

Bloomsburg Area/ North Centre Township PFAS HSCA Investigation

Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields
5/11/2026





Investigation History Summary

- March 2024: PFAS exceeds drinking water MCL in samples collected from Brookside Village Mobile Home Park; reported to DEP SDW Program as part of required monitoring
- April 2024: ECB Program identifies private residential supply wells in area surrounding Brookside; hand-delivers letters to residents requesting access to sample their drinking water
- June 2024: Residential sampling begins; first results showing PFAS above MCLs reported in July
 - Bottled water delivery provided for impacted residents
- August 2024: ECB investigation into potential sources
 - Former small electroplating operation
 - Multiple agricultural fields
 - Documented land application of municipal sewage sludge on farm property directly across Ridge Road from Brookside



Investigation History Summary

- December 2024: HSCA contract awarded; Notice to Proceed issued to assist DEP with investigation and mitigation efforts
- January 2025: Review of Municipal Authority records for land application of sewage sludge as fertilizer to identify areas of concern
- February 2025: Sampling of residential wells near other reported land application sites begins
- March 2025: Public hearing held providing preliminary information to community and on interim action selected (supply of alternative water source)



Regulatory Standards for PFAS

- January 2023 Pennsylvania promulgated statewide Maximum Contaminant Limits (MCLs) for two PFAS compounds
 - Polyfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) = 14 parts per trillion (ppt)
 - Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) = 18 ppt
- June 2024 US EPA published federal MCLs for 5 individual PFAS compounds as well as a cumulative hazard index
 - PFOA = 4 ppt
 - PFOS = 4 ppt
 - Perfluorohexanesulfonic Acid (PFHxS) = 10 ppt
 - Perfluorononanoic Acid (PFNA) = 10 ppt
 - HFPO-DA “Gen X” = 10 ppt
 - Hazard Index of 1 when two or more of the following are combined: PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA and PFBS



Analysis of Alternatives

- A Prompt-Interim Response under HSCA allows the proposed response to begin prior to public comment resulting in more immediate mitigation
- Four alternatives were evaluated for potential response action
 - **1 - No Action**
 - The No Action alternative is included but not under consideration
 - **2 - Provide impacted residents with sample data, information on treatment systems and a list of contractors who could install them**
 - This alternative is not proposed as it places mitigation solely on impacted homeowners
 - This alternative does not provide for DEP oversight of mitigation to ensure protectiveness



Analysis of Alternatives

- **3** - Provide impacted residents with an immediate alternative source of drinking water for consumptive use
 - While this alternative provides drinking water, it does not mitigate all water entering the home that may be used for consumptive purposes
- **4** - Provide impacted residents with treatment systems to provide point-of-entry treatment until such time as permanent alternative water resources are evaluated
 - This alternative provides long-term mitigation, but takes time to put into place
- Proposed response is a combination of Alternatives 3 and 4 to provide immediate alternative drinking water followed by long-term mitigation of water entering the home with installation of point-of-entry treatment systems (POETs)



Activities Since Initial Hearing

- Ongoing: Expanded area for private well sampling
 - Twelve separate municipalities currently included in investigation; one or more documented PFAS impacted wells above the standards in eight municipalities
- Residential wells sampling
 - Over 285 private residential water supply wells sampled
 - Over 115 wells impacted by PFAS above federal MCLs
 - Levels of combined regulated PFAS above the federal MCL range from 4.2 ppt to 3612 ppt in impacted wells
- Point of Entry Treatment Systems (POETs) First system installed by DEP in April 2025
 - 34 installed by DEP (as of March 2026)
 - remaining homes with wells impacted above federal MCL are receiving bottled water (81 homes)
 - Efforts continue as new impacted homes are identified
 - Quarterly sampling following installation has confirmed treatment is effectively removing PFAS
 - Water usage is being logged for each home to better predict filter change out needs



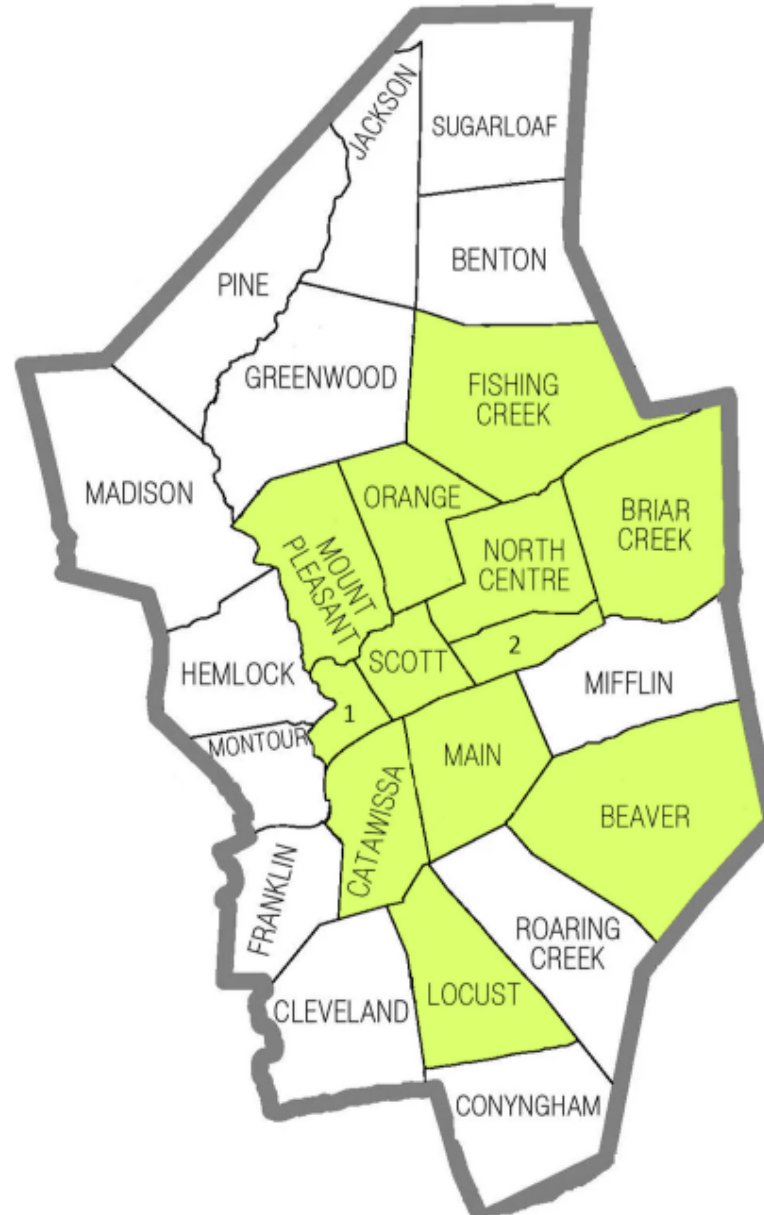
Activities Since Initial Hearing

- October/November 2025: Soil samples collected
 - Confirmation of land applied sludge as a PFAS source
 - Other known potential source ruled out
- Comprehensive stream survey conducted
 - Biologists from DEP's Clean Water Program
 - Sampling of water quality, fish tissue and macroinvertebrates in streams
 - Locations based on soil and groundwater data collected during investigation
- Outreach and consultation with DOH, Dept of Ag, Geisinger, PSU Ag Extension
- Updates to public webpage including sample results, resources, key documents
- Updates to local municipal officials, county commissioners and legislators



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Investigation Area*

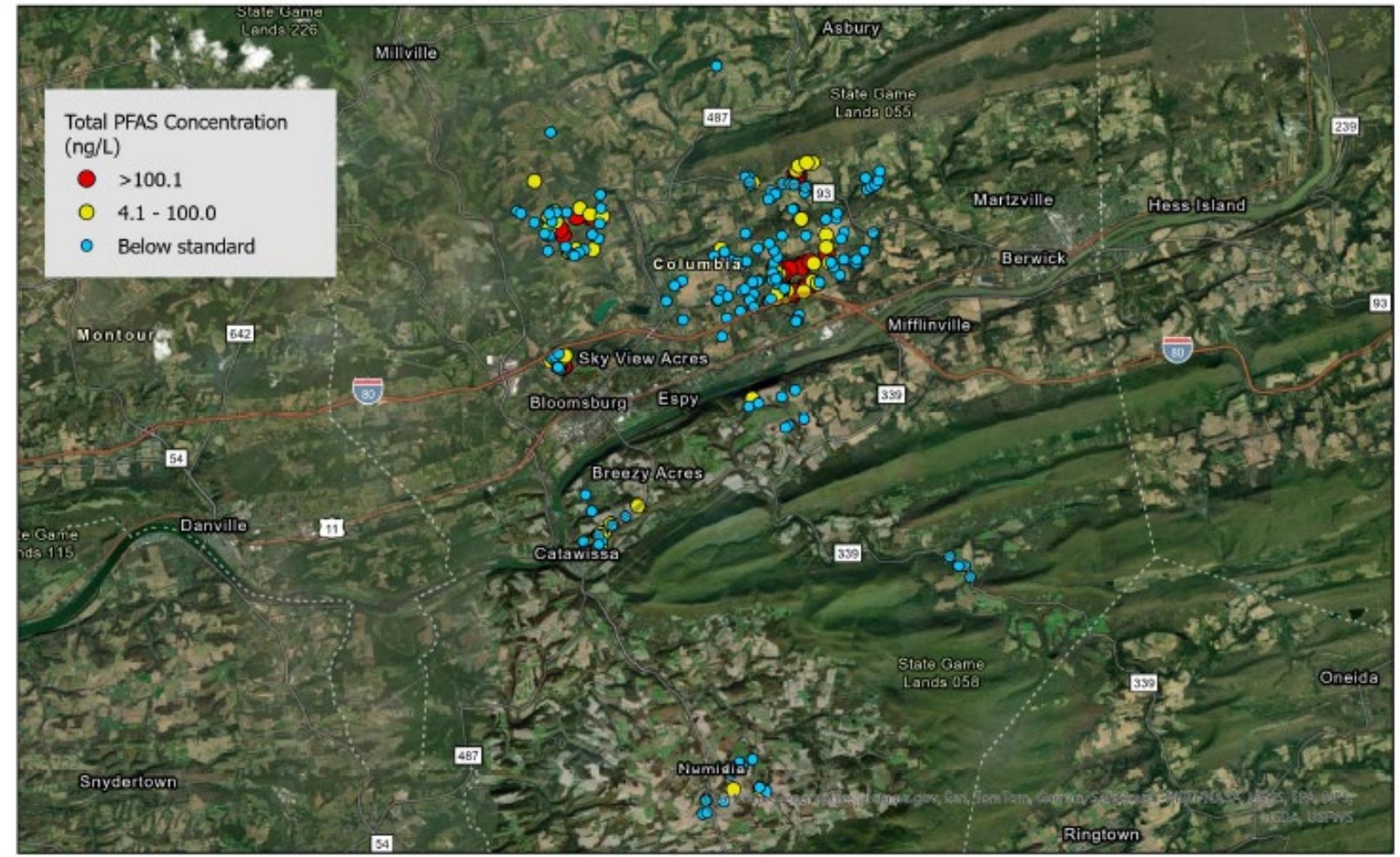


- * 1 Town of Bloomsburg
- 2 South Centre Township

Columbia County Well Sampling Overview



Well sampling locations throughout investigation area



00.51 2 3 4 Miles
Updated April 2026
(with data reported through March 04, 2026)

Data collected by the Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields Northcentral Regional Office





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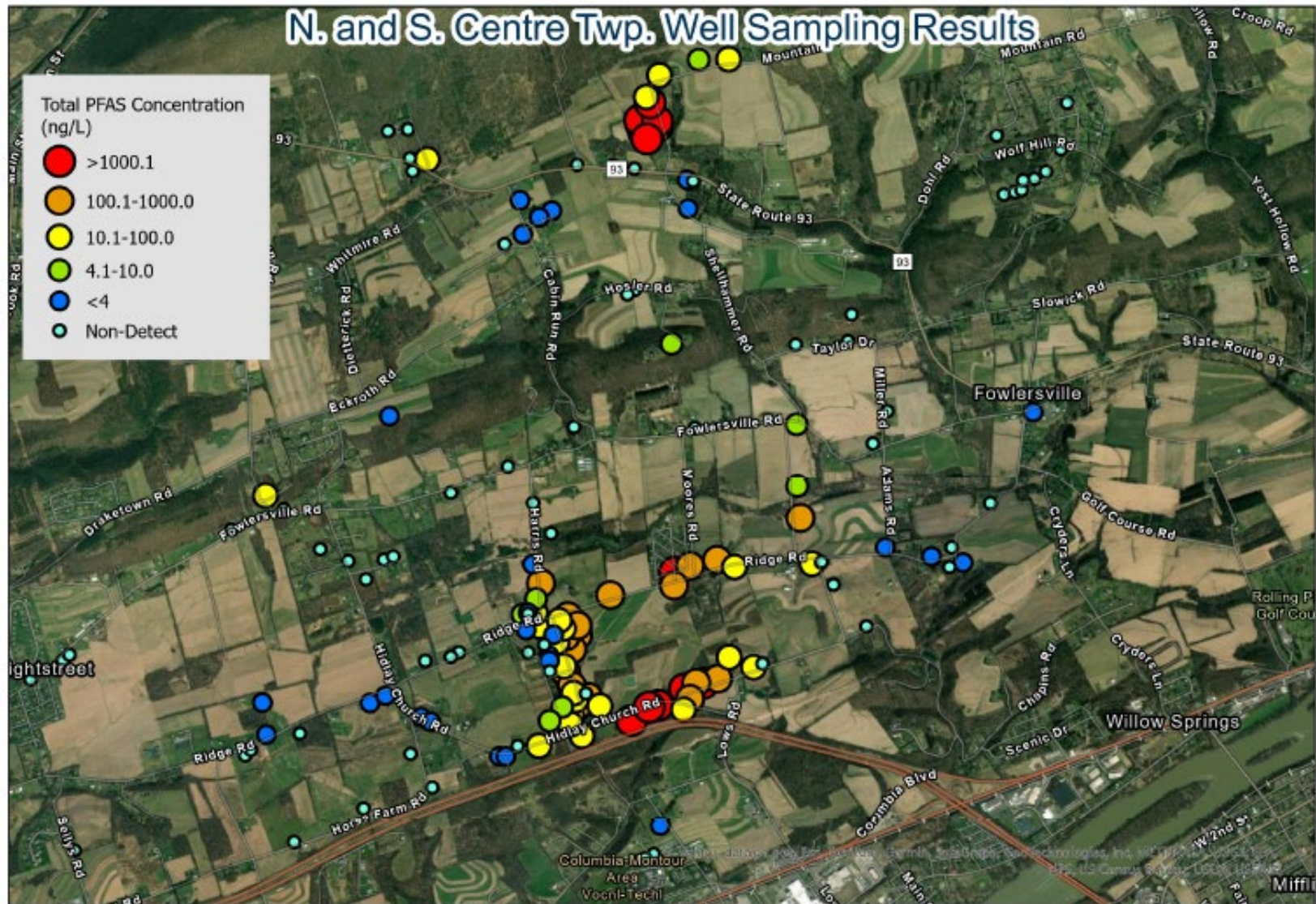
Private Water Well Sampling and Results



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North & South Centre Townships

McDowell and Edwards Farms



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0.0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8
Miles
Updated March 2026
(with data reported through March 04, 2026)

Data collected by the Bureau of
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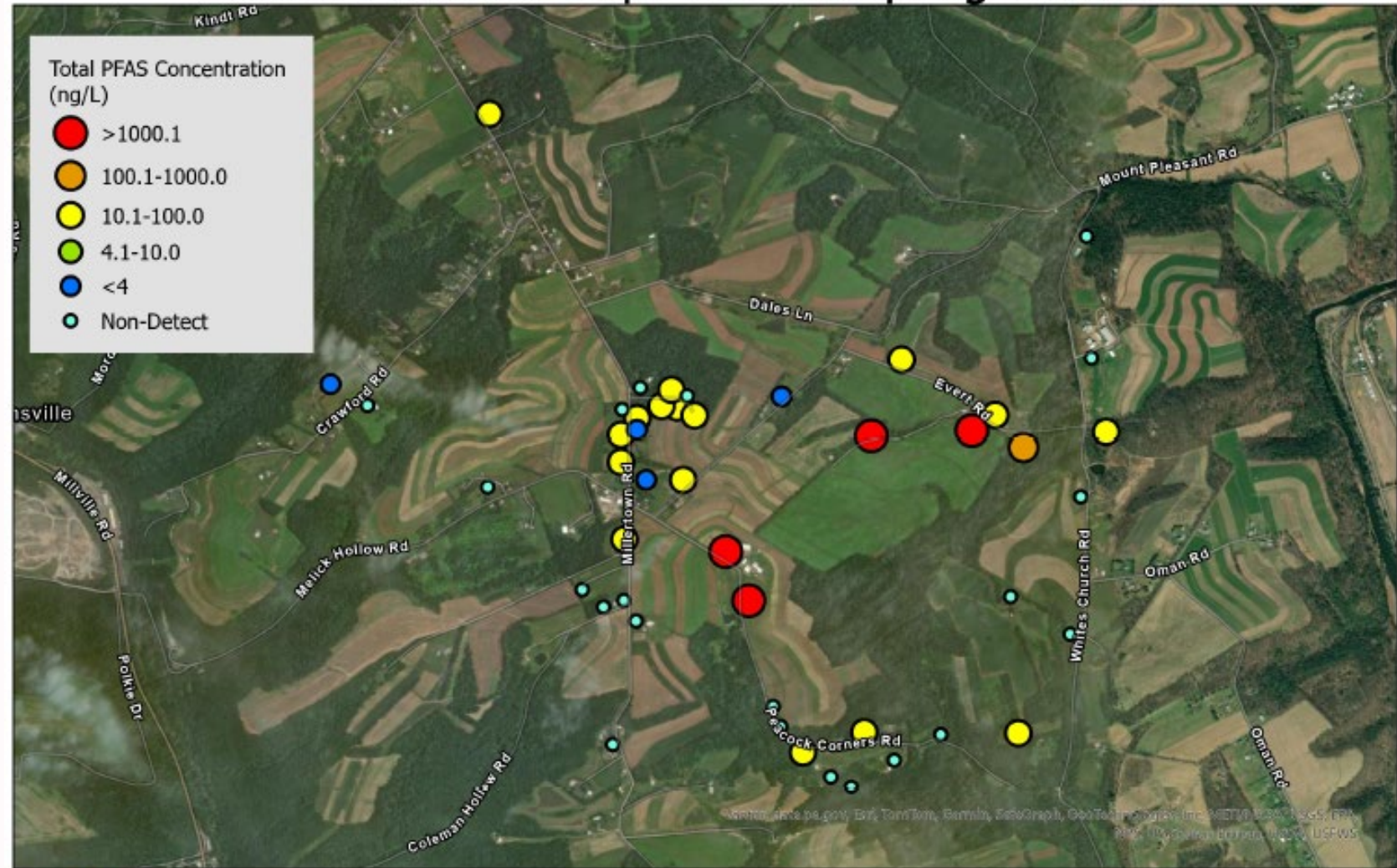


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Mount Pleasant Township

Evert and Robbins Farms

Mount Pleasant Twp. Well Sampling Results



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0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles

Updated March 2026
(with data reported through March 04, 2026)

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Locust Township

George Beaver, Mary Ellen Beaver,
Gene Miller and Leah Rarig Farms

Locust Twp. Well Sampling Results



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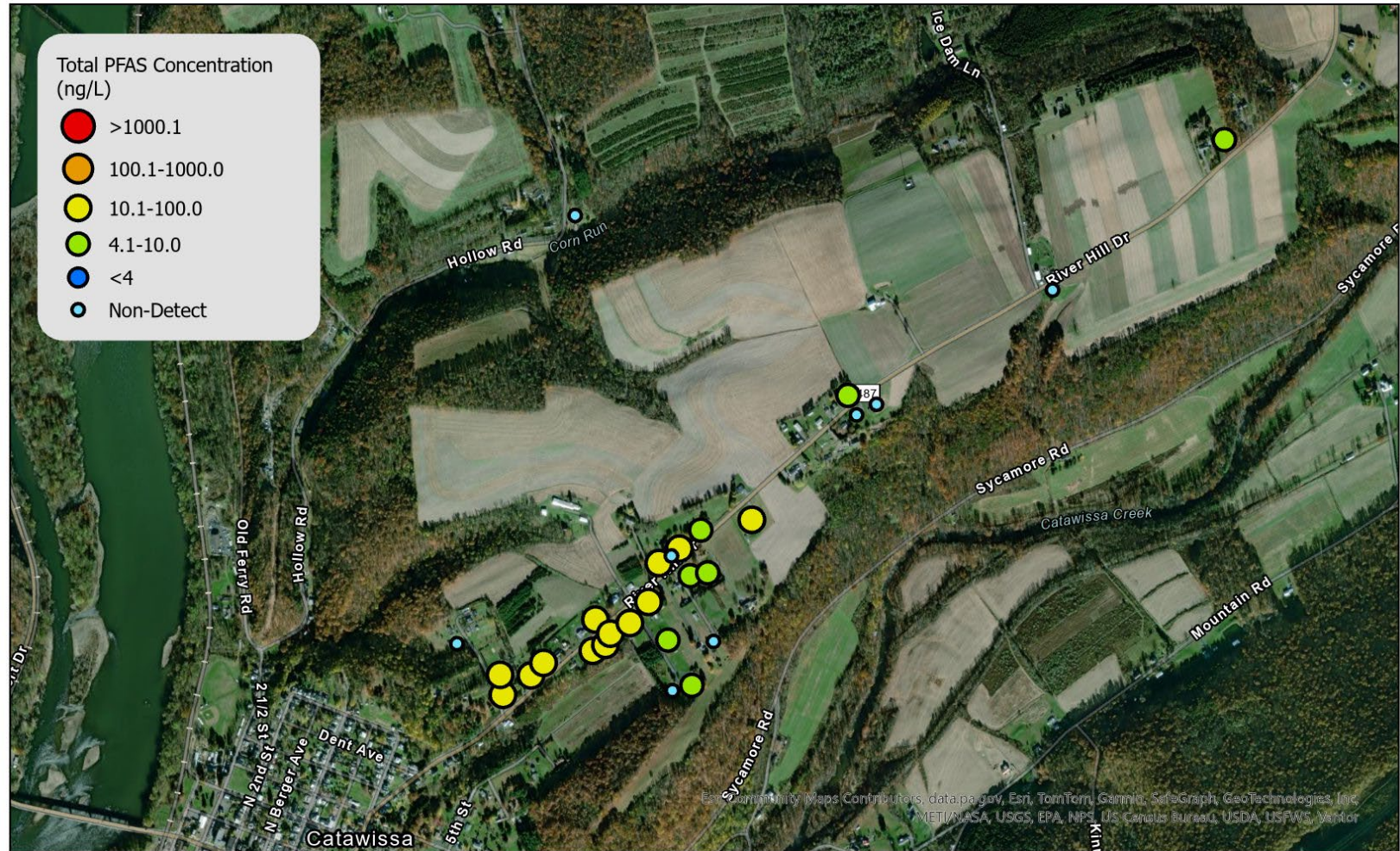


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Catawissa Township

Keller Farm

Catawissa Twp. Well Sampling Results



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Main Township

Breisch Farm

Main Twp. Well Sampling Results



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0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles

Updated March 2026
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Bloomsburg

Percy Miller Farm

Bloomsburg Town Well Sampling Results



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Well Results Summary

| Township | # wells sampled | # above MCLs | Highest Total PFAS* |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| North Centre Township | 149 | 52 | 3601.7 |
| South Centre Township | 12 | 7 | 3612.2 |
| Mount Pleasant Township | 48 | 22 | 3447.0 |
| Locust Township | 20 | 6 | 175.6 |
| Catawissa Township | 29 | 20 | 30.0 |
| Scott Township | 6 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Town of Bloomsburg | 14 | 6 | 143.2 |
| Orange Township | 2 | 1 | 25.08 |
| Beaver Township | 2 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Main Township | 7 | 1 | 29.8 |
| Fishing Creek Township | 1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Briar Creek township | 1 | 0 | 0.0 |



Soil Sampling and Results

- October 28 – November 4, 2025: soil sampling conducted
 - Former McDowell Farm, Edwards Farm and Former Schultz Electroplating (potential source evaluation)
 - Brookside Village Mobile Home Park (for detection of potential surface runoff)
- December 2025: soil results received
 - PFAS detections at McDowell and Edwards farms; *all below PA direct contact for residential properties*
 - No significant PFAS detections at Schultz Electroplating or Brookside Village MHP
 - Results shared with owners of properties sampled and posted on project webpage
 - Results shared with PA Department of Health and PA Department of Agriculture
 - Results shared with DEP Clean Water Program for stream survey evaluation
- March-April 2026: efforts to gain access to additional farms continues



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Surface Soil Samples McDowell Farm

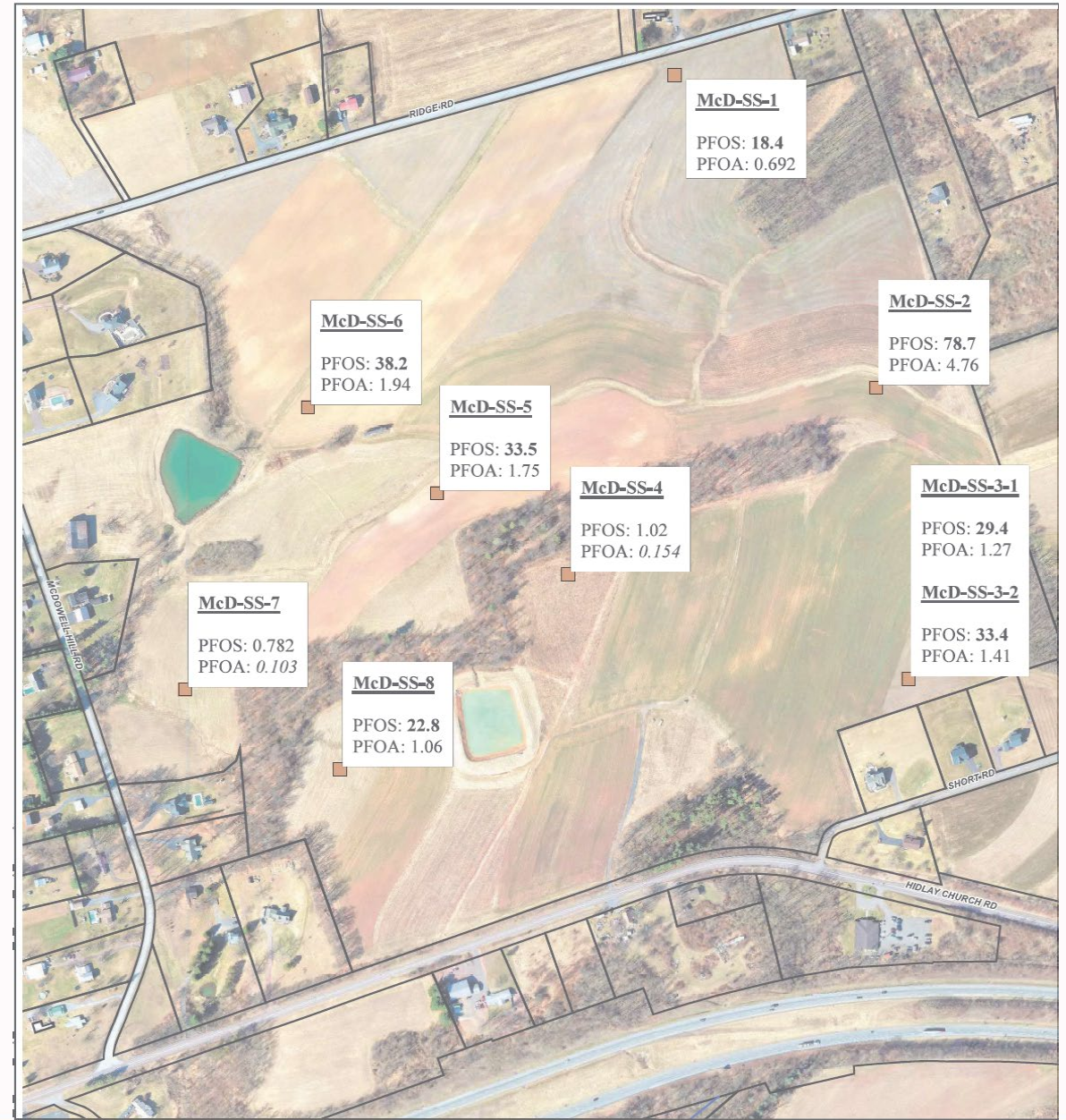
PA Residential Direct Contact MSCs:

PFOA – 4400

PFOS – 4400

PFBS - 66000

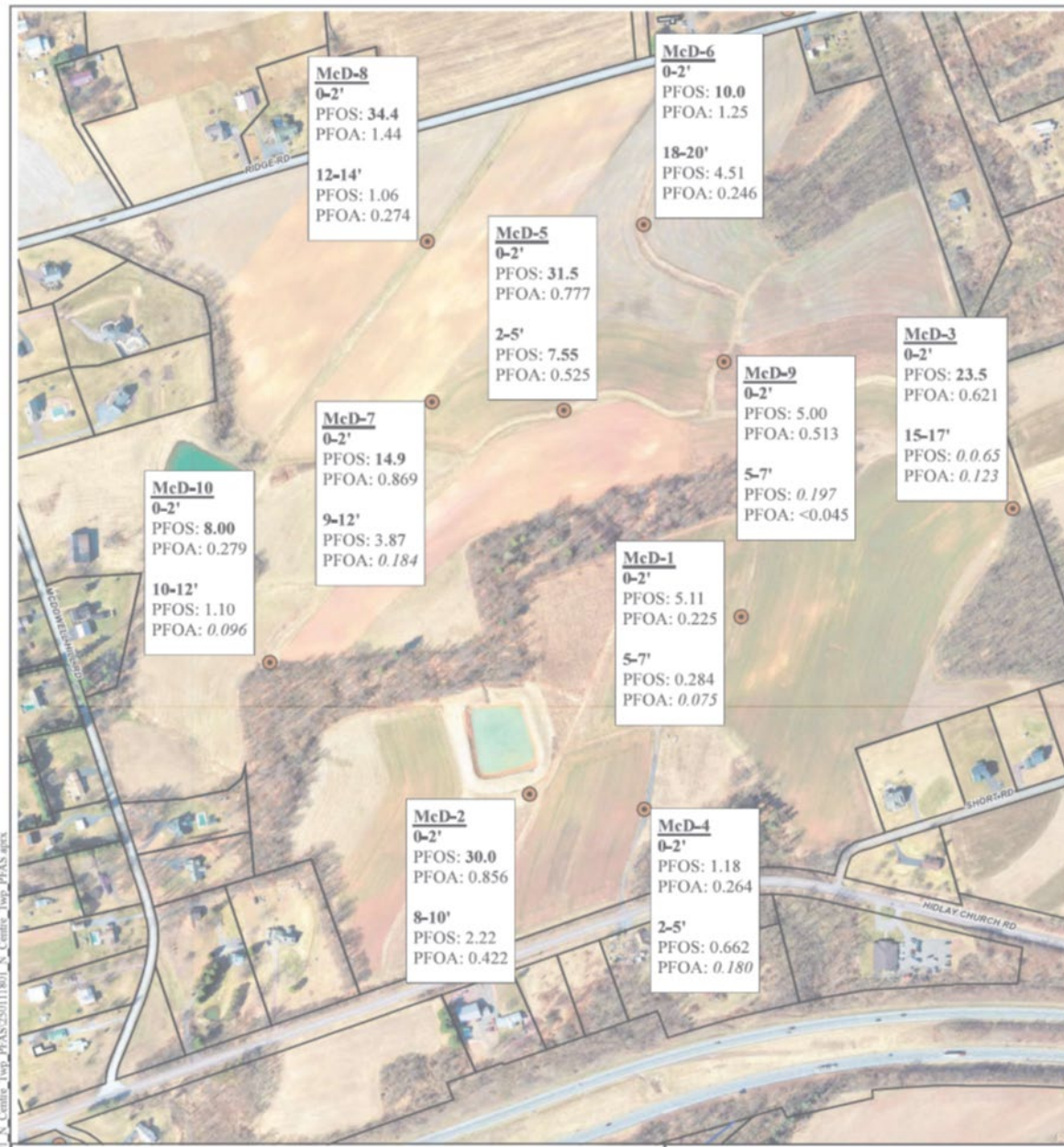
(micrograms per kilogram; ug/kg)





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Soil Boring Samples McDowell Farm





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Surface Soil Samples Edwards Farm

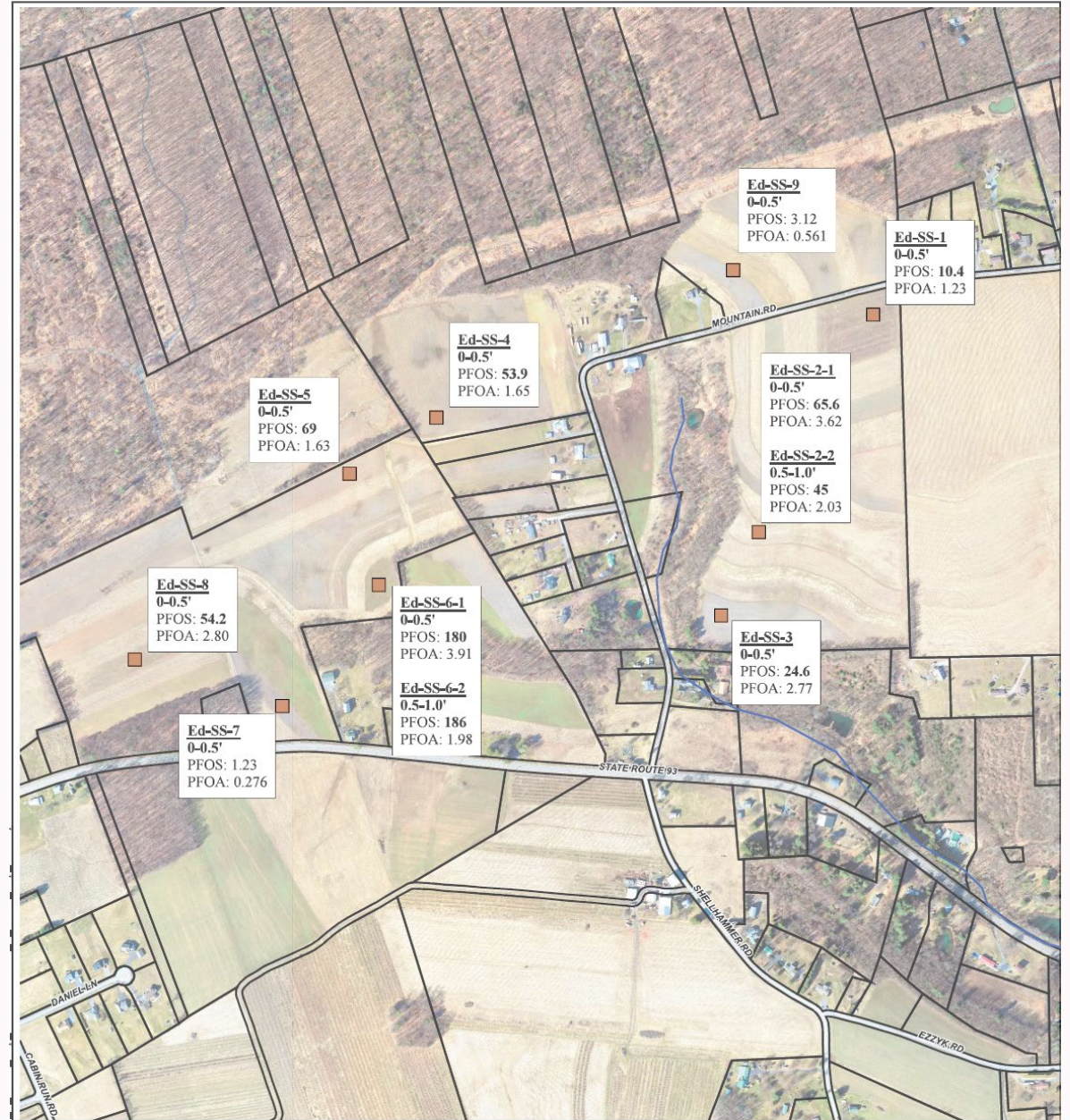
PA Residential Direct Contact MSCs:

PFOA – 4400

PFOS – 4400

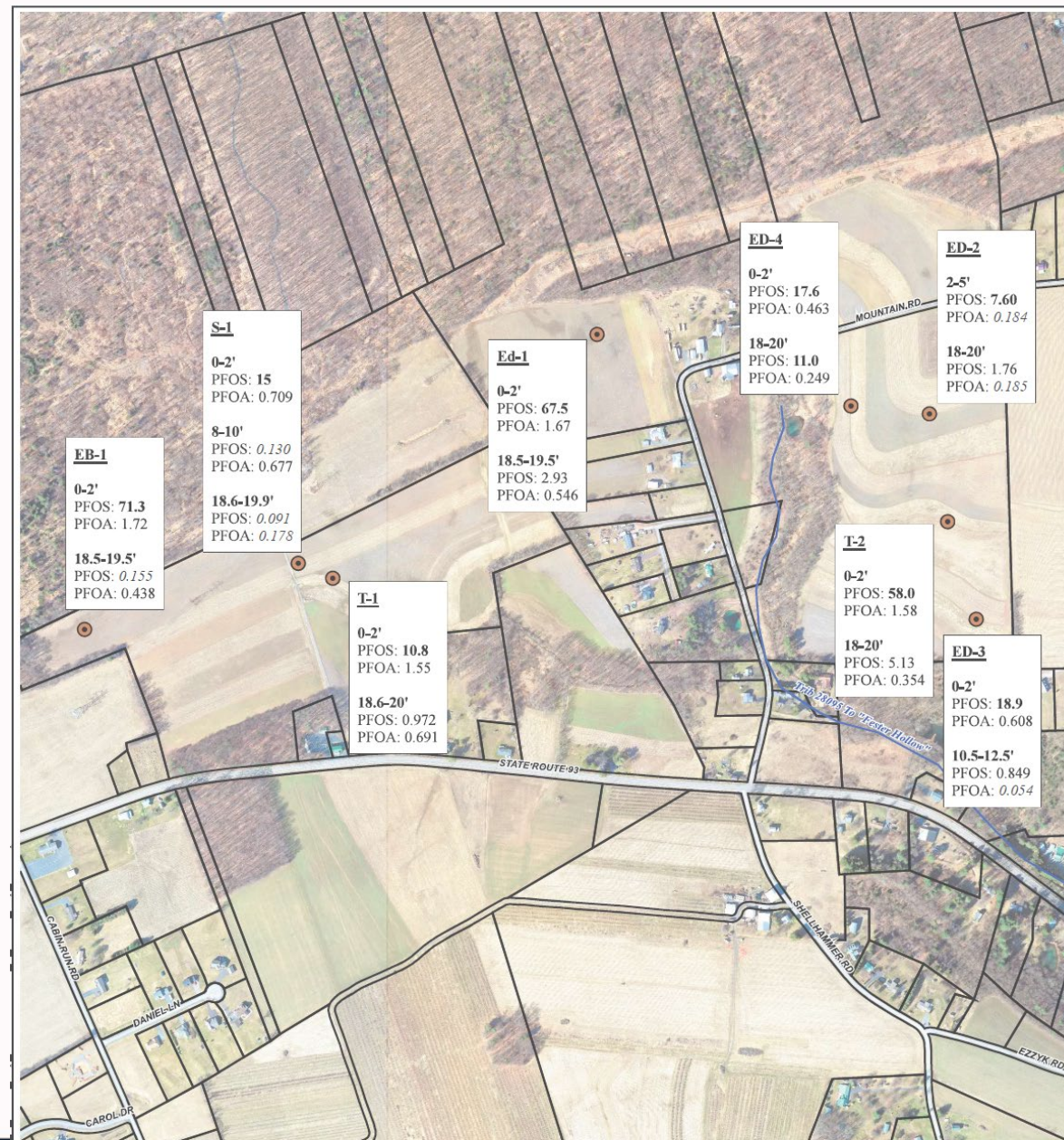
PFBS - 66000

(micrograms per kilogram; ug/kg)





Soil Boring Samples Edwards Farm





Comprehensive Stream Surveys

- June/July 2025:
 - Physicochemical and habitat data from 7 sites in West Branch Briar Creek, Fester Hollow, Briar Creek and East Branch Briar Creek
 - Fish community data from 6 sites in West Branch Briar Creek, Fester Hollow and Briar Creek
 - Fish tissue data from 4 sites in West Branch Briar Creek, Fester Hollow and Briar Creek
 - Continuous PFAS passive data over a 30-day period from 2 sites in West Branch Briar Creek and Briar Creek
- October 2025:
 - Continuous PFAS passive data over a 30-day period from 2 sites in West Branch Briar Creek and Briar Creek



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Comprehensive Stream Surveys

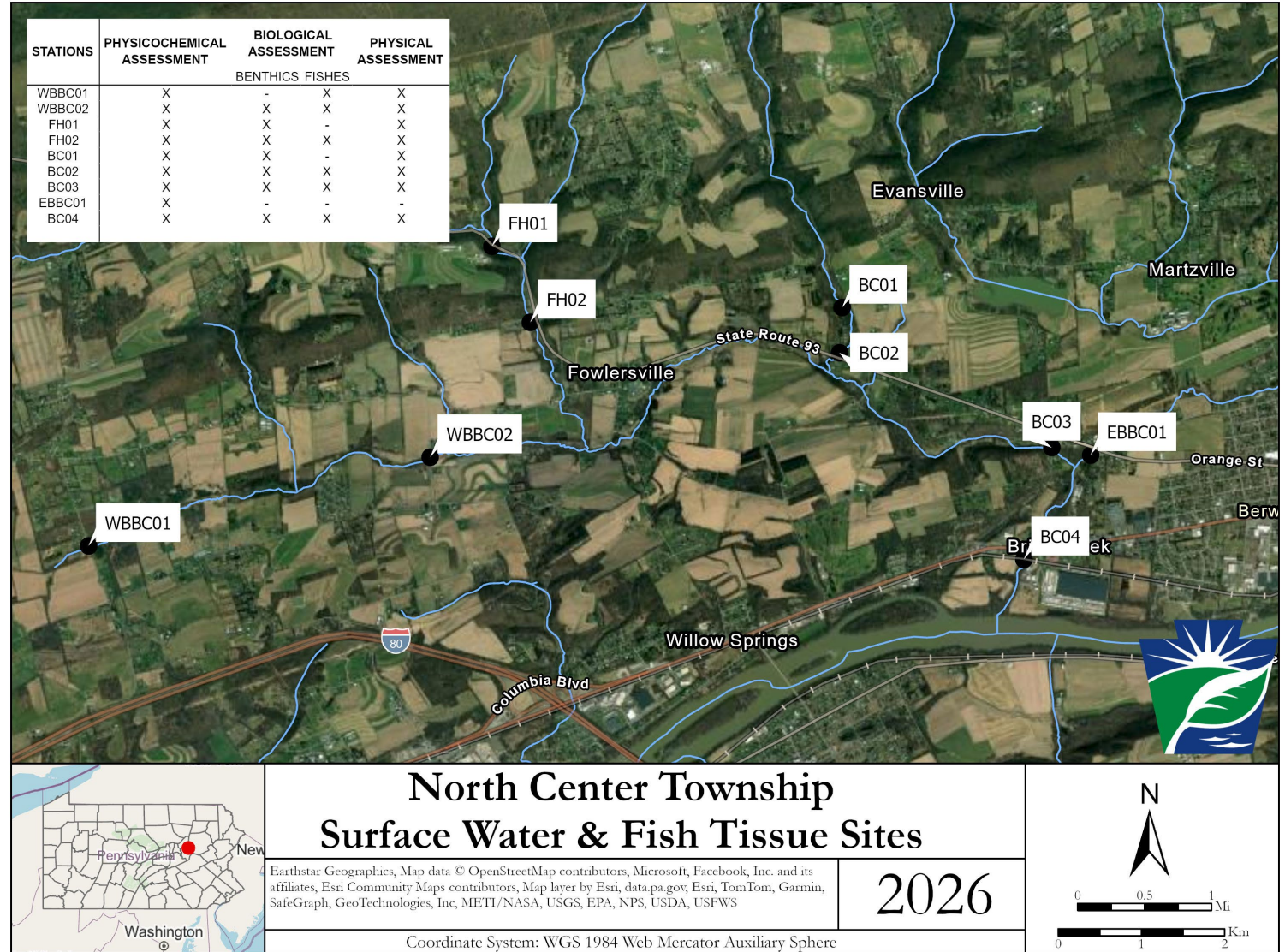
(continued)

- November 2025:
 - Physicochemical data from 8 sites in West Branch Briar Creek, Fester Hollow, Briar Creek and East Branch Briar Creek
 - Benthic macroinvertebrate data from 6 sites in West Branch Briar Creek, Fester Hollow, Briar Creek and East Branch Briar Creek
- January 2026:
 - Physicochemical data from 1 site on Briar Creek
 - Benthic macroinvertebrate data from 1 site on Briar Creek
- February 2026:
 - Fish consumption advisory issued



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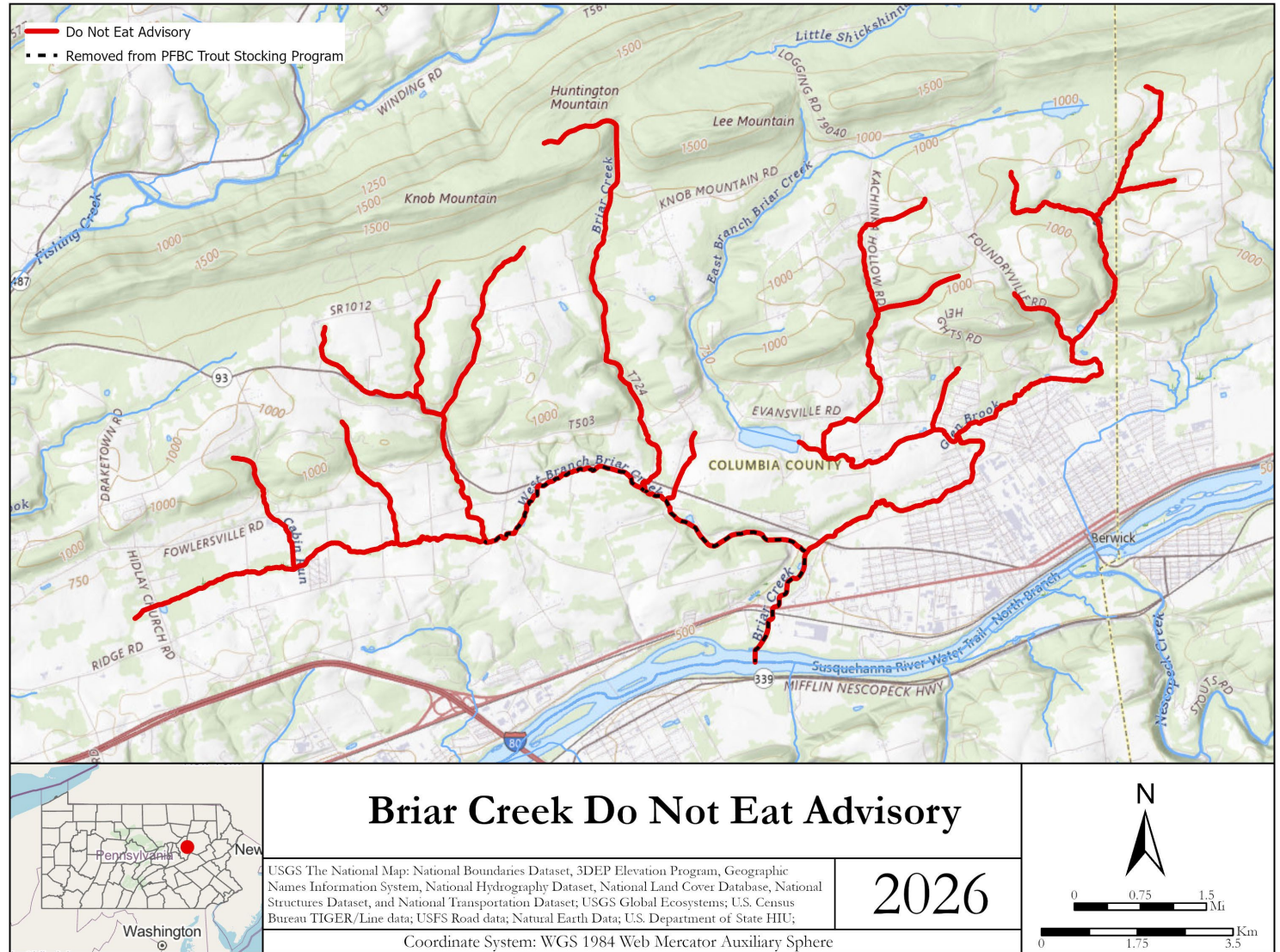
Sample Sites for stream survey





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Spring 2026 Fish Consumption Advisory





Common Questions

- What is the source of the PFAS contamination in this community?
 - Comparison of well data with soil sampling confirms PFAS impacts are primarily related to land application of municipal sewage sludge as fertilizer
- Why was the sewage permitted to be land applied?
 - Regulations at the time of application did not limit the use of sewage sludge as fertilizer
 - PFAS was not a known contaminant class at the time of land application
- Why are there different results between the drinking water wells near the farms?
 - Duration and timeframe of land application may result in varying levels as well as changes in the composition of the material received along with different spatial location of the water supply wells with respect to the application sites and different environmental and geologic conditions



More Common Questions

- What are the next steps for the investigation?
 - Ongoing sampling of private wells until the extents of contamination are fully delineated
 - Continued mitigation efforts for impacted residents
 - Soil sampling is planned for other farm properties with impacted wells nearby
- What happens next for homeowners who received POETs?
 - Post-treatment sampling and any maintenance needs to be provided by DEP for duration of the North Centre Township PFAS Investigation
 - Quarterly for residences with total PFAS at or above 2000 ppt *
 - Semi-annually for residences with total PFAS below 2000 ppt
 - At close of investigation, as per signed agreements, sampling and maintenance will become homeowners' responsibility

*based on testing and certification of Aquasential treatment unit installed in homes with concentrations at highest levels



More Common Questions

- Will PFAS impacts reach my home in the future?
 - Because the application of sludge ended in the 1990s, the contaminant appears to be stable in terms of extent of contamination. Those with wells with no detections nearest to the plume may want to sample periodically to confirm there has been no change
- Why isn't public water one of the alternatives evaluated?
 - DEP can not own and operate a water supply system there must be someone willing to take that on
 - A feasibility study is underway for public water to a limited portion of the investigation area
 - It is unlikely that all impacted residents will have access to public water should it become available



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Get In Touch

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The Department of Environmental Protection's mission is to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water resources and to provide for the health and safety of its residents and visitors, consistent with the rights and duties established under the Environmental Rights Amendment (Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution).