

Great Lakes Projects Receive Matching Funds

By Betsy M. Galbraith, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Five area restoration projects were selected this year to receive about \$4.5 million in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds while more than \$1.7 million in matching funds from the Lower Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustee Council are supporting two of these projects.

This money will be used to start GLRI projects or compliment ongoing trustee council efforts to restore, replace, or acquire habitat for plants and wildlife injured by PCBs released into the Lower Fox River.

Restoration projects supported by NRDA and GLRI funding:

- **Cat Island Chain Restoration**, Brown County Port and Solid Waste Department, \$1.5 million awarded through GLRI, \$1.1 million provided by NRDA for restoration of a 272-acre historic island chain on the west shore of Green Bay.
- **West Shore/Green Bay Northern Pike Habitat Restoration**, Brown County Land and Water Department and Oconto County Land Conservation Division, \$885,242 awarded through GLRI, \$626,000 provided by NRDA for restoration of wetland and floodplain habitat for northern pike spawning on the west shore of Green Bay in Brown and Outagamie counties.

Other GLRI projects within the NRDA restoration area that compliment trustee council goals:

- **Baird Creek Riparian Protection Project**, Brown County Land and Water Department, \$377,354 awarded for buffer strip installation to provide habitat and sediment reduction in the Baird Creek Watershed.



PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Wetland and habitat for northern pike along west shore of Green Bay is slated for restoration.

- **Integrated Stream and Wetland Restoration in the Green Bay Area of Concern**, The Nature Conservancy, \$1.3 million awarded for restoration of streams and waterways in the Duck/Pensaukee Watershed for northern pike habitat.
- **Eradicating giant reed grass (phragmites) from coastal areas along Lake Michigan**, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, \$805,626 awarded for treatment of invasive plants to improve habitat for fish and wildlife.

To date, \$36 million in settlement funds have supported over 110 restoration projects with an additional \$22 million in matching funds from project partners.

————— See Great Lakes Projects Page 3

Justice Department Holds Comment Period, Meeting on Georgia-Pacific Settlement

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency addressed about 40 people at a November 18 public meeting in Green Bay regarding a proposed settlement with one of the companies deemed potentially responsible for environmental problems in the Lower Fox River and Green Bay.

DOJ, which typically acts on behalf of EPA concerning such matters, filed the settlement, or consent decree, for the United States and the state of Wisconsin. In the proposed settlement, Georgia-Pacific Consumer Products LP agrees that it is liable for certain required cleanup work downstream from a negotiated line across the river slightly upstream of the company's paper mill in the city of Green Bay. According to DOJ Senior Attorney Randy Stone, cleanup work downstream from the dividing line is estimated to cost

more than \$300 million. "A judge would decide how that cost should be split between Georgia-Pacific and the other parties named in lawsuits brought by two other paper companies, NCR and Appleton Papers," he explained.

The consent decree also states that Georgia-Pacific would agree to pay \$7 million to reimburse a portion of the government's unpaid past and future costs of overseeing the ongoing cleanup. It would also be protected against legal claims for upstream portions of the river.

DOJ accepted public comments on the proposed decree through November 24. All comments will be considered before a judge is asked to approve the settlement in federal court.

River Cleanup Shuts Down for Winter

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The second season of dredging PCB-contaminated sediment in the Lower Fox River has been completed.

NCR Corp. and Appleton Papers Inc., two of the companies responsible for the contamination, ended their 2010 "construction season" on November 13. Dredging began in April and consisted of removing about 720,000 cubic yards of sediment from the river.

According to EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, their original goal was 550,000 cubic

yards. "We actually dredged 30 percent more than what was originally planned," he said.

Hahnenberg added that dredging work went exceptionally well again this year. "We thought the greatest volume of contaminated sediment dredged in a single construction season for any environmental project occurred there last year," he stated. "However, we even exceeded last year's total of 540,000 cubic yards of sediment which was the all-time record for a project of this kind."

See River Cleanup, Page 7

Companies Look Ahead to 2011

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

With another year of dredging in the Lower Fox River in the books, the two companies doing the cleanup under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources oversight can start to make plans for next year.

According to EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, Appleton Papers Inc. and NCR Corp. will use the winter months to prepare for 2011.

So far, plans are similar to 2010. Estimates include:

- Dredging 560,000 cubic yards (or 100 acres) of contaminated sediment.

Great Lakes Projects *from Page 1*

Trustees will continue to work with their conservation partners in the Lower Fox River/Green Bay NRDA restoration area to fund more projects.

The GLRI is a new EPA-led interagency Great Lakes restoration initiative that will target the most significant problems, including invasive aquatic species, non-point source pollution and contaminated sediment. This initiative will use outcome-oriented performance goals and measures to target the most significant problems and track progress in addressing them. EPA and its federal partners will coordinate state, tribal, local and industry actions to protect, maintain and restore the chemical, biological and physical integrity of the Great Lakes.

More information on restoration goals can be found in the Joint Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Lower Fox River and Green Bay Area at www.fws.gov/midwest/FoxRiverNRDA. For more information on GLRI, go to www.epa.gov/greatlakes/glri.

The natural resource trustees are comprised of Wisconsin DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

- Capping and covering 49 acres with sand and/or heavy stone layers from Little Rapids to Green Bay.
- Sending at least 550 truckloads of sediment per week for disposal at a facility in Chilton.
- Adding to the 740,000 “man hours” of work with no time lost due to accidents.
- Operating 24 hours per day, 5 days per week.

The cleanup is expected to resume next April.



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:

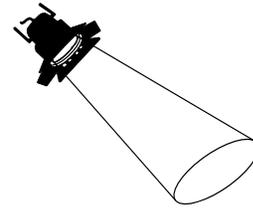
November

- ◆ *Jim Hahnenberg*, EPA: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Statewide Training, Waupaca; innovative approaches on the Lower Fox River sediment cleanup.

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

Spotlight On:

Sunset Fishing Wharf



By Betsy M. Galbraith, Lower Fox River/Green Bay NRDA Trustee Council Coordinator

Sunset Park in Kimberly, Wis. is home to baseball fields, playgrounds, hiking trails, boat launches and most recently, a handicapped-accessible fishing pier along the Lower Fox River.

Local residents requested the pier many years ago and the village incorporated the concept into its Open Space and Recreational Plan. After finding grant funding through the Lower Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustee Council, the project became a reality during the summer of 2009.

The handicapped-accessible pier is about 100 feet long by 6 feet wide and constructed of treated lumber. The village of Kimberly provided matching funds for the project and a local construction firm completed the work.

Prior to its construction, rip rap (large boulders) in this stretch of the river created a surface that was difficult for most anglers to walk on. The pier also increases fishing opportunities for those anglers who are disabled or do not have access to a boat.

“When we designed the project, we looked at the river and wanted to enhance its natural features,” said Al Schaefer, Kimberly community enrichment director. “The new pier provides benefits for all people who enjoy the river.”

As they cast their lines into the river, anglers have a chance to catch bass, perch, bluegills, northern pike, carp and suckers from the pier.



PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Newly constructed fishing pier located along the Lower Fox River in Kimberly.

Community members seem to appreciate the new fishing pier. About 20-30 youth have used the pier each summer as part of an outdoor recreation class sponsored by the Kimberly school district. One local resident and his son even donated their time and materials to add custom-made fishing rod holders to the pier.

To visit the new fishing pier, from state Route 441, exit county road CE East to Railroad Street South, then take Kimberly Avenue east. Turn left on Sunset Park Road and travel into the park. Veer to the right

See Spotlight, Page 5

DOJ Files Second Legal Agreement

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

A settlement with Brown County and the city of Green Bay was the subject of a second proposed consent decree filed by U.S. Department of Justice in federal court on December 1.

Under this latest proposed legal agreement, Brown County, Green Bay and the United States government would pay a total of \$5.2 million. Of that \$5.2 million, \$4.3 million would go toward natural resource damages and \$850,000 would be used to cover past and future costs associated with the river cleanup. The county and city are each responsible for \$350,000 while the United States government is responsible for \$4.5 million.

“Most of the payment toward past and future response costs will be put into a special state-managed account to pay future government costs of overseeing cleanup work being done by other paper companies that have not yet settled,” said EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg.

This proposed consent decree would also release Brown County, Green Bay and the Army Corps of

Spotlight from Page 4

at the bottom of the hill and proceed through the park.

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

For more information about Lower Fox River/Green Bay NRDA projects, contact Betsy M. Galbraith, trustee council coordinator, at betsy_galbraith@fws.gov or 920-866-1753.

Engineers from potential liability for natural resource damages resulting from any releases associated with historic placement of PCB-dredged material in Green Bay and releases to the bay from two local confined disposal facilities, Bayport and Renard Island, which are owned by the city and county.

A comment period on the proposed decree was announced in the December 7 Federal Register. Copies of that notice and the proposed consent decree are posted at www.justice.gov/enrd/5112.htm.

If this consent decree and another decree filed against Georgia-Pacific Consumer Products LP on October 13 are approved in federal court, a lawsuit against 11 other parties would continue. Those parties are: NCR Corp., Appleton Papers Inc., CBC Coating, Inc., Kimberly-Clark Corp., Menasha Corp., NewPage Wisconsin Systems, Inc., P.H. Glatfelter Co., U.S. Paper Mills Corp., WTM I Co., city of Appleton and the Neenah-Menasha Sewerage Commission.



PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Another view of the newly constructed fishing pier located along the Lower Fox River in Kimberly.

Health Dept. Electronically Inventories Signs

By Jessica Maloney, Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Fish consumption advisory signs along the Lower Fox River were “geolocated” this fall by Wisconsin Department of Health Services staff.

Geolocation is the process of defining the actual location of an object and using markers (like latitude and longitude) to link it to an electronic mapping system. Geolocation can be used to connect geographical information with other points of interest in the same area.

DHS is geolocating signs that have been posted along the Lower Fox River and Green Bay since the early 1990s to make it easier to find them when updates or new signs are needed.

Mapping signs through geolocation is a simple way to electronically track not only the sign locations but other

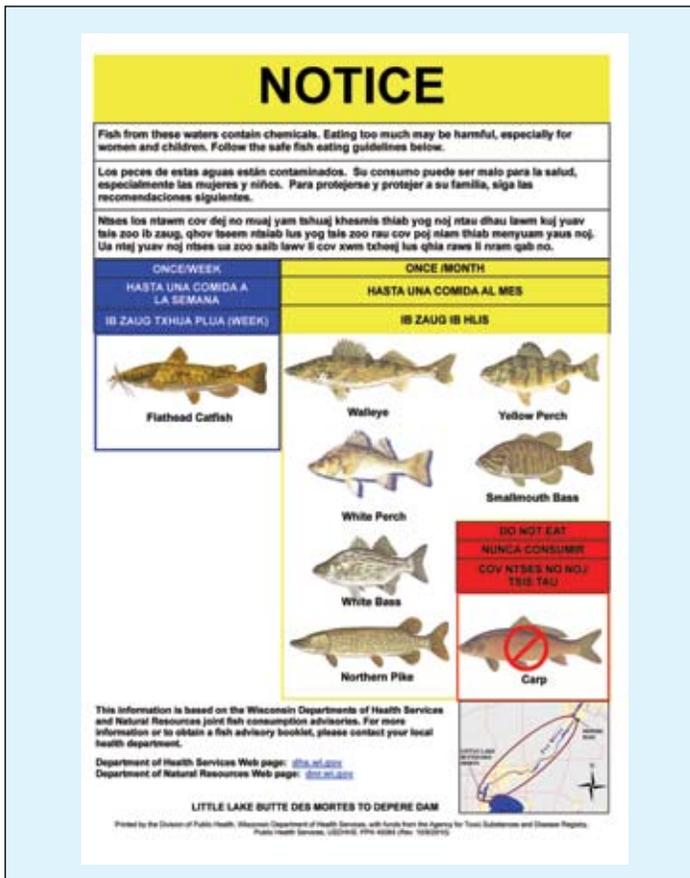


PHOTO COURTESY OF WISCONSIN DEPT. OF HEALTH SERVICES

Fish consumption advice is posted for Little Lake Butte des Morts to DePere.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WISCONSIN DEPT. OF HEALTH SERVICES

Fish advisory signs are now tracked electronically for easier updating and repair.

important information such as which municipalities posted the signs and when they were last updated. DHS will eventually post a map of advisory locations online and may link them to other information such as public boat launches and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources fishing license vendors.

Fish consumption advice was first issued for the Lower Fox River and Green Bay in 1977 due to high levels of PCBs. Consumption recommendations are based on PCB levels in fish periodically tested by Wisconsin DNR. According to Candy Schrank, Wisconsin DNR fish toxicologist, “As the cleanup along the Lower Fox River progresses, we expect the PCB levels in fish to eventually decrease over time.”

DHS and Wisconsin DNR regularly evaluate the new contaminant levels to determine whether the consumption advice needs to be updated. Last spring, “one meal per week” advice was added for flathead catfish from Little Lake Butte des Morts downstream to DePere. Advice for the entire river, which ranges from “one meal per week” to “do not eat” for the different fish species from the river and bay, can be found at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/eh/fish and at www.dnr.wi.gov/fish/consumption.

Suggestions on where additional signs might be useful may be directed to Jessica Maloney, public health educator, at jessica.maloney@wi.gov or 608-267-7199.

River Cleanup *from Page 2*

As for the caps placed over sediment upstream from the DePere Dam last year, they appear to be performing as expected, according to Hahnenberg. "In 2012, there will be a more complete evaluation to make sure they are stable and containing the PCBs," he said.

As the work continued, the companies again did extensive public outreach to address the communities' concerns regarding boat traffic, trucking and noise.

"We still have a cooperative working relationship that produced this year's positive results," Hahnenberg concluded. "The project is still expected to be completed in 2017, but with this year's results, we are hopeful that it can be completed a year earlier."

Information Available at Local Libraries

The Intergovernmental Partners invite the public to review technical reports, fact sheets, newsletters 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.

- **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

In addition, fact sheets and newsletters only are maintained at the public libraries in De Pere, Kaukauna, Little Chute, Neenah and Wrightstown.



Check out these Web sites:

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

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

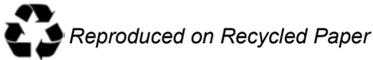
<http://contaminants.fws.gov/issues/restoration.cfm>

<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 Wisconsin 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.



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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 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

Great Lakes Projects Receive Matching Funds	1
Justice Department Holds Comment Period, Meeting on Georgia-Pacific Settlement	2
River Cleanup Shuts Down for Winter	2
Companies Look Ahead to 2011	3
Out and About . . .	3
Spotlight On: Sunset Fishing Wharf	4
DOJ Files Second Legal Agreement	5
Health Dept. Electronically Inventories Signs	6
Information Repository Locations	7
Web Site Addresses	7

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