



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) Significant Activities Report

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October 2005

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Wisconsin Automobile Mercury Switch Collection Project

In September 2001, USEPA's Great Lakes National Program Office awarded the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) a \$65,000 grant to establish an Automotive Mercury Switch Collection Project (Project) with the auto and scrap recycling industry.

This successful project had a number of positive impacts:

- It established a collection program that is on-going,
- It furthered the development of positive relationships between the industry group and the WDNR,
- It resulted in keeping 796 pounds of mercury waste from entering the environment during the processing, smelting, shredding of scrap material,
- It collected over 50,000 mercury switches from scrapped automobiles,
- It was accomplished at minimal cost (\$65,000 for the 4 years),



Examples of the types of mercury switches collected (photo courtesy of Wisconsin DNR)

- It assisted the automotive recyclers in helping to meet their Best Management Practice required in their Storm Water Permit,
- It was able to provide recognition to those participants by the highest level of state government (Governor and Secretary of WDNR) and
- It provided a basis for further discussions/involvement with other responsible industry groups in future efforts.

Additional information about the WDNR's mercury collection program is available on their Web Site at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cea/assistance/scrap/switches/index.htm>

(Contact: Tony Kizlauskas, 312-353-8773, kizlauskas.anthony@epa.gov)

***Mudpuppy's* Busy October**

The Great Lakes National Program Office's 32-foot sediment research boat, the *R/V Mudpuppy* had a busy October, completing trips

to several Great Lakes Areas of Concern to characterize the condition of bottom sediments or to check on sediment cleanups.

Muskegon Lake

Scientists from GLNPO and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality obtained twenty-three sediment core samples and twenty-three Ponar surface samples at the Division Street outfall in Muskegon Lake from October 3rd to 5th. The Ponars and cores taken on board the *R/V Mudpuppy* will be analyzed for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and metals. There were two objectives for this sampling:

1. To understand the micro-distribution of contaminants in sediments, both vertically and horizontally; and
2. To understand Muskegon Lake PCB and metal concentrations at Division Street outfall. This work is part of a Great Lakes Legacy Act sediment monitoring project at Ryerson Creek.

(Contact: Alie Muneer, 312-886-8031, muneer.alie@epa.gov)

Black Lagoon

On October 11th, the *R/V Mudpuppy* visited the Black Lagoon (being cleaned up under USEPA's Legacy Act authority) to take cores to confirm that the residual sand layer cap (part of the final phase of cleanup) was placed.

(Contact: Marc Tuchman, 312-353-1369, tuchman.marc@epa.gov)

Trenton Channel

On October 12th, the *R/V Mudpuppy* collected sediment samples on the Trenton Channel of the Detroit River Area of Concern, located in Riverview, Michigan. The sampling took place on the western shore of the Trenton Channel, adjacent to the BASF



R/V Mudpuppy retrieving sediment core sample

and Arkema industrial sites, and upstream of the Grosse Ile toll bridge. The sampling plan called for the *Mudpuppy* crew to collect five Ponar dredge samples at each of three designated locations. In 2004, surficial sediment samples were collected at these three locations and found to have mercury concentrations above 20 mg/kg. The purpose of the Ponar samples was to confirm and further characterize the extent of mercury concentration in the vicinity of the three sites. The Ponar dredge samples were processed on site by the *Mudpuppy* crew, bottled, and transferred to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for mercury analysis. Additionally, four vibracore samples were obtained in the northern portion of the study area, adjacent to the Arkema industrial property. The purpose of these samples was to measure the depth of sediment in the area, and to quantify the extent of contamination by mercury and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Analytical results for both sample sets are pending.

(Contact: Dave Wethington, 312-886-1437, wethington.david@epa.gov).

Saginaw River

On October 18th to 20th, 2005 the *R/V Mudpuppy* was in Saginaw, Michigan to provide

support to the State of Michigan in delineating dioxin levels in Saginaw River sediments. Sediment cores and surficial samples were collected in 18 sampling locations for dioxin analysis. The samples will help Michigan DEQ confirm and delineate the extent of a dioxin hot spot near the City of Saginaw.

(Contact: Scott Cieniawski, 312-353-9184, cieniawski.scott@epa.gov)

Habitat Grant Awards

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has been the grant servicing intermediary for GLNPO habitat-related grants for two years, with the third year of sub-grants just being awarded. In FY 2003 and 2004, the more than \$1.1 million was awarded for 29 projects approved by GLNPO. Of the 29 projects, seven have been completed:

STREAMS Educational Outreach Forums (NFWF 2005-0005-002)

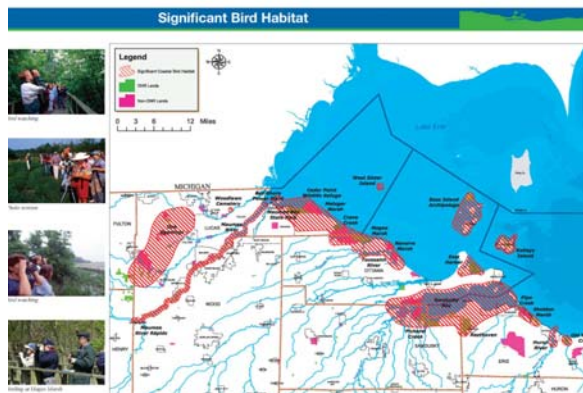
Ohio Department of Natural Resources. \$10,815.

More than 270 streambank rehabilitation professionals from 19 states attended a conference to learn about stable stream processes and water resource management. The goal was to enhance the capabilities of professionals regarding natural channel design.

Wetlands C.P.R. Toolkit (NFWF 2004-0005-006)

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. \$19,317.

A wetland resource toolbox was developed to promote citizen wetland conservation protection and restoration throughout the Great Lakes basin. The toolbox is found at: http://www.greatlakesdirectory.org/GLAHNF_wetlands_packet/cover_letter.htm



Significant Bird Habitat map from *Ohio Coastal Atlas* (graphics courtesy of Ohio DNR)

Brownfields-Greenfields Policy Roundtable (NFWF 2004-0005-007)

Great Lakes Commission. \$20,000.

A policy roundtable for state officials linking brownfields and greenfields protection was held to increase their knowledge about options for land protection. Information about this and other roundtables is found at: <http://glc.org/landuse/index.html>

Ohio Coastal Atlas (NFWF 2004-0005-102)

Ohio Department of Natural Resources. \$5,000.

The colorful atlas addresses habitat management and related education issues in the Ohio portion of the Lake Erie basin. The atlas is found at: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/coastal/gis/coastalatlasmaps.htm>

Wild Ones Natural Landscapers 25 Year History Book (NFWF 2004-0005-115)

Wild Ones Natural Landscapers. \$5,000.

This project provided support to print 6,000 copies of a 30-page document of Wild Ones historical accomplishments.

Great Lakes Communications Toolbox (NFWF 2004-0005-111)

Biodiversity Project. \$4,800.

The Great Lakes Communications Toolbox is a CD ROM produced to enable citizens

and community-based groups to promote awareness of water quality and quantity, habitat protection, and invasive species. 120 groups applied for and received the toolbox.

Road Crossings Training Program

(NFWF 2004-0005-114)

University of Wisconsin Extension Service.
\$5,000.

Thirty-three people attended a workshop in Ashland, Wisconsin about how to build fish friendly stream crossings. Attendees were from municipal, county and tribal governments. Part of the program included a field day to Silver Creek to cover engineering and fish biology and discuss construction practices needed to design and build fish-friendly water crossings.

(Contact: Karen Rodriguez, 312-353-2690, rodriguez.karen@epa.gov)

Japanese Visitors Study Environmental Restoration Methods

On October 13th and 14th GLNPO staff assisted Region 5 in hosting six visitors from Japan interested in lake and river cleanup and restoration and cooperative restoration efforts. The visitors were chief researchers from the Foundation of River and Water-



GLNPO's Karen Rodriguez (second from left) with Japanese visitors
(photo courtesy of Tohru Abe)



Some of the pesticides turned in at the Red Rock, Minnesota hazardous waste collection event
(photo courtesy of Jim Bailey/ecosuperior.com)

shed Environment Management in Tokyo. GLNPO staff talked about Great Lakes environmental problems, progress, and the Regional Collaboration. Staff also accompanied the group to Northerly Island and the Magic Hedge at Montrose Harbor with City of Chicago Department of Environment staff to learn about lakefront restoration and Chicago Wilderness.

(Contact: Karen Rodriguez, 312-353-2690, rodriguez.karen@epa.gov)

Lake Superior Hazardous Waste Collection

In accordance with Lake Superior LaMP priorities, household hazardous waste collections held in the small, Canadian Lake Superior North Shore towns of Red Rock and Wawa, Ontario, Saturday and Sunday, October 29th and 30th. Area residents brought in substantial quantities of old oil, paint, solvents, pesticides, mercury, creosote, cleaning products, batteries, propane tanks, etc.

The purpose of the collection was to reduce the volume of toxic substances that would be landfilled or simply poured down a drain

into the municipal sewer system or even poured directly into the ground. Products were collected by a certified hazardous-waste carrier and recycled or disposed of in accordance with Ontario Ministry of the Environment regulations.

Red Rock and Wawa town councils demonstrated their support by hosting the one-day events, and area residents demonstrated their support through their participation in the events. Comments from participants about the events were highly positive, and many of them asked when the next event would be held. The events were coordinated by EcoSuperior Environmental Programs, a non-profit group from Thunder Bay, in partnership with the Townships of Red Rock and Wawa. Financial support was provided by the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Environment Canada.

(Contact: Elizabeth LaPlante, 312-353-2694, laplante.elizabeth@epa.gov)

Upcoming Events

2005

- December 6th-7th Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy Stakeholder Forum and Integration Workgroup, Chicago, Illinois
- December 12th Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Summit II, Chicago, Illinois

2006

- November 1-3 State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) 2006 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

We welcome your questions, comments or suggestions about this month's Significant Activities Report. To be added to or removed from the Email distribution of the Significant Activities Report, please contact Tony Kizlauskas, 312-353-8773, kizlauskas.anthony@epa.gov.