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Region 5 Cleanup Sites

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Lower Fox River and Green Bay Site

Contact Information

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More government experts

Photo Gallery



Site Information

- Green Bay, WI (Brown County)
- EPA ID# WI0001954841
- NPL Site Narrative
- NPL Factsheet
- Superfund Site Progress Profile
- Alias(es): Fox River NRDA/PCB Releases, Fox River
- Photos
- *Fox River Current* Newsletter Archive

Background

The Lower Fox River, located in northeastern Wisconsin, begins at the Menasha and Neenah channels leading from Lake Winnebago and flows northeast for 39 miles where it discharges into Green Bay and Lake Michigan. Approximately 270,000 people live in the communities along the river. The river has 12 dams and includes the highest concentration of pulp and paper mills in the world. During the 1950s and 1960s, these mills routinely used PCBs in their operations which ultimately contaminated the river.[\(more...\)](#)

What are PCBs?

As a result of the recycling of PCB-containing carbonless copy paper, area mill operations discharged PCBs in waste streams, contaminating sediment in the Lower Fox River. The Lower Fox River is the

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- Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry

Fox River Cleanup Group

[EXIT Disclaimer](#)

Little Lake Cleanup Team

[EXIT Disclaimer](#)

Oneida Environmental Quality Department

[EXIT Disclaimer](#)

EPA Contaminated Sediment Management Strategy

Workplan describing the Agency's long-term approaches to assess, reduce and prevent further risks posed by contaminated sediments in many watersheds. The strategy does not discuss the cleanup of specific sites.

Repositories

(where to view written records)

Appleton Public Library
225 N. Oneida Street
Appleton, WI

Brown County Library
515 Pine Street
Green Bay, WI

Door County Library
104 S. Fourth Ave.
Sturgeon Bay, WI

Oneida Community Library
201 Elm Street
Oneida, WI

Oshkosh Public Library
106 Washington Ave.
Oshkosh, WI

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

DNR Lower Fox River Basin Team
801 E. Walnut Street
Green Bay, WI

Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources

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largest source of PCBs to Lake Michigan in the basin. From 1957 to 1971, about 250,000 pounds of PCBs were released, contaminating 11 million tons of sediment. It is estimated that some 160,000 pounds of PCBs have already left the Fox River and entered Green Bay and Lake Michigan. On average, 300 to 500 additional pounds are flushed from the Lower Fox sediment each year. Floods would flush additional thousands of pounds into Green Bay. Once PCBs are released into the bay and Lake Michigan, they are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to recover.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Great Lakes Contaminated Sediments Program

Video: Contaminated Sediments in our Waterways: Impacts and Solutions (28 min.)

Bureau of Watershed Management
101 S. Webster Street, 3rd Floor
Madison, WI
EPA Record Center
77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor
Chicago, IL

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Site Updates

[Fox River Current Newsletter \(PDF\)](#) (8pp, 577K) Spring/Summer 2014 ([all issues of the Fox River Current- Archive](#))

August 2014

EPA has completed a status review of the site's cleanup. This type of review is required at least every five years where the cleanup is complete--or ongoing--but hazardous waste remains managed on-site. These reviews are done to ensure that the cleanup continues to protect people and the environment.

[Five Year Rivew Report \(PDF\)](#) (68 pp, 4.9MB) July 2014

The review included:

- An evaluation of background information
- Cleanup requirements
- Effectiveness of the cleanup and any anticipated future actions
- An analysis of ways for EPA to operate more efficiently.

This was the second five-year review for the Lower Fox River site. It details the site progress. The previous review was done in 2009.

The sixth year of dredging in the Lower Fox River from DePere to Green Bay is in progress. About 670,000 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment is expected to be removed this year using at least three hydraulic dredges. Similar to last year, dredging will take place 24 hours per day, at least five days a week through early November (except for holidays). Another process referred to as sand capping and covering, which started in 2011, will also continue. This year, 60 acres of sediment will be capped and covered.

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All dredged sediment is pumped into the State Street dewatering facility through a pipeline. Then, the water is squeezed out by special equipment called a plate and frame press. The remaining dried sediment is loaded onto trucks to be properly disposed of. Some sediment with higher levels of PCBs is trucked to Ridgeview Recycling and Disposal Facility in Whitelaw, near Manitowoc. Owned by Waste Management of Wisconsin, this landfill received a permit in 2012 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to accept this type of material. Since most of the sediment has PCB levels less than 50 parts per million, it is taken to Veolia Hickory Meadows Landfill in Chilton.

The entire cleanup is scheduled to be completed by 2017. In a May 1, 2013, federal court ruling, U.S. District Judge William Griesbach required seven companies that EPA considers responsible for the PCB contamination to continue and complete the required cleanup work.

Three legal agreements for settlements totaling about \$55 million were lodged in federal court on March 26. If a judge approves these agreements, or consent decrees, this would resolve claims against six companies and two municipal sewer system operators for cleanup costs and natural resource damages in the Lower Fox River.

In April, the remaining portions of five historical ships were pulled out of the Lower Fox River just north of the southern "railroad bridge" in Green Bay. This work was done under a legal agreement signed by EPA, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the state historic preservation officer, Green Bay's Neville Museum, and NCR Corp.'s contractor.

The ships, two of which date back to the 1880s, were discovered in 2008 by archaeologists hired to document artifacts found in the river from Appleton to Green Bay. With the help of Wisconsin historians, nautical organizations and maritime museums, two were identified as the *Bob Teed* and the *Satisfaction*. Little information is available on the three other wooden barges near the shoreline by the State Street sediment processing facility. Six years ago, the archaeologists were charged with making recommendations on how to handle the ships, also referred to as artifacts, so the cleanup could proceed on schedule. Because these sunken vessels are considered to be cultural resources, they must be "replaced" if they are removed. The paper companies have agreed to build a display for [The Neville Public Museum of Brown County](#) to "replace" these resources. The display is expected to be ready next year.

You will need the free Adobe Reader to view some of the files on this page. See [EPA's PDF page](#) to learn more.

News Releases

- [EPA: Design changes at Little Lake Butte des Morts PCB cleanup approved June 12, 2008](#)
- [EPA proposes design changes at Little Lake Butte des Morts PCB cleanup; public meeting Dec. 13, Nov. 21, 2007](#)
- [EPA Order: Begin Cleanup on Remaining Stretch of Fox River, Nov. 14, 2007](#)
- [Fox River cleanup plan amended to include additional capping, June 28, 2007](#)
- [view all News Releases](#)

Fact Sheets

- [EPA Proposes Revisions to Cleanup Plan for Little Lake Butte des Morts \(PDF\)](#) (8 pp, 527K) November 2007
- [EPA Proposes Changes to Current Cleanup Plan \(PDF\)](#) (8 pp, 493K) November 2006

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- [view all Fact Sheets](#)

Technical Documents

[view all technical documents](#)

2013

- [Memorandum of Agreement \(PDF\)](#) (9 pp, 176K) September 2013

2012

- [Remedial Design Volume 2 of 2 \(PDF\)](#) (196 pp, 12MB) October 2012
 - Appendices are rather large and can be viewed at the repository.
- [Risk-Based Disposal Approval \(PDF\)](#) (30 pp, 900K) Sept. 18, 2012

2011

- [Lower Fox River Operable Unit 1 Post-Remediation Executive Summary \(PDF\)](#) (12 pp, 106K) March 2011

2010

- [Interagency Agreement Between EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) (13pp, 1.7MB)- April 2010
- [Explanation of Significant Differences \(PDF\)](#) (16 pp, 1.1MB) February 2010
- [Criteria Analysis Memorandum \(PDF\)](#) (19 pp, 3.1MB) February 2010

2009

- **Lower Fox River Remedial Design Volume 1 - 60% Design Report**
 - [Design Report Volume 1 \(PDF\)](#) (192 pp, 20MB) June 2008
 - [Volume 1 Appendices - \(PDF\)](#) (840 pp, 46.4MB)
 - [Design Report Volume 2 \(PDF\)](#) (138 pp, 9.7MB) June 2008
 - [Volume 2 Appendices - \(PDF\)](#) (946 pp, 53.4MB)

2001

- EPA and Wisconsin DNR released a [proposed cleanup plan \(PDF\)](#) for the Lower Fox River and Green Bay, October 2001

Five Year Review Reports

- [Five Year Rivew Report \(PDF\)](#) (68 pp, 4.9MB) July 2014
- [Five Year Review Report, July 2009 \(PDF\)](#) (54 pp, 1.9MB) July 2009

Legal Documents

2014

- 924: [Notice of Lodging of Three Proposed Consent Decrees \(PDF\)](#) (7pp, 41K), March 26, 2014
- 924-1: [Consent Decree With Cashout Settling Defendants and the State of Wisconsin \(PDF\)](#) (59 pp, 980K), March 26, 2014
- 924-2: [Consent Decree With Kimberly Clark \(PDF\)](#) (32 pp, 541K), March 26, 2014

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- 924-3: [Consent Decree With Newpage Wisconsin Inc. \(PDF\)](#) (30 pp, 617K), March 26, 2014

2013

- [Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law on Plaintiffs' Fifth Claim for Relief \(PDF\)](#) (78 pp, 432K) May 1, 2013
- [Order Entering Declaratory Judgement and Terms of Injunction Under Fed. R. CIV. P. 65\(d\) \(PDF\)](#) (7 pp, 32K) May 1, 2013

2012

- [Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin \(PDF\)](#) (24 pp, 379K) Aug. 3, 2012
- [Decision and Order on Defendants' Liability \(PDF\)](#) (8 pp, 37K) Nov. 23, 2012
- [Decision and Order on the Propriety of the Remedy \(PDF\)](#) (13 pp, 172K) Nov. 21, 2012
- [Decision and Order \(PDF\)](#) (9 pp, 48K) Oct. 4, 2012
- [Decision and Order \(PDF\)](#) (9 pp, 48K) Oct. 4, 2012
- [Order Denying Motion for Stay Pending Appeal \(PDF\)](#) (1 pg, 37K) May 4, 2012
- [Decision Granting Preliminary Injunction \(PDF\)](#) (19 pp, 140K) April 27, 2012
- [Reply Brief \(PDF\)](#) (28 pp, 134K) April 10, 2012
- [Expedited Motion for a Preliminary Injunction \(PDF\)](#) (5 pp, 55K) March 19, 2012
- [Brief in Support of United States Expedited Motion \(PDF\)](#) (25 pp, 75K) March 19, 2012

2010

- [Consent Decree with Brown County and the City of Greenbay \(PDF\)](#) December 2010 (44 pp, 408K)

[View legal documents from previous years.](#)

Public Meetings

- [Transcript of the December 13, 2007 public meeting on the Lower Fox River/ Green Bay Little Lake Butte des Morts site Proposed Plan \(PDF\)](#) (49 pp, 324K)