

Preparations Start for 2009 Downstream Cleanup

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Although full-scale cleanup work in the downstream segments of the Lower Fox River isn't scheduled to begin until next spring, the paper companies responsible for the cleanup from Appleton to Green Bay are getting a head start now.

Much of the prep work is happening on an area in Green Bay near Georgia Pacific's plant known as the "Shell Property." Under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources oversight, the companies leading the cleanup will be using the property at 1611 State St. as a staging area. This is where sediment will be "dewatered" (drained) and the water will be treated before being returned to the river.

A small-scale test of the dewatering system was done using sediment samples collected from the river. "This preliminary work provided an opportunity for the companies to test a number of sets of equipment



PHOTO COURTESY OF TETRA TECH

Sediment dredged from the Lower Fox River will be treated and dewatered next year at this state-of-the-art processing facility in Green Bay.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TETRA TECH

When construction is complete, this 242,000-sq. foot processing facility will feature eight of the world's largest filter membrane presses.

and additives to get the best dewatering results," said EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg. "A dryer product means less loads of sediment being hauled to a landfill."

Soil and ground-water samples have been taken to ensure that construction on site is done without creating an environmental problem. Contractors are busily removing asphalt, grading the site, making an area for the sediment processing building and talking with local agencies about their construction regulations.

"These various evaluations are important to make sure that nothing is adversely affected by our operations," Hahnenberg concluded.

More information will be available soon on the companies' new Web site, which is under development.

EPA, Paper Companies Sign New Legal Agreement

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

A new legal agreement was recently finalized between U.S. Department of Justice (on behalf of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources) and two paper companies which ensures that the cleanup of Little Lake Butte des Morts will continue.

The agreement, called a consent decree, replaces the original 2004 decree in which Glatfelter and WTM I agreed to pay for the work and reimburse EPA and DNR for their past costs. The previous decree applied to the cleanup plan EPA approved at the time. Under this new decree, the companies are responsible for the design and cleanup of contaminated sediment in the lake under the recently amended record of decision document for Little Lake Butte des Morts (also referred to as Operable Unit 1). This document details the final cleanup plan.

According to EPA Assistant Regional Counsel Richard Murawski, both federal agencies and DNR are pleased with this new consent decree. "This legally requires Glatfelter and WTM I to design and conduct the Little Lake Butte des Morts cleanup according to our new record of decision," he said. "With this new agreement in place, there won't be any interruption, so all dredging and sand covering can continue."

EPA and DNR will continue to oversee the work to verify that all aspects are done properly and according to the new decision document. Dredging and covering will be the main methods used for the cleanup. Buoys and other waterway markers will be installed around the perimeter of the in-water work.

The companies will also be required to use in-water pipelines or other appropriate techniques to transport the

dredged sediment to the staging area. Dewatering will be done by using processes such as plate and frame presses, belt filter presses, or large geotextile tubes to squeeze water from PCB-contaminated sediment before disposal.

Water generated by dredging and dewatering operations will be treated prior to discharge back to the Lower Fox River and must meet all state and federal water-quality standards.

This consent decree was lodged in federal court on June 30 and it was approved by the court on August 13, after a public comment period was held by DOJ. The decree is posted at www.epa.gov/region5/foxriver. Hard copies are also available for review at the five information repositories listed on page 7.



A plate and frame filter press similar to this might be used to dewater dredged sediment at Little Lake Butte Des Morts.

Companies Complete Lake Dredging, Begin Capping

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

With the dredging portion of the Little Lake Butte des Morts cleanup completed in late June, the companies doing the work have set their sights on placing sand covers and caps in the remaining contaminated areas.

The covers and caps are being done under a modified plan that was issued by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in June. It replaces the cleanup plan that had been in place since 2002. Other than long-term monitoring, this is the final phase of the lake cleanup project.

Sand covers and “armored” caps are the two methods being used by Glatfelter and WTM I to clean up PCB-contaminated sediment, along with dredging.

According to EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, “We are entering the final phase of the project building on successes achieved by the companies’ diligent efforts.”

Work under the new plan began in June. The plan requires sand covers to be used over certain areas with low levels of PCB-contaminated sediment as well as over some areas previously dredged but with small amounts of residual, or leftover, PCBs. The armored caps will be placed in areas of the river that have more than six feet of water and have higher levels of PCBs in the sediment. These covers and caps will keep the sediment in place to ensure that fish cannot come into contact with it.

Sand covers are being placed around nearby Friendship Trail and will continue through October when work will stop for the year. After boating season ends in October, sand covers will be placed in the navigation channel near the Highway 441 bridge.

A second staging area was added in August. The area is located on two acres of property owned by Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd. on Butte des Morts Beach Road. Pumps, pipes and sand and gravel supplies will be stored there. It will also serve as the starting point for a pipeline extending to in-water equipment. This new area will be used through the end of October and again in spring 2009 when cleanup work starts up.



Out and About ...

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership is made up of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. These partners, as well as other supporting agencies, regularly provide speakers to organizations in the Fox Valley area. The following people recently made presentations:

August

- ◆ *Colette Charbonneau*, FWS: FWS directors meeting, LaCrosse; cooperative restoration of Lower Fox River/Green Bay site.
- ◆ *Greg Hill*, DNR: Optimist Club, DePere; general Lower Fox River/Green Bay site update.

September

- ◆ *Susan Pastor*, EPA and *Betsy Galbraith*, Oneida Tribe: Fall Fest booth, Oneida; general Lower Fox River/Green Bay site update.

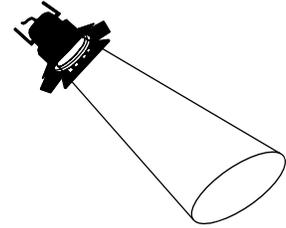
When work starts up again next spring, it will take place north of the bridge and is expected to run into the summer. This will end the in-water work for the project and the entire lake cleanup will be done in 2009.

The Fox River Current is featuring promising natural resource damage assessment projects in and near the Lower Fox River.

Spotlight On:

Common Tern Nesting Island Project

By Colette Charbonneau, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



After three long years of mild Wisconsin winters, the ice on western Lake Butte des Morts was finally thick enough this past winter to hold dump trucks loaded with boulders, rocks and clay used to construct an island. This island was developed to provide nesting habitat for a state endangered bird, the common tern.

The Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council approved funding for the restoration project since it clearly would restore injured natural resources. Common terns were likely affected by the release of PCBs into the environment by eating small fish—the bird's preferred food. This species was once fairly common in lower Green Bay but habitat loss, nest disturbance, human interference and chemical contaminants have affected the population.

“The area in the lake where the island was built was a shoal or small rock pile just under the water surface,” said Art Techlow, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Winnebago system biologist. “We needed at least 19 inches of ice for the trucks to drive on safely. Then they could only carry half loads of materials to the island spot.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ART TECHLOW, WISCONSIN DNR

Work crews construct an island on the ice of Little Lake Butte des Morts during the winter of 2008.

According to Techlow, the construction of the island took 62 truck loads at 10 tons per load and seven days to complete. When the ice melted this spring, the materials sank around and above the small rock pile creating an island for the birds.

Common terns nest on isolated, sparsely vegetated islands or peninsulas in large lakes. Their nests

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are slight depressions in the sandy soil which may be lined with grasses, small sticks or bits of water plants. The birds prefer to nest in colonies. The new island, to be named soon, is in a little-used area on one of the bays of Lake Butte des Morts near Terrell's Island Habitat Restoration Area. The island is owned by the Butte des Morts Conservation Club and is held in public trust just in case something happens to the club. This way the nesting island will be protected far into the future.

"We did not expect to see any nesting on the island this first year," Techlow continued. "I thought the birds would check out the new spot but be a little hesitant to use it right away. To my surprise, 11 pairs of common terns nested with success during the summer. And, there were several single birds that used the island too."

Some of the biggest concerns for continued nesting success on the island are predation (killing and eating young birds) from owls, displacement by gulls and potential human disturbance. The DNR will assist the Conservation Club in the management of the island to limit these factors as much as possible. Remember to enjoy the birds from a distance to reduce disturbing the adult terns in their nests next summer.

Common terns will return to a site where they have successfully raised their young the year before. And, the young will return the next year as adults also. "We hope they tell all their friends, too," Techlow said with a grin. "More successful years

of nesting will help build the population of this neat bird."

The natural resource trustees are comprised of DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Michigan Attorney General, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For further information on Natural Resource Damage Assessment restoration projects, contact Trustee Council Coordinator Colette Charbonneau, FWS, at Colette_Charbonneau@fws.gov or at 920-866-1726.



PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Adult common terns nest on the newly constructed island during the spring and summer of 2008.

Wild Rose Hatchery Celebrates New Trout, Salmon Facilities

By Tom Turner and Lisa Gaumnitz, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

A \$15.9 million renovation of Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery was celebrated by state and federal government officials, local residents and anglers Monday, Aug. 18.

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Secretary Matt Frank, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials made the trip to Wild Rose, a small town in Waushara County about 80 miles inland, to be part of the grand opening. The project updates a century-old facility that's long been a pillar of Wisconsin's stocking program, enabling it to meet modern environmental standards and to raise even more fish.

"Today's a great day for anglers," Doyle told the crowd before cutting a ribbon stretched across the doors of the new trout and salmon nursery. "This project is critical to Lake Michigan's world-class fishing and to expanding fishing opportunities across the state. It will allow Wild Rose to continue to produce these fish for generations to come."

The new coldwater facilities were paid for by an innovative funding package. Nearly 40 percent of the total, or \$6 million, comes from the environmental restoration agreements reached with paper companies on the Lower Fox River. The Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council approved this project as part of a natural resource damage assessment and restoration agreement.

About \$3.6 million of funding comes from sport fish restoration dollars and federal revenues from the excise tax on fishing and boating equipment. The Great Lakes Trout and Salmon stamp that anglers buy to fish Lake Michigan and Lake Superior is providing \$1.5 million.

"We're thrilled to be opening these new facilities for trout and salmon and to bring Wild Rose into the 21st century," said Frank. "The renovation of this hatchery

will cement Lake Michigan's status as the top fishing destination in Wisconsin and the anchor of our \$2.75 billion sport fishing industry."

Lake Michigan depends on stocking and 100 percent of the 2.3 million trout and salmon produced at the Wild Rose Hatchery are stocked in Lake Michigan. The completion of the coldwater facilities allows DNR to continue producing Chinook, coho and brown trout. In the future, it will allow Wild Rose to start raising rainbow trout, eventually increasing by 15 percent the total amount of trout and salmon produced for Lake Michigan.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Deputy Regional Director Charlie Wooley noted that appreciating the success of programs like the FWS sport fish restoration comes directly from seeing on-the-ground action by state agencies like the DNR. FWS, through the sport fish restoration funds it provides to Wisconsin, helped pay for the renovation of the Wild Rose coldwater facilities.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF WISCONSIN DNR

Self-cleaning and biosecure rearing tanks house brown trout at the new Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery.

Wild Rose Hatchery from Page 6

Construction work on the coldwater facilities started in 2006 and was largely completed this past spring. Work started earlier this year to build Phase 2, a new coolwater facility for musky, walleye, lake sturgeon and northern pike, and is expected to be completed in 2010. That expansion will allow Wild Rose to double its production of these species. A third phase will restore the wetland, springs and stream disturbed when the hatchery was originally built in the early 1900s by a private fish farmer. The renovation will allow the hatchery to send cleaner water back to the Pine River, a Class 1 trout stream.

Invited guests and local residents toured the new coldwater production facilities and saw the first fish being raised in the hatchery. They also explored the new visitor center and strolled the historic hatchery grounds, which have been fixed up with new paint and new interpretive signs for self-guided tours. Parts of the old hatchery have been left in place and

large trout and salmon still swim in the old outdoor raceways giving people an up-close look at the fish species produced at the hatchery. The contrast of the new hatchery with elements of the old is a reminder of the important role this hatchery has played over the past century and looks ahead to continued service for the next 100 years.

The natural resource trustees are comprised of DNR, FWS, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Michigan Attorney General, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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Information Available at Local Libraries

The Intergovernmental Partners invite the public to review technical reports, fact sheets and other documents related to the Lower Fox River cleanup at information repositories set up in the reference sections of the local libraries listed below. Information repositories at the public libraries in De Pere, Kaukauna, Little Chute, Neenah and Wrightstown have been discontinued. However, binders containing fact sheets and newsletters are being maintained at these locations as well as at the following repositories:

- **Appleton Public Library**, 225 N. Oneida St., Appleton, Wis.; 920-832-6170
- **Brown County Library**, 515 Pine St., Green Bay, Wis.; 920-448-4381, Ext. 394
- **Door County Library**, 107 S. Fourth Ave., Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; 920-743-6578
- **Oneida Community Library**, 201 Elm St., Oneida, Wis.; 920-869-2210
- **Oshkosh Public Library**, 106 Washington Ave., Oshkosh, Wis.; 920-236-5205




Check out these Web sites:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/foxriver/index.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/foxriver>

<http://contaminants.fws.gov/Issues/Restoration.cfm>

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/nrda/index.html>

An administrative record, which contains detailed information upon which the selection of the final site cleanup plan was based, is also available for review at two DNR offices: 801 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, Wis. and 101 S. Webster St., 3rd Floor, Madison, Wis. An administrative record is also available at the EPA Record Center, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor, Chicago, Ill.



Prepared by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Supporting agencies include Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by all members of the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership.

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Fox River Current is published quarterly by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership. Its purpose is to provide up-to-date information about cleanup and restoration efforts on the Lower Fox River. Call Susan Pastor at 312-353-1325 or 800-621-8431 Ext. 31325, weekdays, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to request a subscription or alternative format. Feedback on articles and ideas for future issues are welcome. Send comments to Susan Pastor, EPA Office of Superfund (P-19J), 77 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604 or e-mail pastor.susan@epa.gov.



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