

Spirit Lake Environmental Cleanup Continues Under GLRI

For more information

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Cleanup possible through GLRI

The **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**, or GLRI, was launched in 2010 to accelerate efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Sixteen federal partners work together on five priorities:

- Cleaning up [Great Lakes Areas of Concern](#).
- Preventing and controlling invasive species.
- Reducing nutrient runoff that contributes to harmful/nuisance algal blooms.
- Restoring habitat to protect native species.
- Conducting education and outreach for future restoration efforts.

GLRI's funds provide up to 65% of the cost of cleanup with a non-federal entity contributing the balance through a Great Lakes Legacy Act partnership – under which the Spirit Lake work is being done. GLLA partnerships have cleaned up 27 sites in six Great Lake states and remediated 4.6 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment.

Spirit Lake GLLA Remediation and Restoration

Duluth, Minnesota

December

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and United States Steel Corporation have partnered to clean up contaminated sediment and soil in the Spirit Lake area of the St. Louis River in Duluth, Minnesota. This project is being conducted under the Great Lakes Legacy Act and is jointly funded by EPA and U. S. Steel.

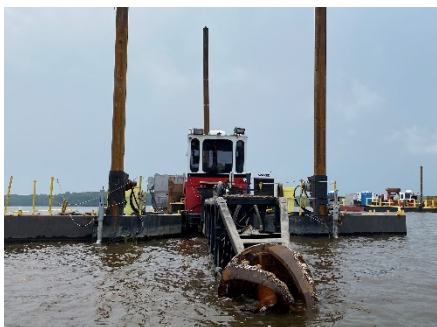
The site is located in the St. Louis River Area of Concern and is south of the Morgan Park neighborhood in Duluth. The site has in-water cleanup areas which include Spirit Lake, Unnamed Creek, and Wire Mill Pond as well as onshore clean up areas (*see map, page 2*).

This project, which began in October 2020, will address impacts from former industrial activities in the Spirit Lake area. Chemicals of concern include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs, and associated heavy metals including lead, copper and zinc. This large environmental cleanup includes dredging, capping and monitoring sediment and will result in the creation of new open water and restored wetlands. The cleanup will support the eventual delisting of the St. Louis River AOC and will benefit people who live, work and recreate in and around the AOC and the broader ecological system.

2021 Work Activities

Hydraulic dredging activities began in the Wire Mill Delta in August 2021 and were completed in November 2021. A residual cover, consisting of a thin layer of clean sand, was placed over the remediated dredged sediment surface to support the reestablishment of native species. Hydraulic dredging also took place in the North Dredge Area in November 2021 and will resume in summer 2022. During hydraulic dredging, contaminated sediment and water is pumped through temporary pipes to the Upland confined disposal facility (CDF), where it is processed to remove debris and placed in Geotubes® to dewater. The water is collected and treated on-site at the water treatment plant before being discharged back into Spirit Lake. The Geotubes® will be buried in place within the Upland CDF.

(Continued on reverse page)



A hydraulic cutting head is attached to the dredge equipment in preparation for in-water dredging activities.



Dredge material from the Wire Mill Delta is pumped into Geotubes® in the Upland CDF.

2021 Work Activities cont.

Restoration of the upstream Unnamed Creek was completed in early fall 2021. Dredging in the Weir Pond and the Unnamed Pond is also complete. Capping operations were completed in the Weir Pond and in Unnamed Creek. Capping these areas consists of placing protective layers of clean sand and granular active carbon on the remediated dredge surface. To ensure noise levels do not exceed state thresholds, EPA and U. S. Steel are conducting monitoring at various locations.

Early 2022 Work Activities

During the winter of 2021/2022 mechanical dredging of the Shallow Sheltered Bay will begin. Information on activities that will occur in summer 2022 and later will be provided in an upcoming fact sheet.

Project Outreach

EPA continues to coordinate with project stakeholders on the development of outreach materials. Informational kiosks have been installed at the Morgan Park Community Center and at the 88th Avenue West and Idaho Street site entrance. Weekly photos of construction progress are also available on the [EPA Spirit Lake website](#).



Map showing work areas.

FIRST CLASS

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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