

Company Fulfills 2012 River Cleanup Requirements

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

As ordered in federal court earlier this year, cleanup work required in the last stretch of the Lower Fox River was completed in November.

According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, NCR Corp. removed 662,000 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment from DePere to Green Bay.

NCR Corp., one of the companies responsible for PCB contamination in the Lower Fox River, was required to continue dredging this year under an August 3 ruling from the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. A judge in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin granted a motion for preliminary injunction and ordered the company to remove and clean up at least 660,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment by November 9.

“NCR dredged 662,000 cubic yards of sediment, which is a little more than what was ordered by the judge,” Hahnenberg said. “All of the required work was done by November 11. That work included dredging the sediment, treating it at the facility on State Street in Green Bay, and then transporting it to a licensed landfill for proper disposal.”

This year’s dredging focused on sediment south of the Georgia-Pacific’s Green Bay plant to avoid recontaminating other areas downstream that have

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PHOTO COURTESY OF FOTH

Fish are collected from the river for tissue analysis.

Strictly By the Numbers

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

While NCR Corp. was required to dredge at least 660,000 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment this year, it’s interesting to note some of the other numbers the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency counts.

The company typically reports weekly totals under several categories, including how many loads of sediment were hauled to the in-state landfill, the amount of water that was treated, and how much solid waste was produced.

“For example, for the week ending on November 9, NCR reported that 12,662 tons of sediment were taken to a landfill in Chilton for disposal,” explained EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, “while there were 529 trips, or truckloads, to the landfill.”

In addition, 54 million gallons of water were treated, or cleaned. This produced 12,493 tons of “filter cake” and 2,872 tons of sand. “Filter cake is the solid portion of material that goes into a dredge pipeline, and the sand is material separated out to use for roadway construction,” Hahnenberg explained.

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Two November Rulings Favor EPA, DNR

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Two November rulings from the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin favored the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

On November 21, Judge William C. Griesbach granted a motion for summary judgment that said EPA and Wisconsin DNR's decisions regarding the Lower Fox River cleanup plan followed the Superfund process. "The governments were operating within the bounds of the law," according to the judge. "Their decisions and processes were rational ones given the array of choices they had to make and the complexity and scope of this unprecedented undertaking."

In a November 23 ruling, the judge also granted the agencies' motion for summary judgment with respect to the liability of four of the defendants in the lawsuit, namely NCR Corp., P.H. Glatfelter Co., Menasha Corp., and WTM I Co.

More information can be found in the court's rulings, Decision and Order on the Propriety of the Remedy, Nov. 21, 2012, Case No. 10-C-910; and Decision and Order on Defendants' Liability, Nov. 23, 2012, Case No. 10-C-910. These documents are posted at www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/foxriver and available on disc at the information repositories listed on page 7.

Agencies Approve New Request To Accept PCBs

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Resources have approved a request for an in-state landfill to accept higher levels of PCB-contaminated material dredged from the Lower Fox River.

The request, made by Waste Management of Wisconsin, was approved on September 18, following last summer's 30-day public comment period. The final "PCB risk-based disposal approval" will allow dewatered and processed PCB-contaminated material dredged from the Lower Fox River to be taken to WMWI's Ridgeview Recycling and Disposal facility in Whitelaw, near Manitowoc.

EPA's approval coincided with the state's 2012 "plan of operation modification." WMWI needed both agencies' approval before it could accept Lower Fox River material starting in 2013. Although 2013 work plans are still being reviewed, EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg said NCR Corp., the company doing the dredging, should be "good to go" if it wants to use Ridgeview.

For further information on Ridgeview, contact EPA Environmental Scientist Karen Kirchner at 800-621-8431, ext. 34669 or at kirchner.karen@epa.gov. EPA's approval document is also available at www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/foxriver and on disc at the information repositories listed on page 7.

Final Design Marks Important Milestone

By Trish Ossmann, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The final design for the PCB cleanup on the Lower Fox River is now complete. It includes a combination of dredging, capping, and long-term monitoring and maintenance of PCB-contaminated material on the river's bottom.

"This is a major achievement in this project," explained Gary Kincaid, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources lead engineer. "It's a design effort that has been years in the making and is a necessary component to finishing this river cleanup project."

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DNR Adds New Member to Project Team

By Trish Ossmann, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

You may see Dale Rezabek's face on television or at a meeting of your civic group, speaking about the Lower Fox River generally or the PCB cleanup project in particular. Requests for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources speakers to address civic groups and media are growing. Rezabek is a wastewater specialist with the Wisconsin DNR who is providing community outreach and public relations help to the PCB cleanup project team on a temporary basis.

A native of the Great Lakes region, Rezabek has spent his career working in the world of water. "I've run the gamut of water-related positions, from a biologist with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Michigan to a hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey," explained Rezabek. "Wisconsin DNR is doing great work protecting the state's natural resources, which is very important to me. Projects like the one on the Lower Fox River make me excited to see how resources can bounce back to become an even more tremendous asset to a community."

With an associate's degree in biology, bachelor's degrees in geology and fish and wildlife biology and ecology, and a master's degree in aqueous geochemistry, Rezabek, who lives near Little Lake Butte des Morts,

has a lot to offer to the project. His experience with environmental consulting firms as well as state and federal agencies, gives him a different perspective on the project.

"I worked on water cleanup projects while I was in consulting," said Rezabek, "and several were in river and bay systems. The dynamics of these types of systems are complex, and when contamination occurs

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Dale Rezabek



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:

October

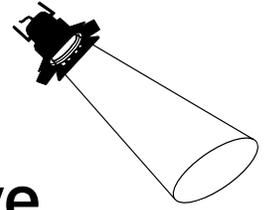
- ◆ *Dale Rezabek*, DNR: interviewed on WLUK-TV's Good Day Wisconsin, Green Bay; water quality and general Lower Fox River cleanup.
- ◆ *Beth Olson*, DNR: interviewed by television's "The Green Economy," <http://thegreeneconomy.tv/>; general Lower Fox River cleanup.

The Fox River Current is featuring Natural Resource Damage Assessment projects in and near the Lower Fox River.

Spotlight On:

Land Trust Creates West Shore Preserve

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



The Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust recently purchased a 34-acre wetland property on the west shore of Green Bay. The property contains 32.5 acres of forested wetland, 1,450 feet of a seasonal creek, which provides spawning habitat for Northern Pike, and 1.5 acres of upland forest. It is located in the town of Suamico just north of Sensiba State Wildlife Area on Bayside Road.

On an unusually warm day last spring, staff from the land trust counted over 30 mature pike on a short stretch of stream on the property within just an hour. “Traditionally, pike spawn as soon as the ice is out, and finding them in the ditches and streams can be hit or miss,” said Ryan Bessette, NEWLT’s west shore project coordinator.

The Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department completed a restoration project for northern pike on the property in 2008. Fox River Natural Resource Damage Assessment settlement monies funded the majority of the enhancements.

Northern pike depend on a network of small streams and ditches that connects inland wetlands with the Bay. The pike use this network every spring as they swim inland from Green Bay to spawn. After hatching, the pike babies, or “fry,” spend time within inland wetlands before they begin their journey back to the Bay in late spring.

The waterways and wetlands the pike occupy in spring dry up over the next few months. When observing these locations in summer, you would



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHEAST WISCONSIN LAND TRUST

Tributary within the new property that supports northern pike spawning.

never suspect that they are critical spawning and rearing habitat for fish. The cycle is repeated each spring and pike often return to the same location where their parents spawned.

Through their land preservation activities, the land trust is an important partner in protecting natural resources on the west shore of Green Bay. This property is nestled between a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources fisheries area and a Wisconsin Department of Transportation restoration project, which makes up for adverse effects to wetland habitat resulting from a U.S. Highway 41 reconstruction project. Just northeast of the new acquisition is 70 acres of coastal wetlands, where NEWLT holds a permanent conservation easement. An 18-acre, state-owned property is located across the road from the new preserve.

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NEWLT's long-term goal is to help preserve additional west shore lands. "If we care about the waters of the Bay and the quality of our fisheries, land conservation on the west shore of Green Bay is crucial," said NEWLT Executive Director Deborah Nett. "The health of Green Bay and also Lake Michigan is very much determined by what we do on the land here in northeastern Wisconsin."

The property is open to the public and can be used for hunting, hiking, birding and fishing. To find it, travel north of Green Bay on state Route 41 and take the County Road B Exit 176. At the bottom of the off ramp, turn right onto County Road B (east). Follow that to the stop sign at County Road J, and turn left (north) onto County Road J. Turn right (east) on Resort Road then left (north) on Bayside Road.

"This will not only be our first preserve on the west shore," Nett added, "but also a place where people can experience first-hand a critical Northern pike spawning habitat."

Matching funds for the project were contributed by Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, Wisconsin DNR's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Wisconsin Land Fund, and an anonymous family foundation.

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Work on the Lower Fox River did not stop during the design process. Each year, the Wisconsin DNR, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the paper companies lay out an annual work plan that keeps the project moving forward. The annual work plan process serves to refine the design as more information is obtained from sampling and analysis of river sediment during the cleanup.

"The final 100 percent design is a fundamental aspect of completing this project," said Wisconsin DNR Project



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHEAST WISCONSIN LAND TRUST

Northern pike spawning in a wetland on the property.

For more information, visit the land trust's website: www.newlt.org.

The natural resource trustees are comprised of the Wisconsin DNR, 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.

Manager Beth Olson. "Now that we have the design established, we will continue to work collaboratively with EPA and the companies to fine tune it. We are one major step closer to completing this project."

The document is posted at www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/foxriver and on disc at the information repositories listed on page 7.

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already been cleaned up. “We like to start upstream and move downstream,” Hahnenberg added.

Cleanup in this stretch of the river will take longer because this is where most of the PCB contamination is located. “The sediment is thicker in the Bay Area and the river is deeper as we move downriver,” Hahnenberg explained. “We still expect to finish the entire river cleanup in five years’ time.”

While dredging resumed in Green Bay, work continued in three other areas that have already been cleaned up.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOTH

A walleye is weighed before it is sent to the lab.

In Little Lake Butte des Morts and in two parts of the river stretching from Appleton to DePere, fish collection as part of the monitoring process took place. This involves pulling fish, such as walleye and bass, from the river and analyzing their tissue in a lab.

“All of the fish collection was done by August,” said Hahnenberg, “and the analysis will be completed by next spring. In the lab, fish tissue samples are analyzed for chemicals to see how much PCB contamination is in their bodies. We hope to see low levels, but we won’t know for sure until our analysis is complete.”

The fish collected from Little Rapids to DePere will provide a baseline for this particular area since cleanup was completed there in November 2011. “Fish collection and sampling occur a year after the cleanup,” Hahnenberg added. “When we finish our current cleanup in 2017, we’ll collect and sample more fish in 2018.”

In addition, long-term monitoring from Appleton to Little Rapids started this year. This involves studying fish, surface water and sediment, and tracking trends in the PCB levels. “We hope these levels will be progressively lower over time,” said Hahnenberg.

While work in the river has shut down for the winter, routine plant and equipment maintenance will go on so dredging can resume in 2013.

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First, mud is dislodged from the river bottom, vacuumed, and pumped into a pipeline where large debris and sand are separated. Next, the remaining sludge settles on the bottom of large tanks after water is squeezed out. Finally, the filter cake is removed from large presses and stored until it is ready to be trucked to a landfill for disposal.

Year to Date Totals (as of Nov. 9, 2012)

13,360 loads hauled to in-state landfill
23.73 tons average weight per load
318,000 tons low-level waste hauled

458 loads hauled to out-of-state landfill
23.8 tons average weight per load
10,901 tons high-level waste hauled



16 billion gallons of water treated

19,874 individual filter cake discharges to pipeline
325,531 tons of filter cake produced
16.38 tons of filter cake per trip to landfill

34,141 tons of fine sand produced
27,056 tons of coarse sand produced
662,000 cubic yards of sediment dredged



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there, it is challenging to get them cleaned up, so conveying the process to the public is also a challenge and I'm glad to help out."

Rezabek, who works in the Wisconsin DNR's wastewater permitting office, brings a background that includes remediation, water quality, rivers and wetlands. He is able to take that technical experience and explain complicated processes in an easy-to-understand way for the public.

The Fox Valley resident loves astronomy and is a trained weather spotter with SKYWARN, an amateur radio operators' group that assists the National Weather Service. He is also an avid reader of mystery novels and cloak and dagger books. When Rezabek isn't working on water issues, he enjoys biking, hiking, skiing, birding and fishing with his wife, four boys and two golden retrievers.

Information Available at Local Libraries

The Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership invites 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 Wisconsin libraries listed below.

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

An Administrative Record, which contains detailed information upon which the selection of the cleanup plans was based, is available at:



Check out these websites:

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

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

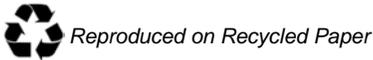
<http://contaminants.fws.gov/issues/restoration.cfm>

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

- **Wisconsin DNR**, Northeast Regional Office, 2984 Shawano Ave., Green Bay
- **Wisconsin DNR**, Bureau of Watershed Management, 101 S. Webster St., 3rd Floor, Madison
- **Appleton Public Library**, 225 N. Oneida St., Appleton
- **Brown County Library**, 515 Pine St., Green Bay
- **EPA Record Center**, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor, Chicago



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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.

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Fox River *Current* is published tri-annually by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership. Its purpose is to provide 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. Feedback on articles and ideas for future issues are welcome. Send comments to Susan Pastor, EPA Superfund Division (SI-7J), 77 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604 or email pastor.susan@epa.gov.