

EPA Begins Cleanup Activities in Harbor Slips

Port of Duluth – Superior

Duluth, Minnesota

September 2018



The **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**, or GLRI, is the largest investment in the Great Lakes in two decades. Sixteen federal departments or agencies are working together on five priorities:

- Cleaning up toxics and Areas of Concern (AOC).
- Combating invasive species.
- Protecting the lakes from polluted runoff.
- Restoring wetlands and other habitats.
- Raising public awareness, tracking progress and working with partners.

The GLRI's **Great Lakes Legacy Act** provides up to 65 percent of the cost of sediment cleanup with a non-federal entity contributing the balance. Legacy Act partnerships have cleaned up 21 sites in six Great Lake states and remediated 4.1 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment.

Completed cleanups have transformed former toxic hot spots into attractive locations and valuable waterfront assets.

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes National Program Office is working with its non-federal sponsor, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, to clean up pollution in the St. Louis River Area of Concern (*see figure, back*). Three slips in the Port of Duluth-Superior will be cleaned up this fall, including Minnesota Slip near the downtown Duluth waterfront and Slips 3 and C. These projects are being performed under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative's sediment remediation component, the Great Lakes Legacy Act (*see box, left*). The work is an important step in removing the St. Louis River AOC from a list of the most polluted places around the Great Lakes.

Minnesota Slip

The Minnesota Slip project will result in the remediation of about 37,000 cubic yards of polluted sediment (mud) in the slip. The mud is contaminated with heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs. Project activities include moving 2,500 cubic yards of the mud within the slip to level the bottom and allow for its current use to continue. All sediment will be left in place and covered, or "capped," with approximately 2 feet of dredged material from clean areas of the harbor along with armoring stone.

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Photo of Minnesota Slip in Port of Duluth-Superior with a cross-section diagram displaying the current sediment issues.

... continued from front

The cap will isolate contaminants and protect against damage from boat traffic. The sediment cleanup is expected to take place in October and November 2018 and will cost about \$3 million.

The dock wall along Harbor Drive in Minnesota Slip is being repaired by the city of Duluth to ensure public safety, prevent erosion into the slip and facilitate removal of the SS William A. Irvin, a retired lake freighter now serving as a museum. In September, the Irvin will be moved temporarily outside of the slip. The ship will return to the slip in spring 2019. The pedestrian bridge may be inaccessible during construction.

Slip 3 and Slip C

Two additional slips will be cleaned up near the Minnesota Slip project area – Slip 3 and Slip C in the Duluth Harbor. Slip 3 is located next to the Pier B Resort where the retired Coast Guard Cutter Sundew is docked. Slip C is located near the former Georgia-Pacific plant and Compass Minerals. These are man-made slips, which have been altered and used by multiple industries since their construction more than a century ago.

About 116,000 cubic yards of sediment contaminated with heavy metals, dioxins, PCBs and PAHs will be left in place and capped with about 2 feet of dredged material from clean areas of the harbor along with armoring stone. This Great Lakes Restoration Initiative project will take place September through November 2018 and will cost about \$3.5 million.

The projects are being conducted with the help of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Coast Guard Safety Zones will restrict public access to in-water construction areas at all three slips. Schedules allow for 24/7 activities so the cleanups may be completed quickly.



Slip 3 in Duluth Harbor.



Slip C

Figure displaying all the St. Louis River Area of Concern sediment remediation sites in Minnesota.

