

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Beneficial Use Impairment

Rochester Embayment Area of Concern, Rochester, NY



Background

The beneficial use impairment, "Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat," is one of 12 impairments identified in the Rochester Embayment Area of Concern (AOC). With funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is evaluating wetland size and condition in the AOC. Field sampling was performed in the fall of 2012 to determine the current extent and quality of the wetlands. An analysis of historical aerial imagery is currently underway to determine trends of wetland extent and quality.



Irondequoit Creek wetland. Photo credit: USFWS



USFWS Biologist rows across Braddock Bay to a sampling location. Photo credit: USFWS

Sampling 2012 and Work To Date

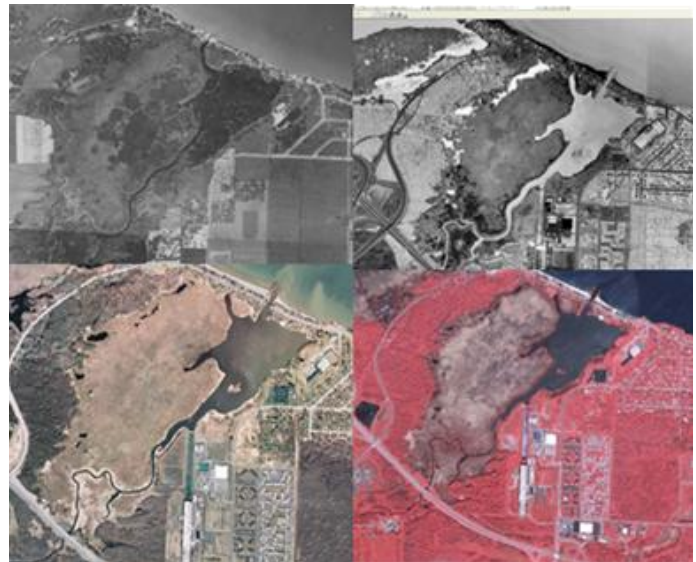
Wetland assessments were performed following the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Rapid Assessment Method (RAM) protocol. The RAM protocol measures wetland characteristics such as plant diversity, invasive species cover, and altered hydroperiod. Sampling was performed at a total of 98 distinct locations in the study area. Water was also evaluated for nutrients, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, temperature, and other parameters at 71 locations. An analysis of the historical extent and some indicators of historical quality of wetlands is in progress using aerial imagery from years between 1930 and the present.

Future Plans

Planning for the 2013 field season is underway. Work in 2013 will include the evaluation of more RAM sites, some additional water quality sampling, and assessments of bird and herptile communities in the study area using the Bird Studies Canada's Marsh Monitoring Program protocol.

For more information, contact:

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Round Pond aerial imagery (clockwise from top left – 1930, 1988, 2009, 2011)