FOX RIVER CURRENT

Winter 2008 Vol. 11, No. 4 Update from the Lower Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership

Archaeologists Find Five Sunken Ships in River

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

While conducting historical research in October at the "Shell Property" near Georgia-Pacific in Green Bay, remnants of five ships were discovered just north of the southern railroad bridge.

The ships, two of which date back to the 1880s, were discovered by archaeologists hired to document artifacts found in the river from Appleton to Green Bay. This area is slated for cleanup that involves dredging and sand covering/capping next year. The archaeologists were also charged with making recommendations on how to handle the artifacts so the cleanup can proceed as scheduled.

According to John Vetter, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's national expert in historic preservation, EPA and the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Officer are working together to develop a formal agreement with respect to historical resources (see related article on Page 3).

"An agreement will ensure compliance with historic preservation laws and, as a result, discover the significant historic settings and activities that took place in and around the Lower Fox River," said Vetter.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS OF THE GREAT LAKES, BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

The C.W. Kraft vessel, built in 1920, is one of five historic ships recently found in the Lower Fox River.

With the help of many Wisconsin historians, nautical organizations and maritime museums, two tugboats called the *C. W. Kraft* and the *Satisfaction* have already been tentatively identified.

According to historical databases, the *C. W. Kraft* was built in 1920. The vessel's history is sketchy. According to various documents, the tug was bought and sold several times until it was listed as "abandoned" in 1943. The *C. W. Kraft* may have been sold to Waterways Engineering Corp. in the 1940s to help the firm respond to the marine construction boom that happened on Lake Michigan during the World War II years. Because its hull indicates that it is from the

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Fox River *Current* Moves To Tri-Annual Schedule

Beginning in 2009, the Fox River *Current* newsletter will move from a quarterly to tri-annual publication. Watch for it in late April, August and December.

Paper Companies Complete Transportation Plan

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

When cleanup of the Lower Fox River begins next year in the reaches from Little Rapids to Green Bay, trucks taking sediment from the staging area to a nearby landfill will be following a carefully planned route.

Appleton Papers, Georgia-Pacific, and NCR Corp., the companies responsible for the cleanup, developed the routes this fall after consulting with local officials. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation also provided information. The plan outlines how PCB-contaminated sediment dredged from the river will be trucked away from 2009 to 2015. According to company representatives, they looked at several factors such as travel distance, existing traffic volumes, weight restrictions and future roadway improvements.

Safety and spill procedures are also built into the plan. All trucks will be washed and covered before leaving on their routes and will be required to comply with all federal and state laws. PCB sediment does not pose an immediate danger on trucks. If, however, a spill happens the owner or operator of the truck will report it and promptly clean it up, as required by law. All drivers will be trained in transportation spill response procedures and will have appropriate spill response equipment on hand.

Further information on the plan can be found on the companies' Web site: http://www.foxrivercleanup.com.

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type of tugboat that operated in Green Bay and Lake Michigan from the late 1800s to the first half of the 1900s, it meets certain criteria for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places.

The *Satisfaction* was built in 1894 as a 47-ton tug that was used in the commercial fishing industry for nearly 25 years. It was bought by the Greiling Brothers of Green Bay in 1919 who converted it for towing, according to reports. In 1930, the *Satisfaction* was purchased by Waterways Engineering. After 16 more years of service, the boat was stripped of its equipment and left to sink near its slip at the Waterways dock. The wood hull on the *Satisfaction* also satisfies specific criteria to make it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Both types of tugs apparently played a major role in the economic development of Green Bay toward the end of the 1800s and the first half of the 1900s. They were considered to have been involved in important maritime trade. Steam tugboats were typically used to haul timber, coal, limestone and other types of cargo. They also assisted large freighters as they arrived and left port and helped other vessels navigate icy waters. They were eventually replaced by diesel-powered boats.

Little information seems to be available on three other wooden barges lying parallel with the shoreline near the bridge. One may be the remains of a dredge or crane often used in the 19th and 20th centuries to improve and maintain Fox River navigation channels, locks, dams and canals.

Under the National Historic Preservation Act, archaeological studies are required when it is suspected that construction projects may disturb cultural resources, such as these sunken tug boats. Artifacts found are also typically evaluated for eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. EPA and contractors for Georgia-Pacific, Appleton Papers, and NCR Corp. are in contact with Wisconsin's State Historic Preservation Officer in Madison to develop plans to minimize any affect to these vessels when the cleanup starts next spring.

EPA, State Protect Historic Resources

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

A formal agreement is in the works to ensure that all required research is done concerning artifacts that might be found during the Lower Fox River cleanup from Appleton to Green Bay.

When signed by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the agreement will specify that background research, in-water investigations and "data recovery" be done at the area referred to as the "Former Shell Property" in the 37-mile stretch of river and in the bay.

The property will house staging areas, a sediment treatment facility and the dredging operation. In-water work will include dredging PCB-contaminated sediment, building a sheet pile and removing debris.

For the property, EPA would also oversee:

- The collection of background research to develop a historic context.
- In-water surveys to evaluate five existing cultural resources (see related article on Page 1).
- Observations by a qualified underwater archaeologist as the resources are avoided during the cleanup.

For remaining areas of the Lower Fox River and Green Bay, EPA would also oversee:

- The collection of background research to identify areas that may contain cultural resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- In-water investigations that may involve diving, mapping, probing and photography.
- Appropriate "data recovery" in places where avoiding identified resources is not possible.

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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. To request a speaker, contact the agencies directly.

EPA To Host Booth At Annual Science Expo

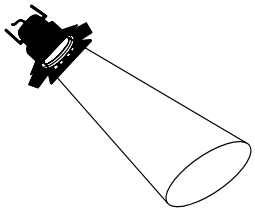
By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Lower Fox River cleanup will be the main focus of a booth sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at the Foth Einstein Project Science Expo on Saturday, Feb. 14 at Green Bay's Shopko Hall.

EPA staff will be available during the expo hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to answer questions about how the river is being protected, preserved and restored. In addition, there will be hands-on environmental demonstrations that kids of all ages can try. Kids participating in the science fair will also find a special EPA surprise inside their "goody bags."

This annual family event teaches kids the science behind everyday events and careers. Activities allow them to explore life, earth, physical and environmental science, technology/engineering, space/flight and forensics.

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



Spotlight On:

Pensaukee Marsh Northern Pike Habitat Restoration

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

Pensaukee Marsh is within the Pensaukee River Wetland Complex, which is located on a sandy lake plain near the mouth of the Pensaukee River on the western Green Bay shore of Oconto County. The wetland complex is comprised of a variety of wetland types that provide prime habitat for many species of plants and animals. Of particular importance is spawning habitat for the game fish of Green Bay, including the northern pike. These wetlands also contribute to improved water quality in Green Bay.

PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Pensaukee Marsh is expected to be flooded next year, which will prevent water from flowing straight to the bay.

In the mid to late 1930s, the Work Projects Administration constructed a channel through Pensaukee Marsh to provide a quicker drainage system for wetlands upstream of the marsh. The ditch spoils were deposited in the marsh creating a berm along the channel that stopped water from flowing into the marsh, but would run directly into the bay instead. The berm also blocked any movement of fish coming into the marsh to spawn during the spring.

The Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council approved funding from the natural resource damage assessment settlements to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to restore Pensaukee Marsh spawning habitat. The project consisted of removing the berm to re-establish water flow into the wetland to levels that existed prior to the construction of the drainage channel. The project was completed this summer with 101 truckloads carrying 1,000 yards of berm material removed from Pensaukee Marsh. A strip of land about 20 feet wide from County Highway S to the waters of the bay was sloped up from the bottom of the channel, seeded and mulched. This will make a ditch, or waterway,

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available to northern pike to swim upstream into Pensaukee Marsh to spawn. It will also to lead to other inland spawning wetlands or allow the sloped grassy areas to be used for spawning sites.

"Water from the Works Project Administration ditch that was channeled directly to the bay will now spread into the 180-acre Pensaukee Marsh making it available for spawning and rearing habitat to many fish like yellow perch, spotted musky and northern pike," stated Tammie Paoli, DNR Green Bay fisheries biologist. "Improving aquatic and near-shore habitats will help to improve spawning success and survival of these important native fish species."

The Pensaukee Marsh restoration project will also benefit wildlife such as waterfowl and marsh birds and help to filter sediment and nutrients from agricultural and residential lands that would otherwise run off into Green Bay.

An additional benefit of the Pensaukee Marsh restoration project was the maintenance and repair of sections of the Oconto Marsh dike (see Fall 2006 Fox River Current Spotlight feature). Rather than have the removed spoils placed in a landfill, innovative DNR biologists requested that the soil be transported north to the dike at Oconto Marsh in Oconto County. Five sections of dike totaling 2,430 feet were repaired using the material from the Pensaukee Marsh project. Repair and maintenance of this dike provides for the continued protection of 220 acres of high quality coastal marsh.

"Oconto Marsh is an important bird area on the west shore of Green Bay," affirmed John Huff, DNR Green Bay West Shore wildlife biologist. "It provides a reliable area of coastal emergent marsh habitat for water-dependent species. And, the marsh is an important nesting area for waterfowl and Forster's terns."

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 920-866-1726.

PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

This strip of land, approximately 20 feet wide, runs from County Highway S to the waters of the bay and was recently sloped, seeded and mulched.

DNR's Greg Hill Retires After 31-Year Career

By Greg Swanson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

After 31 years with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Greg Hill, implementation coordinator for the Lower Fox River/Green Bay project, is retiring.

The 55-year Madison resident started his career with DNR in 1977 as a ground-water specialist after earning a bachelor's degree in geology and a master's degree in soil science from the University of Wisconsin. He worked with the pulp and paper industry to reduce the dioxin level in its wastewater treatment plant sludge.

As his career progressed, the Michigan native found himself working on Great Lakes issues, including PCBs. "We identified early on that to deal with the concerns of toxins in the Great Lakes, the issue of contaminated sediments needed to be addressed," said Hill.

As state and federal agencies joined together in the late 1990s to form an Intergovernmental Partnership to oversee the cleanup of the Lower Fox River and Green Bay, Hill was tabbed to serve as DNR's natural resource damage assessment coordinator and representative on the NRDA team.

For the past several years, Hill has also served as the chief of the sediment management section in the department's bureau of watershed management. In that capacity, he has been responsible for other sediment cleanup projects throughout the state, in addition to the Lower Fox River.

"Greg has been instrumental in managing many critical details of planning, design and implementation of the Fox River project," said Bruce Baker, DNR deputy water division administrator. "Greg has shown real value through his ability to work with diverse and complex issues in an environment where there are many different interests represented at the table."

Hill talked about the progress he has seen over the past 10 years in cleaning up and restoring the Lower Fox River. "I'm proud of the progress that has been made on both remediation and restoration of the Fox," he said. "It is, from my standpoint, an example of what good science, good communication, collaboration and good people can do. I have enjoyed the challenges in the water program for more than 30 years. I was hired in 1977 to manage the land-spreading of municipal sludge and have advanced to managing contaminated mud. My master's degree in "dirt" has certainly served me well, and I hope the state of Wisconsin, too."

After he retires, Hill and his wife Susan plan to spend more time with their family. They have three daughters -- Marissa is an immigration attorney, married and living in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN area; Allie is finishing up a master's degree in early childhood/special education at the University of Illinois-Chicago; and Amanda will graduate in May 2009 with a bachelor's degree in sociology/gerontology at Winona (MN) State. According to Hill, she will use that degree "to help take care of her folks."

An avid outdoorsman, Hill is looking forward to continuing his studies of area lakes (while fishing) and open land and wildlife (while golfing).

Greg Hill, DNR's Lower Fox River/Green Bay implementation coordinator, finishes some work on the project before retiring.

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For upland areas that may be included in the cleanup, EPA would also oversee:

- The collection of background research as necessary.
- Subsurface (underground) investigations.
- On-site studies.

EPA has enlisted John Vetter, its national expert in historic preservation, to help draft the agreement. "Our responsibilities during a cleanup extend to other environmental values including those of historic preservation," he explained.

A provision would also be in the agreement for EPA to oversee the development of a public education program on the history of the river as well as any identified cultural resources that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. EPA would do this in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and local historical organizations.

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. Binders however, 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.

INSIDE FOX RIVER *CURRENT*

Fox River Current is published tri-annually 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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