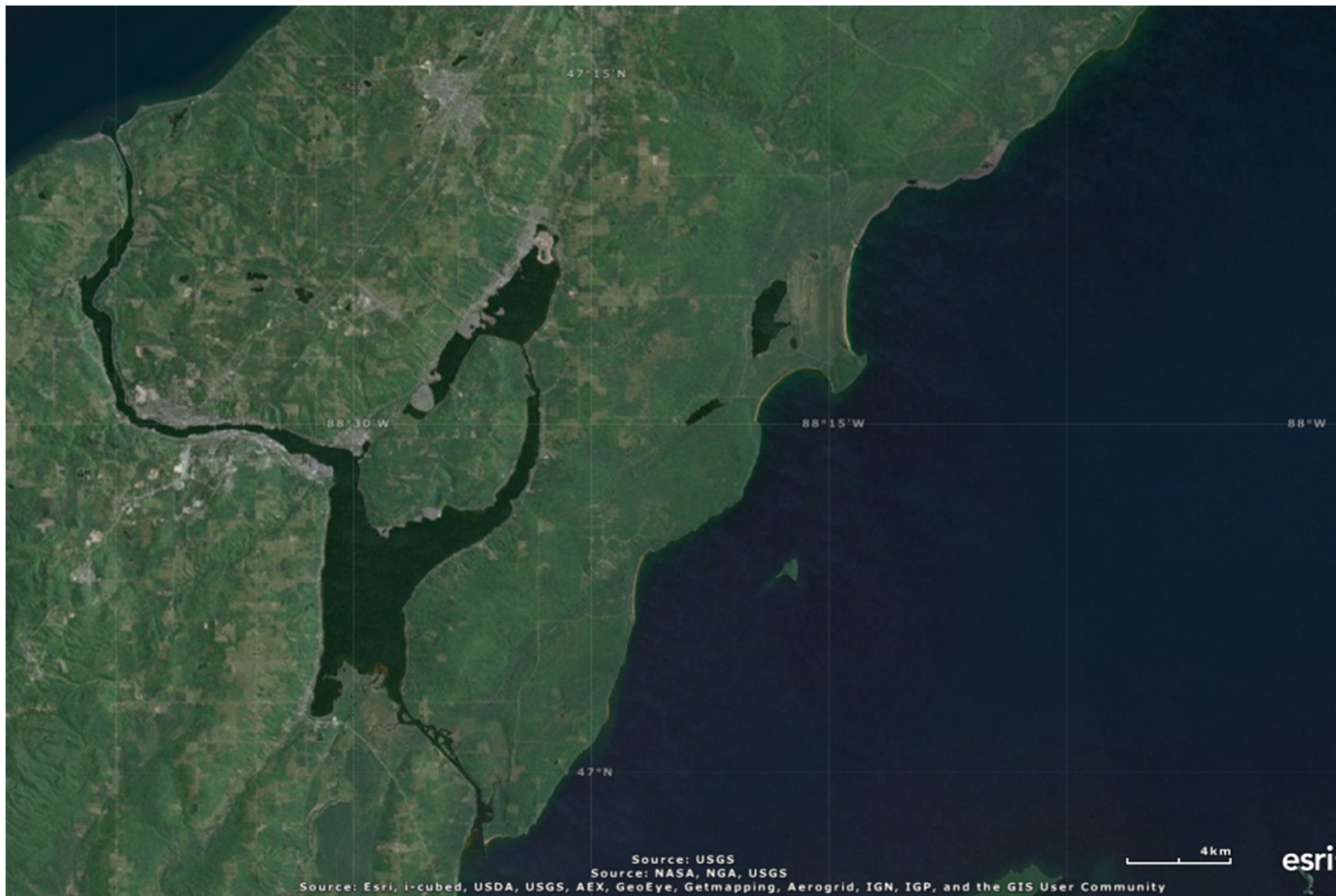
- Superfund and ATSDR
- Steps of assessment:
  - Evaluate data (soil, water, air, other)
  - Exposure? Health effects likely?
  - Conclusions / recommendations
  - Reports, other products
  - Involve communities

# MDCH and Torch Lake area

- Previous involvement
- Request from MDEQ and local health
- Site visit in 2008
- Gather and analyze data
- Write draft reports

# Physical Hazards

- Physical hazards are present and accessible
- Public safety should come first
- Address hazards based on desired use of property



# Gay (Former Mohawk Mill)





# Mason (Former Quincy Reclamation Plant)









# Tamarack City/Hubbell (Former Ahmeek Mill)







# Lake Linden – Former C&H Power Plant





# Other Concerns

- Pilings and former docks
- Slag dump/beach – Hubbell
- “Mineral Building,” others
- Unknown shafts (incident)
- Chemicals among debris?

# Physical Hazards – Conclusions / Recommendations

- Public safety first
- Restrict access as necessary
- Preservation or removal/correction

# Drinking Water

# Background

- Public water supplies are tested for regulated chemicals
- Private residential wells – Western Upper Peninsula Health Department
- Chemical levels in water samples compared to drinking water standards or screening levels
- Methods used for drinking water ensure chemicals can be measured in low enough amounts

# Conclusion from the Health Assessment

- Municipal wells meet drinking water requirements
  - No regulated or unregulated chemicals that would harm people's health

# Municipal wells tested

- City of Houghton (3 wells)
  - Installed in stamptand
  - Groundwater from below the stamptand (about 30-60 feet deep)
- Village of Lake Linden (3 wells)
  - Not in a stamptand area
  - Groundwater from more than 200 feet deep
- Osceola Township (Dollar Bay; 2 wells)
  - Thin stamptand layer
  - Groundwater from below the stamptand (about 30-60 feet deep)

# Municipal well results

- Wells are tested regularly for chemicals regulated in public drinking water
  - None were found at levels that would be a health concern
- Additional testing (not with drinking water methods)
  - No volatile organic chemicals were detected in any of the eight wells
  - No semi-volatile organic chemicals were detected in the Osceola Township wells

# Conclusion from the Health Assessment

- Municipal wells meet drinking water requirements
  - No regulated or unregulated chemicals that would harm people's health
- There is not enough information currently available on private residential wells that may potentially be installed or screened in stampsand to determine if people are exposed to chemicals that may harm their health.



# Residential wells

- Four wells sampled in 2010
  - Uncertain whether installed or screened in stampsand
  - Tested with drinking water method not suited for all of the metals
- Not enough information to determine if private residential wells potentially installed or screened in stampsand have chemicals that may harm people's health

# Regional drinking water concerns

- Wells screened or installed in stampsand
  - May have metals in groundwater
- Western Upper Peninsula Health Department
  - Uranium Advisory
  - Fluoride Advisory

# Conclusion from the Health Assessment

- Municipal wells meet drinking water requirements
  - No regulated or unregulated chemicals that would harm people's health
- There is not enough information currently available on private residential wells that may potentially be installed or screened in stampsand to determine if people are exposed to chemicals that may harm their health.

# Next Steps

- Public comment until August 10, 2012
  - [www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics) under "Health Assessments and Related Documents"
  - Lake Linden/Hubbell Public Library, Portage Lake District Library
- Edit and finalize documents
  - Include comments received, responses
  - Add/correct information as necessary
  - Reviewed by ATSDR
  - Timing? Announced in media

# Future Documents

- Inhalation of resuspended stampsands
- Recreational exposure to stampsands at beaches

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