

# Dredging Begins on Ottawa River Sediment Cleanup Project

## Ottawa River Legacy Act Site/Maumee River AOC

Toledo, Ohio

May 2010

### About Areas of Concern

Although discharges of toxic substances into the Great Lakes have been reduced over the last 20 years, high concentrations of pollution remain in the bottom of some rivers and harbors. That poses potential health risks to people and wildlife, and states have issued fish advisories in many Great Lakes locations.

The tributaries and harbors identified as having pollution problems are known as “Areas of Concern,” or AOCs. There are 40 AOCs on the Great Lakes – 25 on the U.S. side, 10 in Canada and five shared between the U.S. and Canada. The Ottawa River is part of the Maumee River Area of Concern. The Maumee has the largest drainage area of any Great Lakes river covering 8,316 square miles with numerous rivers, creeks and stream.

### For more information

For more information about the Great Lakes, AOCs or the Great Lakes Legacy Act, you can contact these EPA experts:

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### Websites:

[www.epa.gov/glla](http://www.epa.gov/glla)

[www.epa.gov/glnpo/aoc/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/aoc/index.html)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes National Program Office and several local partners have begun dredging contaminated sediment from 5 1/2 miles of the Ottawa River in Toledo, Ohio. This follows the cleanup of Sibley Creek that began in December 2009 and was completed this April.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act Ottawa River project calls for the removal of 250,000 cubic yards of sediment (mud) contaminated with heavy metals, PCBs and PAHs (polychlorinated biphenyls and polyaromatic hydrocarbons). About 10,000 cubic yards have been removed from Sibley Creek and another 240,000 cubic yards will be removed from the Ottawa River. The sediment from the river will be hydraulically dredged and transported through a pipeline to the nearby Hoffman Road Landfill. Some “hot spots” in the river containing excessive levels of PCBs exist. Therefore, about 7,000 cubic yards of sediment will be dredged and taken to a specially licensed facility for disposal. The project is expected to be completed this fall or early winter.

### Feds and local partners share costs

The federal Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) and the Ottawa River Group are funding the \$49 million project. The GLLA provides federal money that along with local matching dollars are used to clean up polluted sediment along the U.S. shores of the Great Lakes. GLLA and the Ottawa River Group will split the cost of the sediment cleanup 50/50. The ORG



*Hydraulic dredging of the Ottawa River is under way in Toledo. The barge shown here holds the booster pumps to help move the sediment to the Hoffman Road Landfill.*

consists of the following stakeholders: Allied Waste North America Inc; the city of Toledo; E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co.; GenCorp Inc.; Honeywell Inc.; Illinois Tool Works Inc.; United Technologies Corp.; Varta Microbattery Inc.; The Mosaic Co.; Perstorp Polyols Inc.; and Grand Trunk Western Railroad.

### Beneficial uses

The Great Lakes Legacy Act was passed by Congress in 2002 as a tool to accelerate the pace of sediment cleanup within the Great Lakes Areas of Concern (AOC). One of the goals of the GLLA includes restoring “beneficial uses” to polluted sections in the Great Lakes AOCs. The Legacy Act was reauthorized in 2008 and includes new provisions that allow for habitat restoration in conjunction with sediment cleanups.

In the Maumee River AOC, which covers the Ottawa River, beneficial use impairments include restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption, excessive algae growth and degraded fish and wildlife habitats.

### Ottawa River cleanup history

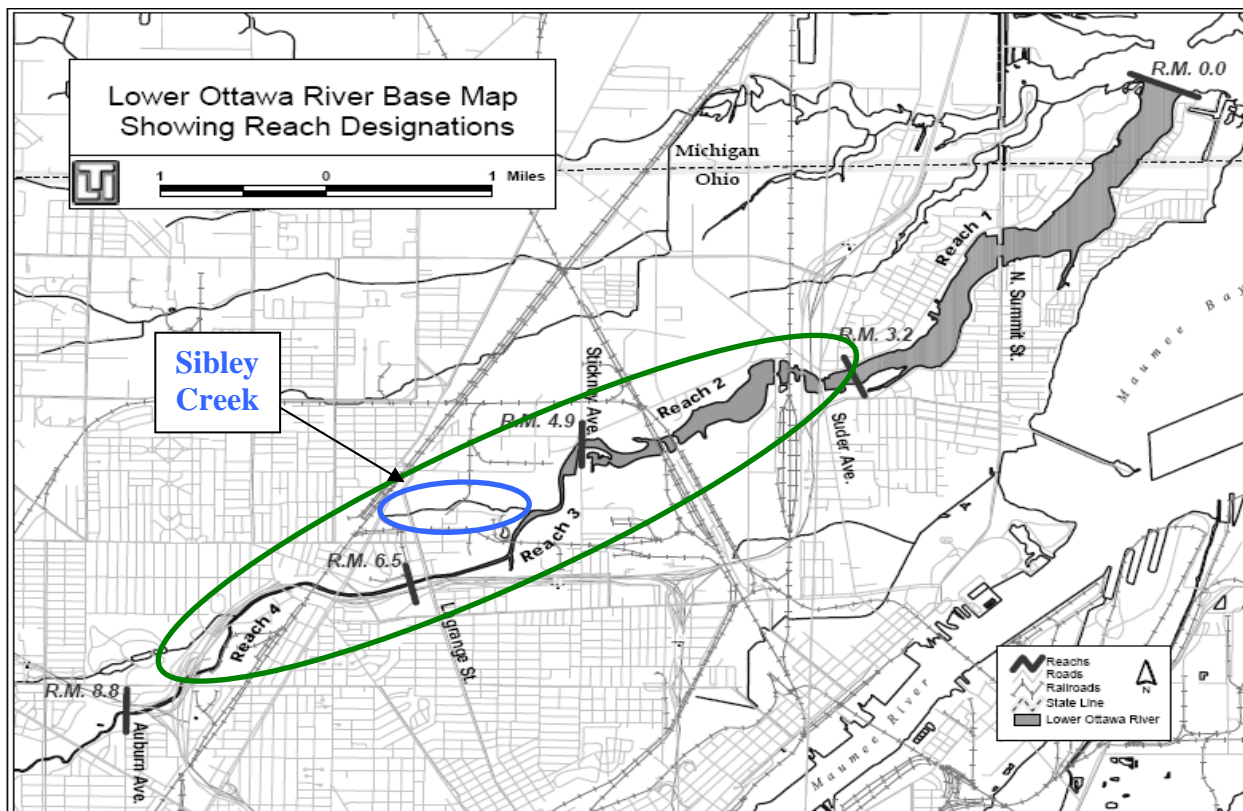
Historical pollution sources along the Ottawa River

included several landfills, industrial facilities and eight sewer outlets that overflow after heavy rains. But officials have been busy the last 10 years stopping and containing these sources. Three landfills have been capped, five industrial sites were cleaned up and Toledo is planning work to prevent some of the sewer overflows.

### Great Lakes Legacy Act sediment cleanup successes

Since 2004, six sediment cleanup projects have been completed under the Great Lakes Legacy Act. These projects have cleaned up nearly 960,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment at a cost of almost \$119 million. Some \$68 million in Legacy Act funds have leveraged \$51 million in non-federal dollars from state, local and private partners.

This funding translated into the removal of nearly 1.6 million pounds of contaminants from Great Lakes waterways, reducing risks to human health and wildlife. The Ottawa River is the second Legacy Act project in Ohio. In 2007, sediment removal was completed on the Ashtabula River in Ashtabula, Ohio, and the GLLA habitat restoration work was completed this year.



Map shows the location of the Great Lakes Legacy Act project on the Ottawa River in Toledo, Ohio. Dredging is under way and will remove 250,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from about 5 ½ miles of the river and Sibley Creek.