



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency

Region 5  
77 West Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Illinois, Indiana,  
Michigan, Minnesota,  
Ohio, Wisconsin

# Environmental NEWS RELEASE



CONTACT: Anne Rowan, (312) 353-9391

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## ***BLACK LAGOON CLEANUP, THE FIRST LEGACY ACT PROJECT, IS NOW COMPLETE***

**TRENTON, MICH.**(Nov. 16, 2005) – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional Administrator Thomas V. Skinner today announced that EPA and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality have completed the cleanup of contaminated sediment in the Black Lagoon, an inlet of the Detroit River. This \$9.3 million project was the first funded under the Great Lakes Legacy Act of 2002, a special initiative to clean up the 31 pollution hotspots on the U.S. side of the Great Lakes.

“Every drop of water that flows through the Detroit River and out to Lake Erie will be cleaner because of the Black Lagoon efforts,” said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. “As the first cleanup funded under President Bush’s Great Lakes Legacy Act, this cleanup has delivered real environmental results.”

For many years, the Black Lagoon was a trap area for contaminated sediment (mud) moving downstream from Detroit-area industries. Over the past 13 months, more than 470,000 pounds of contaminants were removed from a one-mile stretch of the inlet. EPA and MDEQ coordinated the removal of 115,000 cubic yards of sediment polluted by PCBs, mercury, oil, grease, lead and zinc.

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### ***BLACK LAGOON...***

The Black Lagoon lies within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, the first of its kind in North America. Trenton recently

received a grant of \$113,000 to restore a natural shoreline on Black Lagoon to reduce erosion and provide a habitat for fish and wildlife. In the future, the city plans to construct a marina in the park.

“This is a prime example of how a healthy environment and a healthy economy go hand in hand,” said MDEQ Director Steven E. Chester. “This effort has improved the ecology of the Detroit River and complements the work being done to revitalize the local economy.”

Contaminated sediment is one of the major reasons why many Great Lakes fish are not safe to eat in unlimited quantities. It also harms aquatic habitat and pollutes sources of drinking water. This has been a long-term and persistent problem throughout the entire Great Lakes basin.

There are still millions of cubic yards of contaminated sediment to be removed from the Great Lakes.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act authorizes \$270 million in funding over five years for cleanups of contaminated sediment hotspots. In 2004, the first year funds were available, Congress appropriated \$9.9 million. In 2005, Congress appropriated \$22.3 million and \$30 million will be available in 2006. Other Legacy Act projects are at Hog Island on the St. Louis River in Superior, Wis., and Ruddiman Creek in Muskegon, Mich., and more are expected to begin soon.

The cost of the Black Lagoon cleanup was shared between EPA (65 percent) and MDEQ’s Clean Michigan Initiative Funds (35 percent).

For more information, go to <http://www.epa.gov/glla/blklagoon>.

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