



Notice: 30-Day Public Comment Period for Draft Restoration Plan

Consistent with the 1997 Memorandum of Agreement between the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), on behalf of the Department of the Interior, (collectively the “Trustees”) have prepared a Restoration Plan (RP) to identify and analyze proposed restoration initiatives that will restore natural resources injured and ecosystem services lost due to releases of hazardous substances and discharges of oil within the Great Lakes watershed.

This RP proposes restoration initiatives for augmentation of freshwater mussel populations in or near the Great Lakes watershed. Mussel restoration is a critical component of aquatic ecosystem recovery given mussels’ ecological role in improving water quality, stabilizing sediments, and enhancing biodiversity. Specifically, this RP seeks to utilize funds from the 2003 and 2005 Grand Calumet River Natural Resource Damage settlements to implement new native mussel augmentation projects. These actions are designed to restore injured benthic communities and advance long-term ecological resilience in the Great Lakes watershed and may include areas outside the watershed that can produce mussels to benefit this watershed and the State of Indiana.

This RP is in alignment with the 2004 Restoration and Compensation Determination Plan (RCDP) for the Grand Calumet River/Indiana Harbor Canal (GCR/IHC) Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). The purpose of the RCDP was to evaluate restoration alternatives against a variety of criteria. That RCDP analysis of two decades ago still is directly relevant to this RP’s evaluation of environmental consequences of proposed mussel augmentation initiatives. In this RP, the Trustees present and evaluate proposed mussel restoration initiatives alongside other alternatives for the Great Lakes Watershed, which includes the GCR/IHC Site.

The Trustees performed a thorough analysis of the possible alternatives in the 2004 RCDP, including on-site and replacement restorations. The Trustee’s preferred alternative has

been to implement as much on-site restoration to the extent possible. The Trustees have spent more than \$66M in on-site restoration, which attracted more than \$190M in matching funds through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's administration of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and more than \$30M in company and municipal contributions. The Trustees are committed to maintaining the completed on-site restoration work and are continuing to explore options of replacement restoration to address the continuing losses to surface water and aquatic biological resources.

Through this notice, the Trustees are soliciting public input on the restoration initiatives proposed in the RP. The public comment period for this RP will be open until February 28, 2026. Comments can be made by contacting via mail or email:

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