

# Spirit Lake Great Lakes Legacy Act Project

**For your safety, no public access is allowed on this construction site.**

## Site History

We acknowledge that the area known as Spirit Lake and in close proximity to Spirit Island are located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of the Ojibwe Anishinaabe people. This land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for the Native nations and peoples of this region. Historical industrial activities as well as other activities upstream of the site have impacted the onshore areas and Spirit Lake. These areas contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and heavy metals including lead, copper and zinc. PAHs are a class of chemicals toxic to fish and aquatic organisms and can potentially cause cancer in humans.

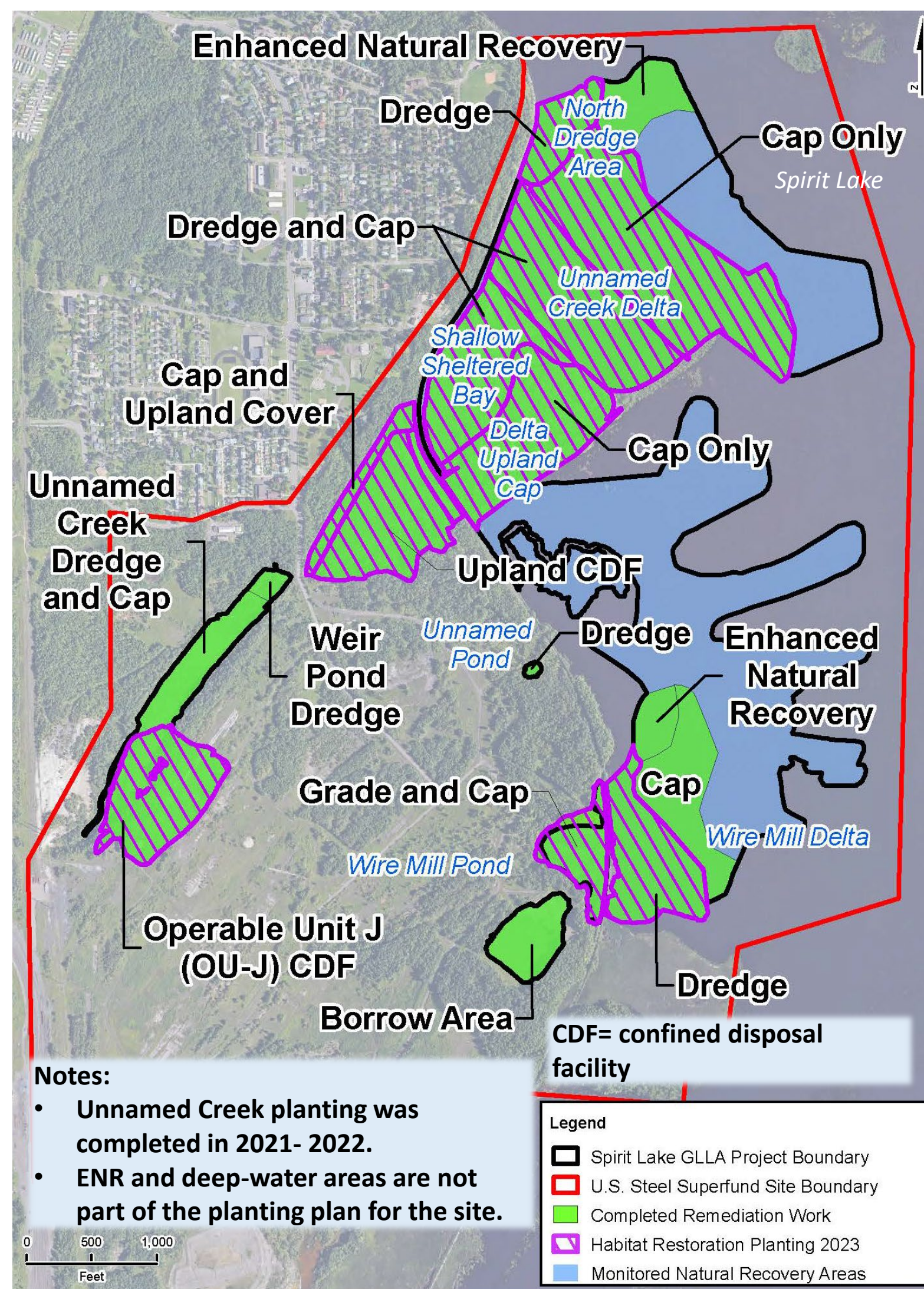
## Cleanup Process

U. S. Steel (USS) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have entered into a voluntary agreement under the Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) to cleanup the aquatic areas within the black boundaries shown on the map (see right). The cleanup includes dredging (sediment removal), capping (isolation of sediment from the environment), and long-term monitoring of impacted sediments. The remainder of the impacted areas within the red boundary will be addressed later under the Superfund program, where necessary.

## Benefits

The cleanup will result in aquatic ecosystem improvement through the creation of new open water, increased fish spawning habitat and restored wetlands. This will contribute to the removal of beneficial use impairments and the eventual delisting of the St. Louis River Area of Concern. Public access to the St. Louis River will also be improved.

Map of completed work at Spirit Lake indicating which areas will receive habitat restoration plantings in 2023.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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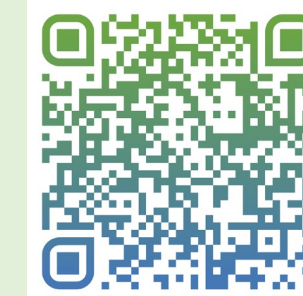
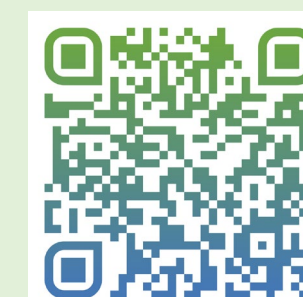
EPA Region 5 toll-free:  
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 M-F 8:30-4:30

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EPA Spirit Lake Website:  
<https://www.epa.gov/great-lakes-aocs/spirit-lake-great-lakes-legacy-act-cleanup>

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Great Lakes Mud Website:  
<https://www.greatlakesmud.org/spirit-lake-site---st-louis-river-aoc.html>



## Spirit Lake Cleanup Work

### Dredging

✓ **425,000 cubic yards** (or over 100,000 loads in a full-size pick-up truck bed) of impacted material has been removed from the in-water and upland work areas.

### Capping

✓ **100 acres** (or 76 football fields) have been covered with a clean multi-layer remedial cap in the upstream Unnamed Creek and in-water work areas.

### Enhanced Natural Recovery (ENR)

✓ **12 acres** of in-water work areas have been covered with a thin layer of clean sand to accelerate natural recovery processes in the sediment.

### Shoreline Protection

✓ **6,400 linear feet** of shoreline was protected by rock, timber logs, or vegetation.

### Ongoing Work- Spring through Fall 2023

- Railroad and pedestrian bridges are being constructed where Unnamed Creek meets the Shallow Sheltered Bay and where Wire Mill Pond meets the St. Louis River.
- The pedestrian trail will be completed in fall 2023; **for safety, the trail will not be open to the public until all work is complete.**
- Habitat restoration plantings will occur spring through fall of 2023.
- Topsoil and clay will be placed on the CDFs and they will be planted with native upland species in 2023.

