

Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA)



Since the 1950s, the Lower Fox River system has been contaminated by the release of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from paper mills, public treatment works, and other sources. These PCB releases injured fish, bald eagles, fish-eating birds such as herons and terns, surface water, and sediment. Cultural resources were also impacted as a result of these natural resource injuries.

Working on behalf of the public in order to address natural resource injuries, recover damages, and implement restoration, the following entities formed a Trustee Council as provided under federal law: the Department of the Interior (working through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), the State of Wisconsin, the Oneida Nation, and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. Working collaboratively for more than 25 years, these 4 governments with diverse backgrounds have positively impacted the natural resources and communities of northeast Wisconsin.

Beginning in 2002, the Trustees have directed settlement funds to over 160 restoration projects; because of partnerships with a variety of government agencies, non-profit groups, Tribes, universities, and others have frequently resulted in greater conservation accomplishments (through leveraged funding and other resources) than would have been possible with NRDA funding alone. This has resulted in over 21,000 acres of landscape conservation, fisheries, and recreational benefits. Completed restoration projects include land preservation, habitat restoration, fisheries enhancements, and public outdoor recreational use projects.



The Fox River Natural Resource Trustees developed a 2016 Update to the Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment to guide future NRDA restoration in the Lower Fox River/Green Bay restoration area, building upon the goals set forth in 2003.

In combination with the continuing removal of millions of cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediments from the Lower Fox River, these remediation and restoration efforts are making significant contributions to the recovery of this Great Lakes Area of Concern, and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat and resources across this important Great Lakes landscape.

