

# Crawford Creek Cleanup Assessment Continues under GLRI

## Cleanup possible through GLRI

The **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**, or GLRI, is the largest investment in the Great Lakes in two decades. Sixteen federal departments or agencies are working together on five priorities:

- Cleaning up Great Lakes Areas of Concern.
- Preventing and controlling invasive species.
- Reducing nutrient runoff that contributes to harmful/nuisance algal blooms.
- Restoring habitat to protect native species.
- Laying the foundations for future restoration actions with education and outreach.

The GLRI's **Great Lakes Legacy Act**, or GLLA – under which the Crawford Creek work is being done – provides up to 65 percent of the cost of sediment cleanup with a non-federal entity contributing the balance. Legacy Act partnerships have cleaned up 24 sites in six Great Lake states and remediated 4.3 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment.

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## Crawford Creek and Tributary Remediation and Restoration Superior, Wisconsin

December 2020

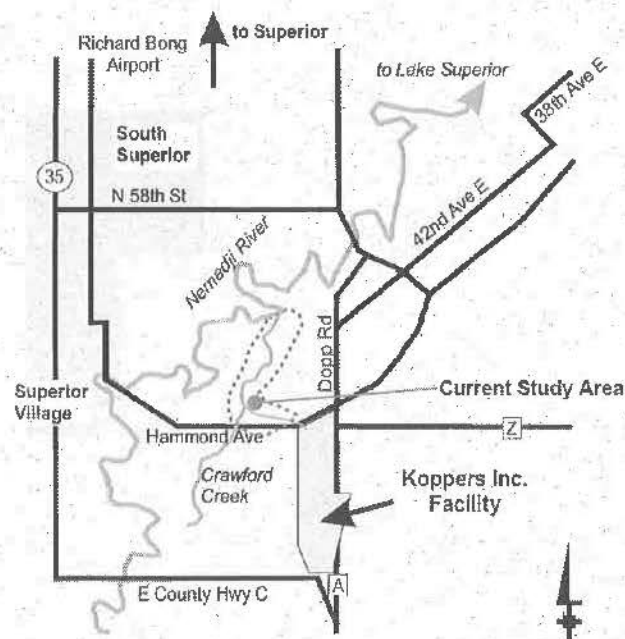
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Beazer East, Inc. (Beazer) are continuing the cleanup assessment of the Crawford Creek and Tributary site in Superior, Wis. This work is being conducted as part of the Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) agreement between Beazer and EPA.

The site is located within the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC), which is approximately five miles southeast of the city of Superior. The site consists of a tributary to Crawford Creek and associated floodplains, and the portion of Crawford Creek and its floodplain from the tributary confluence downstream to the Nemadji River (*see map, below*).

### Background

The former Koppers Inc. wood-treating facility, which operated from 1928 to 2006, produced pressure-treated railroad ties, bridge timbers, switch ties, and crossing panels. Various wood-treating compounds were used at the facility including creosote and pentachlorophenol. Soil and sediment in Crawford Creek and its floodplain have been negatively affected by the compounds used at this former wood-treating facility.

Numerous environmental investigations have been performed on and near the facility by Beazer, a former site owner and operator, under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) since 1981. Investigations included sampling of groundwater, soil, surface water, sediment, fish and insects to help understand site conditions and determine appropriate corrective measures.



Map showing the approximate site area.

## Previous Cleanup Activities

Corrective actions for surface soil and drainage ditch sediments at the main wood treating facility were completed in 2010 and 2011 by Beazer under RCRA. The corrective actions consisted of construction of soil covers over eight distinct areas, and the installation of an engineered liner system in the on-property portion of the tributary to Crawford Creek.

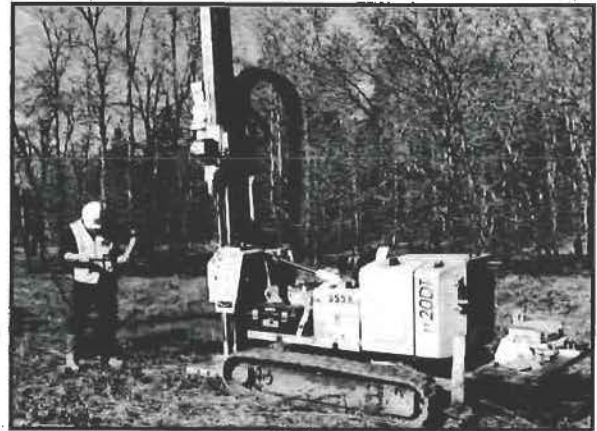
## Feasibility Study Underway through GLRI

Investigations conducted by EPA and Beazer between 1996 and 2016 detected chemicals from historical wood-treating operations including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, pentachlorophenol, dioxins and creosote-like product in the sediments and floodplain materials of the off-property portion of the tributary and Crawford Creek. EPA and Beazer, in coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), are investigating those off-property areas to determine where and what type of cleanup may be required. The group has identified additional information that is needed from the off-property areas to plan the cleanup. These additional sampling efforts are underway and will lead to a feasibility study (FS), which describes and evaluates various alternatives that may be used to address the problem.

The FS process will help EPA and Beazer coordinate with WDNR and the public to ensure the selected remedy meets local, state, and federal requirements for protection of human

health and the environment. It will continue to move the project toward cleanup. The FS will focus on technologies and alternatives appropriate for the contamination and physical setting of the site. Potential habitat restoration approaches will be also be evaluated. Ultimately, the cleanup work at Crawford Creek under GLRI will help address concerns regarding degradation of aesthetics, restrictions on body contact, and degradation of fish and wildlife habitat. Additionally, it will support broader cleanup activities that are occurring across the entire St. Louis River AOC.

The additional sampling and FS activities will take place through 2020 and into 2021. A public meeting to describe the results and potential cleanup plans under the GLRI will occur in 2021.



*An environmental specialist collects soil samples from the floodplain for testing. (Photo Credit: CH2M).*



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