

REPORT CARD

The Eighteenmile Creek Area of Concern Report Card was created by the Eighteen-mile Creek Remedial Advisory Committee (RAC). **The purpose of this Report Card is to give a brief overview of the health, improvements and current conditions of Eighteenmile Creek during 2011.** The Eighteenmile Creek Watershed includes – the main branch of Eighteenmile Creek, Gulf Creek Tributary, East Branch of Eighteenmile Creek (Red Creek), and augmented flow from the NYS Erie Barge Canal.

Scientific data and research that was referenced during the development of this Report Card can be found at the Area of Concern website:

WWW.EIGHTEENMILERAP.COM

This Report Card offers six “indicators” related to the management of the creek’s overall health. They are: 1) Water Quality; 2) Contamination; 3) Fish & Wildlife; 4) Public Access & Recreation; 5) Remedial Action Plan; and 6) Environmental Education & Public Involvement.

Each indicator has been further divided into several “sub-categories” to assess how specific concerns are being addressed. Each sub-category has been assigned a **letter grade** based upon past successes, current health conditions, and trends over the past few years. The last column identifies action steps or immediate concerns to be addressed in order to meet restoration targets for the Area of Concern. This Report Card will be updated annually.

BENEFICIAL USE IMPAIRMENTS

- 1) Fish & Wildlife Consumption - Impaired Delisting Targets → **Identified**
- 2) Degraded Benthic Populations - Impaired Delisting Targets → **Identified**
- 3) Dredging Restrictions - Impaired Delisting Targets → **Identified**
- 4) Animal Reproductive Issues - Impaired Delisting Targets → **Identified**
- 5) Fish & Wildlife Populations - Impaired Delisting targets → **Identified**

	CATEGORIES	GRADE	SUCCESSIONS & IMPROVEMENTS	CURRENT CONDITIONS	TREND	STEPS NEEDED FOR PROBLEM RESOLUTION
WATER QUALITY	Overall Water Quality	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program has been deployed in the watershed to document and prioritize water quality impairments within agricultural areas. Numerous best management practices (BMPs) were constructed for farms within the watershed which will reduce pollutant runoff to the creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AOC is a Class B/C stream indicating that the primary use is contact recreation and fishing. NYSDEC monitors water quality through the Rotating Intensive Basin Study (RIBS) program and State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) program. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A citizen water quality campaign should be deployed within the watershed. Contaminated sediments within the watershed must be remediated. Annual “Clean-Sweep” events should continue to occur throughout the watershed. Unknown sources of impairments must be identified.
	Quality of Storm Water	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm water education activities are ongoing. Oil absorbent “skimmers” have been added to a number of Town of Newfane catch basins to improve storm water discharge to the creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Combined Sewer Overflow still discharge to the creek. During storm events degraded water quality negatively impacts Olcott Beach along the shore of Lake Ontario, possibly causing beach closures. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining Combined Sewer Overflows must be eliminated. Continue with the storm water education campaign.
CONTAMINATION	Spills, Discharges & Leaching of Contaminants	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four projects have been completed on farms in the watershed which reduce nutrient loadings. A recent study ruled out the Erie Barge Canal as a source of PCBs to Eighteenmile Creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites in the watershed still have the potential to negatively influence the AOC. Lockport continues to improve quality of WWTP discharge. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to assist farms in the watershed via the NYS Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program. Continue to remediate Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites and other sources of contamination.
	Contaminated Sediment	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eighteenmile Creek has been referred to the National Priorities List (Federal Superfund). This proposed designation includes the Eighteenmile Creek Corridor Site, Former Flintkote Plant Site, and down stream contaminated sediments already present in the creek system. A formal designation is anticipated in March 2012. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sediments in the AOC exceed NYS standards for a variety of contaminants, including PCBs, lead, etc. Contaminated sediments within the watershed continue to influence the overall health of the AOC. A number of historic power generation structures present in the creek act as “sinks” for contaminated sediment. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize the Federal Superfund program to address the current sediment contamination. Remediate all upstream sources of contamination, including the Eighteenmile Creek Corridor Site and Old Upper Mountain Road Site. Continue to identify new funding sources.
FISH & WILDLIFE	Contaminant Levels in Fish & Wildlife	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new fish consumption advisory pamphlet was recently completed by New York State Department of Health. Funding has been secured to assess contaminant levels in fish and wildlife during the 2012 field season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish consumption advisories exist for the AOC, upper watershed and Lake Ontario. PCBs in fish collected from the Creek were: 10 times greater than in fish collected from control sites; often exceeded the critical PCB tissue concentration for effects on fish and; great enough to possibly affect reproduction of fish-eating mammals 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remediate upstream sources and contaminated sediments. Monitor contaminant levels in fish and wildlife present in the AOC and watershed in an attempt to establish a more current baseline of data prior to any potential remediation. Monitor contaminant levels present in the benthic population.
	Fish & Wildlife Diversity & Populations	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 130,000 Chinook and Coho salmon and 7,000 Steelhead stocked by NYSDEC in 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large concentrations of Coho and Chinook salmon and brown trout migrate from Lake Ontario each fall. The area also supports natural reproduction by bass, northern pike and black crappie. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support Olcott Pen Rearing Project. Contaminated sediments affecting fish & wildlife require special attention.
PUBLIC ACCESS & RECREATION	Public Access to the Creek & Adjacent Areas	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Eighteenmile Creek via Fisherman’s Park continues to be maintained by the Town of Newfane. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AOC is accessible for anglers and general recreation activities from Fisherman’s Park and Olcott Harbor. Majority of the AOC is secluded by a steep ravine. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate options for public access improvements to the creek in the City and Town of Lockport, NY.
	Aesthetics of the Creek & Adjacent Riparian Areas	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cub Scouts participated in a “Clean-Sweep” of the AOC which yielded the collection of 65 lbs of trash from creek banks/riparian areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town of Newfane routinely monitors Fisherman’s Park and Olcott Harbor for garbage and large debris. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with annual AOC “Clean-Sweep” events. Educate and encourage recreational users to “Pitch-In” and promote a healthy creek ecosystem.
REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN	RAP Management	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A New York AOC workshop occurred in 2011 which provided a forum to discuss mutual goals & objectives across all NY AOCs. A Stage 2 RAP update was completed in 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA Region 2 has funded Niagara County SWCD to oversee the Eighteenmile RAP through the end of 2016. New York AOCs have begun to collaborate as a group to identify common challenges and goals to AOC recovery. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Status Reports and updates should continue to be completed. Grant fund acquisition should continue to be ongoing. Continue oversight of all AOC activities and projects.
	RAC Management	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAC members worked with AOC partners to complete a remedial delisting strategy for current beneficial use impairments. Assisted in completion of a Stage II RAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RAC is comprised of a diverse group of original members and representatives from newer interests. The RAC meets to discuss various aspects of the RAP and to explore new opportunities to de-list the AOC. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on monitoring needs and protocols to effectively assess progress post remediation. Continue to assess the status of active BUIs. Utilize the updated Stage 2 RAP as a plan for the future.
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION	Public Awareness	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A social media campaign is ongoing which incorporates a website, ‘Facebook’ & other media. A number of student classes visit the AOC to learn about critical AOC issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite a fish consumption advisory, the AOC is visited by 12,000 anglers annually. Every year the AOC is utilized as an “outside classroom” for elementary, secondary and collegiate classes. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage the public utilizing educational tools like the annual report card, various education events, internet mapping database, AOC website, newsletters and press releases.
	Watershed Stewardship	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cub Scouts participated in a “Clean-Sweep” of the AOC which yielded the collection of 65 lbs of trash from creek banks/riparian areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an increasing but still limited amount of participation from the public related to the AOC. The Marsh Monitoring Program has attracted volunteers interested in environmental issues. 	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with sportsmen clubs/local residents to promote AOC stewardship. Continue with annual AOC “Clean-Sweep” and education events to keep youth interested in stewardship.

TRENDS	GRADING
Conditions Improving ↑	A Excellent
Conditions Unchanged ↔	B Good
Conditions Worsening ↓	C Fair
	D Poor
	F Failure

WHAT IS THE EIGHTEENMILE CREEK AREA OF CONCERN (AOC) ?

Local, state and federal officials identified a section of Eighteenmile Creek as one of 42 "Areas of Concern" (AOC) in the Great Lakes Basin. Eighteenmile Creek received this designation because of poor water quality and contaminated sediments present throughout the watershed. Eighteenmile Creek's long history of use by major industries in the area, especially near the City of Lockport and Town of Newfane, has played a large role in the present condition of the creek.

WHAT IS THE EIGHTEENMILE CREEK REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN (RAP) ?

A RAP is an integrated, whole ecosystem approach to remediating impaired water bodies. The RAP first identifies use impairments, their causes, and contaminant sources, using existing studies and data. Next, existing cleanup and regulatory programs which apply to the water body are identified. A coordinated cleanup strategy is then developed to eliminate the use impairments. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation produced the Stage 1/2 RAP in 1997 in an effort to restore the integrity of the creek's ecosystem.

WHAT IS THE EIGHTEENMILE CREEK REMEDIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC) ?

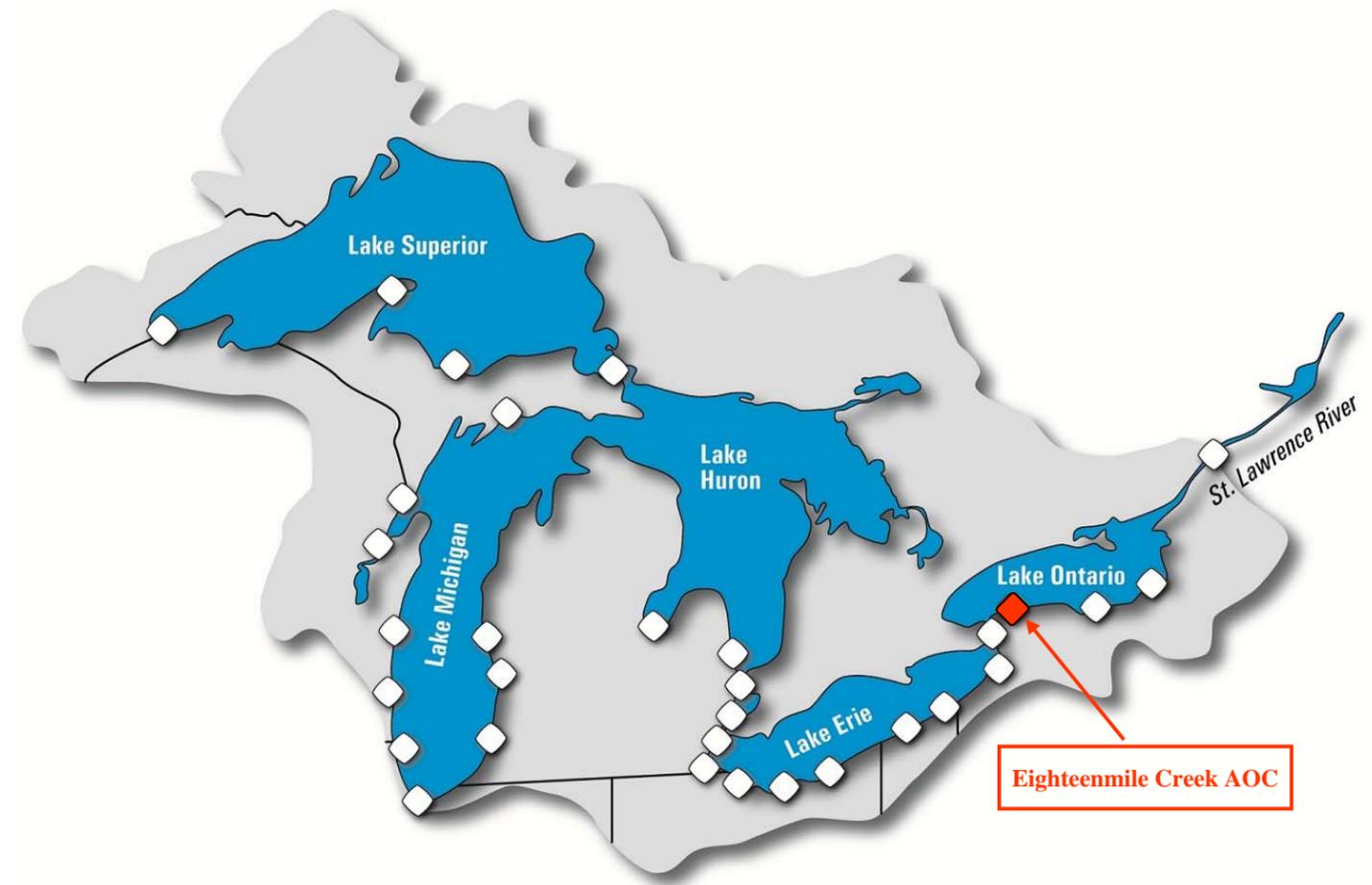
The Eighteenmile Creek RAC is comprised of a group of local, state and federal stakeholders, representing industries, organizations and local communities with a vested interest in the health of Eighteenmile Creek. The RAC is responsible for implementing the RAP, monitoring restoration efforts, and assessing ongoing needs and conditions. After a brief hiatus, the RAC reconvened in 2005 and is currently making progress in moving the RAP forward.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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EIGHTEENMILE CREEK AREA OF CONCERN



2011 REPORT CARD



A COMPILATION OF SUCCESSES, IMPROVEMENTS & CURRENT CONDITIONS

