

WHY DO MILWAUKEE'S WATERWAYS NEED TO BE CLEANED UP?

Sediment in our waterways is contaminated with chemicals that are present from a long history of industrial uses in the surrounding areas. Though the contaminated sediment has been in our waterways for decades, if we don't remove it many of the issues that define the Milwaukee Estuary as an Area of Concern, like fish and wildlife consumption advisories, would continue to exist. Removal of the contaminated sediment and capping of contaminated areas will help restore our waterways and provide protection for humans, wildlife, and the environment.

HOW WILL THE CONTAMINATED SEDIMENT BE REMOVED?



Contaminated sediment will be removed by dredging which is a common method for removing sediment from the bottom of rivers, lakes, and streams. There are two main types of dredging: mechanical and hydraulic. Mechanical dredging uses a bucket to scoop up sediment and move it to a barge or other container. Hydraulic dredging vacuums sediment from the lake or riverbed after it's loosened with a drilling cutter head.

WHAT IS A DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT FACILITY (DMMF) AND WHY IS IT BEING PROPOSED FOR MILWAUKEE?

A DMMF is an area specifically designed for the containment of dredged material and control of potential releases of contaminants to the environment. Two primary options were considered to deal with the dredged contaminated materials in Milwaukee - a DMMF or landfill disposal. Landfill disposal is much more expensive and disruptive to the community due to hauling costs and truck traffic. For these reasons, the DMMF was recommended as the preferred option by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Most of the contaminated sediment from Milwaukee's rivers would be placed in the proposed DMMF.





IS THE DMMF SAFE?

Waterfront facilities for the permanent storage of sediment have been used successfully in Milwaukee and across the Great Lakes for decades. Given the proposed steel cofferdam walls with sealed interlocks bounding the DMMF, leakage is not likely. The DMMF is designed for a 100-year design life, including changes in Lake Michigan water levels and 100-year probability rain and wave events.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE DMMF IS FULL?

The process to fill a DMMF with sediment can take several years, if not decades. After it is filled, the contents in the DMMF will settle and then the facility is capped. A cap is a layer of clean material, such as sand, that is placed over the contaminated sediments to mitigate the risk posed by those sediments. The area above the stored sediment becomes usable as newly created land, which can be developed for Port commercial expansion and other public uses. The City is open to robust and ongoing public feedback throughout the storage and settling phases of the DMMF as it considers future uses of the newly created land.











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