



September Board Cycle

Milwaukee County Parks
9480 Watertown Plank Rd.
Wauwatosa, WI 53226
(414) 257-PARK

Date: August 13, 2019
To: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, County Board of Supervisors
From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: **Authorization to execute a Project Agreement with EPA for the Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) Project within the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern - ACTION**

Issue

Authorization is needed for the Milwaukee County Parks Department to execute a project agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) Focused Feasibility Study, Pre-Design Investigation, and Remedial Design of Remaining Impacted Sediments in the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern.

Background

Milwaukee Area of Concern

The U.S.-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement defines Area of Concern (AOC) as "geographic areas designated by the Parties where significant impairment of beneficial uses has occurred as a result of human activities at the local level", or an AOC. An impairment of beneficial uses means a change in the chemical, physical or biological integrity of the Great Lakes system. Examples of beneficial use impairments (BUIs) include degraded fish and wildlife populations, restrictions on drinking water consumption or taste and odor problems, and beach closings.

There are 27 U.S. AOCs in the Great Lakes basin, including the Milwaukee Estuary AOC. The EPA provides direct funding to states for implementing the AOC program. The state then distributes those funds to local groups to implement the AOC program. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is tasked with implementing the AOC in Wisconsin. In performance of that role, the DNR and Parks have worked together in this way to fund the South Shore Park Water Quality Improvement Study, the Kletzsch Park Dam Fish Passage Study, and the Little Menomonee River Corridor Habitat Restoration.



Empowering People
Strengthening Community



The community as a whole is an important part of the process to complete work within the AOC, and government agencies, scientists, and other advocates have aligned around this work in order to accelerate the restoration work needed to protect Lake Michigan, our drinking water source, protect and rebuild our fishing community, and improve economic and recreational opportunities. This means that rather than taking 20+ years to do the construction work (e.g., dredging, stream rehabilitation, re-meandering, etc.) the goal is to complete the work in 6-8 years, and the Milwaukee AOC will be delisted.

Project Agreement for the GLLA Project @ the Milwaukee River Downstream

The project agreement currently being reviewed relates to a project referred to as the Milwaukee River Downstream, meaning the river and floodplain areas downstream of Estabrook Park. The downstream area is split into 4 reaches, 3 of which are adjacent to or within Milwaukee County Parks. In 2016, site investigation work took place and identified contaminants such as PCBs as present within the Milwaukee River Greenway. As a continuation of this work, action has now progressed to this new project, which will include a feasibility study and design for the removal and remediation of this known contamination. Milwaukee County is being requested to participate in the project by providing access to the project sites, with no monetary contribution required. Other project partners include the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), the City of Milwaukee and its division of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM), We Energies, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), represented by the Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO), as well as their contractors and representatives.

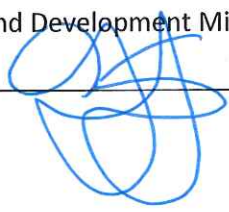
The objectives of this project are to evaluate appropriate remedial actions, perform sampling as required for plans and specifications, and implementing the project. While Milwaukee County does not have a fiscal obligation for this project, the combined in-kind contributions from other project sponsors as well as the EPA's funding bring the total expected project cost to approximately \$29,000,000.

Recommendation

The Parks Department recommends that it be authorized to enter into an agreement with the EPA to participate as a non-fiscal project partner for this project, pending review of Milwaukee County Corporation Counsel.

Prepared By: Sarah Toomsen, Manager of Planning and Development Milwaukee County Parks

Approved By: Guy Smith, Executive Director _____



Attachments

- A1 Resolution
- A2 Fiscal Note



- A3 Map of AOC and Parks
- A4 Summary of 2017 Mke River Floodplain Sampling

Copy

- Chris Abele, County Executive
- Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
- Jason Haas, Parks, Energy & Environment Chair, Supervisor District 14
- Sheldon Wasserman, Parks, Energy & Environment Vice-Chair, Supervisor District 3
- Marcella Nicholson, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 5
- Felesia Martin, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 7
- Steven Shea, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 8
- Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors
- Kelsey Evans, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
- Emily Peterson, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
- Mark Yatchak, Fiscal Mgt. Analyst, Admin & Fiscal Affairs, Department of Administrative Services



Empowering People
Strengthening Community



