

St. Louis River Area of Concern

Projects in partnership to restore the river and revitalize the community

Restoring Superior's Pickle Pond

Purpose

A project is underway to restore the Pickle Pond (Pond) to a diverse aquatic and upland habitat area along the Superior waterfront. Project features include contaminated sediment removal, habitat restoration, invasive species control, and stormwater management.

In 2013, Area of Concern (AOC) stakeholders identified this project to contribute toward cleanup and restoration goals of the St. Louis River. Improvement of habitat in the Pond is a management action for addressing the Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) for the St. Louis River.

Background

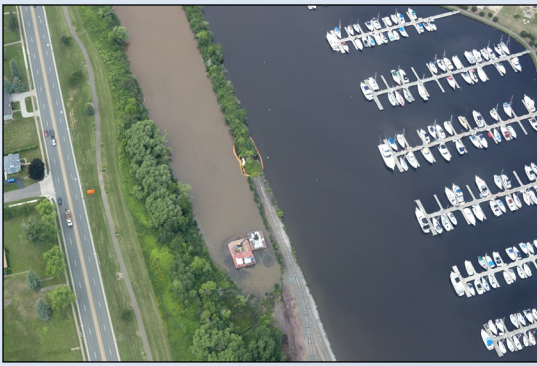
The Pond is an approximately nine-acre pond located along the Superior shoreline. This pond feature was created when a railroad embankment was built along the St. Louis River waterfront in the late 19th Century. Over time stormwater runoff, polluted sediments, invasive species, and limited water connection to the St. Louis River have resulted in degraded habitat. The Pond is an important and unique sheltered shallow-water habitat along an otherwise highly-developed shoreline.



This project cleans up contamination in the Pond and opens it up for new recreation opportunities



The Pond is adjacent to Barker's Island, which is a popular destination for recreation, tourism and educational activities for the City of Superior. Project design is focused on improving habitat for fish (especially Muskie and Northern Pike spawning habitat) and wildlife, cleanup of contaminated sediment and providing recreational benefits to the community.



Plan

Landowners adjacent to the Pond are the BNSF Railway Company, City of Superior and WI Department of Transportation. Over the past several years, planning, survey and design work was completed and construction began in 2023. Total project cost will be approximately \$8 million, with funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. **For project updates during the construction, visit: <https://pickle-pond-epa.hub.arcgis.com/> or scan the QR code below.**

Dredging of contaminated sediment deepened the pond, creating clean habitat for fish

Results

Upon completion, the Pickle Pond project will result in:

- Placement of fish habitat, nesting boxes and loafing platforms for various species
- Removal of about 16,500 cubic yards of polluted sediments
- Control of invasive plants in water and on land
- Increased recreational opportunities (e.g., kayaks, canoes & paddleboards)
- Enhanced habitat for fish, birds, and turtles
- Increased water flow connection between Pond and Barker’s Bay
- Reduced runoff pollution
- 17 acres of fish and wildlife habitat restored
- Native plant buffer maintaining views from Marina Drive
- New stormwater treatment infrastructure – hydrodynamic separators
- Long-term partnership opportunities for education and citizen-based monitoring



A spillway being created for improved stormwater drainage

Timeline

- 2022 — Completed Design Phase
- 2023 — Completed in-water construction
- 2024 — Upland restoration plantings
- 2025+ — Monitoring and maintenance



Partners

- City of Superior
- Environmental Protection Agency
- US Fish and Wildlife Service



To Learn More About the AOC

Visit <http://dnr.wi.gov> and search [St. Louis River AOC](#).



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