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Environmental NEWS RELEASE



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OTTAWA RIVER WILL BE CLEANER THANKS TO GREAT LAKES LEGACY ACT

CHICAGO (Jan. 29, 2009) – The Ottawa River will soon be much cleaner thanks to an agreement signed today between U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Ottawa River Group. They agreed to a \$43 million cleanup of contaminated sediment in the river. Costs will be equally shared between EPA, using funds provided by the Great Lakes Legacy Act, and the local sponsors.

The Ottawa River Group is a partnership of the city of Toledo and businesses along the river, including E.I. duPont, Honeywell, Chrysler, Allied Waste North America, Illinois Toolworks, United Technologies and GenCorp.

"The restoration of the Ottawa River not only benefits the immediate area but also helps improve water quality in a high priority area of the Maumee River Area of Concern and in Lake Erie," said Bharat Mathur, EPA Region 5's acting administrator.

"The City of Toledo is proud to be a member of the Ottawa River Group, and we are committed to cleaning up the unfortunate remnants of our manufacturing and industrial past," said Toledo Mayor Garty Finkbeiner. "At a time when many of our City's construction workers are out of work, this \$43 million dollar project will no doubt lead to many jobs. I thank the EPA for working with the City of Toledo and other members of the Ottawa River Group on this project, which will soon allow our citizens to once again enjoy this great natural resource."

"This is a significant commitment of resources that will go a long way toward restoring the Ottawa River. I commend U.S. EPA and the Ottawa River Group for moving this much needed cleanup forward," said Ohio EPA

Director Chris Korleski.

Beginning this summer, about 270,000 cubic yards of sediment contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons or PAHs, and metals will be dredged from a 5.6-mile stretch of the river. The project is expected to be completed in about two years.

Contamination in the sediment of the Ottawa River is a leading cause of state advisories against eating certain fish from the river and Maumee Bay. The cleanup will reduce the mass of PCBs entering Lake Erie. Dredged sediment contaminated with high levels of PCBs will be sent to a facility designed and permitted to accept this type of waste. Remaining sediment will likely go to Toledo's Hoffman Road landfill.

Although discharges of toxic chemicals to the Great Lakes have been reduced in the last 30 years, contaminants persist in the sediment of some rivers, harbors and bays as a "legacy" of urbanization and industrial activity.

Five Legacy Act cleanups have been completed. More than 900,000 cubic yards of sediment have been cleaned up, removing 1.7 million pounds of contaminants. The total cost of the cleanups was \$97 million, with \$53 million coming from Great Lakes Legacy Act funds and \$44 million from nonfederal sources. Key to the success of the projects has been the strong partnerships that have developed between EPA and other federal, state, local and private entities.

More information is available at <http://www.epa.gov/glla/ottawa/index.html>

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