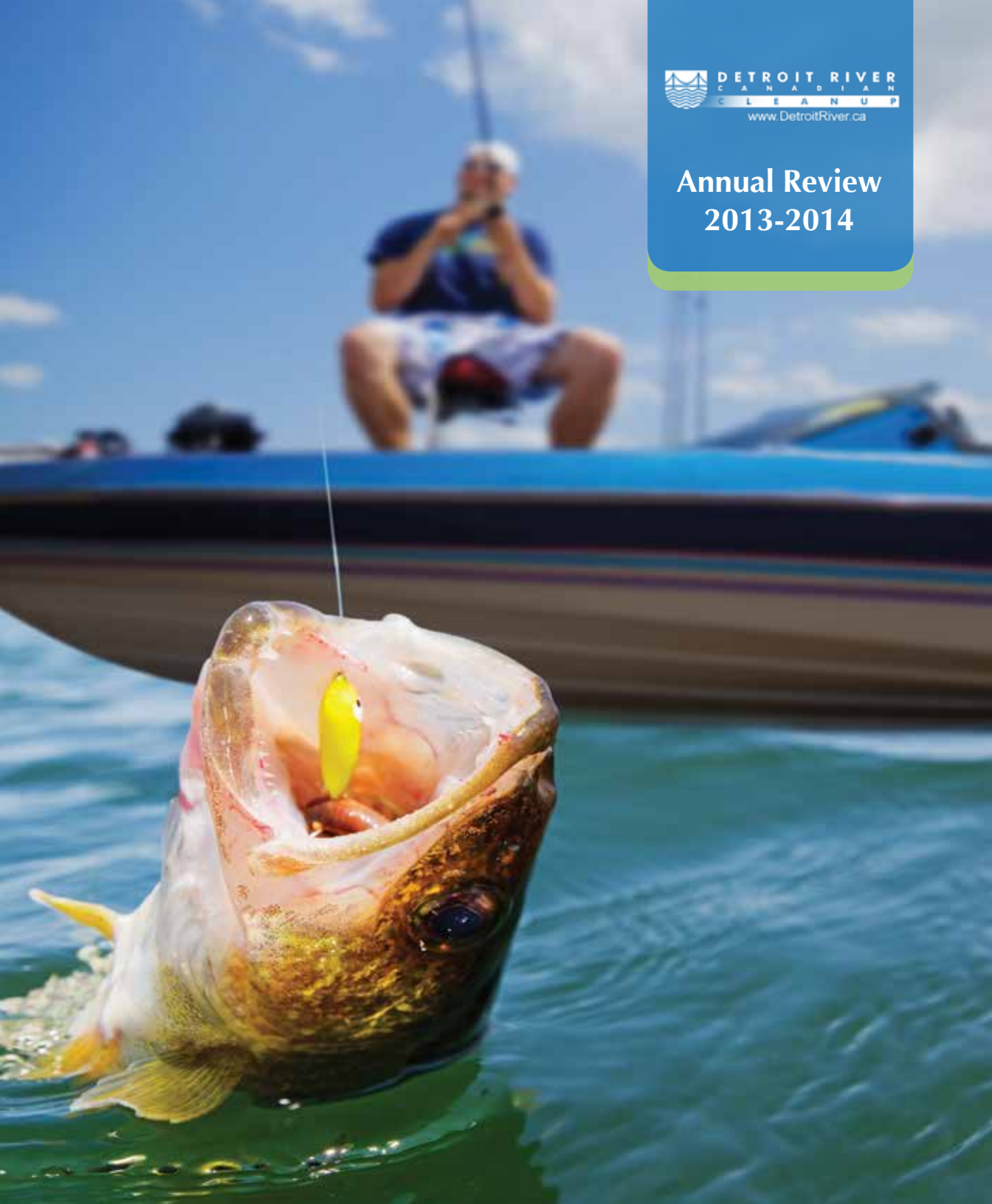




DETROIT RIVER
CANADIAN
CLEANUP
www.DetroitRiver.ca

Annual Review 2013-2014



Year of Change

This year saw significant progress on the Detroit River Remedial Action Plan as we focused our efforts on drafting the “Pathway to Delisting”. The purpose of this continually evolving document is to identify the remaining actions necessary to delist the Canadian side of the Detroit River as an Area of Concern. This strategy provides specific targets to achieve, helps identify gaps in monitoring data, and allows us to measure our progress step-by-step. Over the coming years, it will become a critical guide for all partners of the DRCC as we are hoping to complete remedial work within five years.

It has also been a year of change. It is truly an exciting time to join this partnership. In my short time as the Remedial Action Plan Coordinator, I have been overwhelmed by the passion and commitment toward the remediation of this wonderful river demonstrated by so many dedicated individuals. As we look toward delisting, it is also important to look back and celebrate achievements from the last several decades. Please visit our exhibit, SOS: Saving Our Strait – Restoring Our River Together, at Windsor’s Community Museum (June-December 2014) to see just how far we’ve come!

I look forward to working with you over the coming years as we strive for a healthier Detroit River ecosystem and the removal of the Detroit River from the list of Areas of Concern.

For more information and tips on what you can do to help improve our ecosystem, visit www.detroitriver.ca.



Claire Sanders
Remedial Action Plan Coordinator



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The Detroit River Canadian Cleanup (DRCC) is a community-based initiative launched in 1998 to cleanup, enhance, restore and sustain the Detroit River Ecosystem.

Partnerships within the DRCC aim to promote and implement the cleanup plan called a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) to protect, enhance and restore the Detroit River in order to remove it from the list of Great Lakes Areas of Concern. The DRCC’s members provide leadership in identifying partnerships and funding opportunities to support and complete cleanup goals for the Detroit River.

This document reports on accomplishments on the Canadian side of the Detroit River between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014.



and many dedicated citizens like you!

Cover Photo: Fisherman catching a Walleye.

Education & Public Involvement



The Fish Taste Great!

We recently celebrated our first success toward delisting the Detroit River! A recent survey conducted on both the Canadian and American sides of the Detroit River showed that over 95% of anglers that eat Detroit River fish report that it tastes and smells good. After the review of the extensive report, the DRCC partnership decided to officially recommend a change of status of the beneficial use Tainting of Fish

and Wildlife Flavour from 'Undetermined' to 'Not Impaired'. Over the years, pollution reduction regulations and recovery actions have addressed the pollutants known to cause or contribute to this tainting of fish flavour.

On May 7th, over 50 people, including our American colleagues, gathered on Fighting Island to celebrate this exciting step toward recovery. Our day started with a cold, blustery boat ride but ended with sunshine and a delicious Lake Erie perch fish fry! For additional information on this re-designation, please visit our website.

Pêche Island Day 2013

All aboard! The 8th Annual Pêche Island Day was held on September 28 and was our most popular one to date, with 545 people crossing the Detroit River to visit the Island! Motorized boats and large 18-person canoes carried visitors to this special City-owned park where they discovered its unique ecology. The waters around the island are an important area for waterfowl and fish; Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles can often be spotted around there too! A special thanks to the organizations that made the event a success including the City of Windsor, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Windsor Police, BASF Inc., Windsor Essex County Canoe Club, Essex County Field Naturalists' Club and Citizens Environment Alliance.

3rd Annual Detroit River Evening

Over 50 people attended our 3rd Annual Detroit River Evening at the Freed-Orman Conference Centre in Windsor. We were delighted to welcome Dr. John Howard, who delivered an engaging talk "Healthy People Need Healthy Water: A Physician's Perspective on Ecosystem Health." The evening was also an opportunity to learn more about the projects implemented by DRCC member organizations to improve the Detroit River.

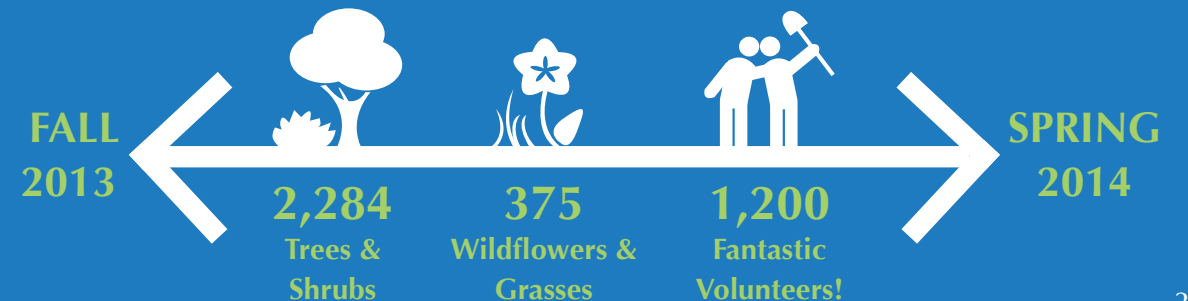
State of the Detroit River Boat Tour

The DRCC sponsored the Citizens Environment Alliance's State of the Detroit River Boat Tour which was held on July 14th, 2013. The four-hour cruise of the Detroit River, attended by over 100 people, featured expert narration about the Detroit River's environmental hot spots and unique fish and wildlife habitats.

Cleanup Events and Community Tree Plantings

The DRCC supports community cleanups and tree planting activities through our member organizations. Not only do these activities improve habitat quality for plants and animals, they also enhance the quality of life for local residents. Events in 2013 and spring 2014 included three community cleanups involving over 100 people who collected over 3000 lbs of garbage! Planting native trees and wildflowers restores lost habitat and increases biodiversity, while fostering environmental stewardship in the community. Planting projects last year included the Airport Community Planting (50 students from David Suzuki school planted 110 native trees and shrubs) and Earth Day Community Tree Planting (over 600 people planted over 1800 native trees and shrubs). Signs explaining some of our previous projects were erected in Canard River Park and St. Joseph's Church Native Plant Garden.

Below is an approximate breakdown of the number of native trees, shrubs and wildflowers planted in the Detroit River watershed in 2013/spring 2014



Children's Song

A children's song about the Detroit River was written and recorded by professional singer/song-writer Ashley Moffat. Listen to it on our website! Some of the catchy lyrics include:

*Year by year
Your impairments will disappear
You've always gone with the flow
Now you're gonna give it to us strait
We've gotta clean you up, it won't wait.*

*And if you're wondering what you can do
For the walleye and the sturgeon and the waterfowl too
You can volunteer there's so many ways
To find out more just go to [detroitriver.ca!](http://detroitriver.ca)
detroitriver.ca, detroitriver.ca*

Screening of Freshwater Seas: The Great Lakes

The 5th Annual Film Screening took place on November 6, 2013. Using stunning, high definition imagery, *Freshwater Seas: The Great Lakes* highlights the incredible beauty of the Great Lakes region, its dramatic history, and its critical importance to the continent and to the world. Over 250 people joined us for this DRCC sponsored event!

SOS: Save Our Strait Restoring Our River Together

As we look toward delisting the Detroit River as an Area of Concern, it is an important time to look back on how far we've come. An exhibit was designed for Windsor's Community Museum that depicts the last 60 years of history surrounding the Detroit River. From its role in facilitating the industrialization of Windsor and Detroit, to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, to the many people who have come together in partnership to clean it up, the Detroit River has a rich and vibrant story to tell. A preview of the exhibit was displayed in the Leddy Library foyer at the University of Windsor during the month of February. During that time, over 104,000 people came through the library and bookmarks were distributed to staff and students at the circulation desk. Posters and bookmarks were also distributed to libraries in Windsor and Essex County and the response was encouraging.

**SOS
SAVING
OUR
STRAIT**

Restoring Our Detroit River Together



Monitoring & Research



Scientific Research

Scientists from the University of Windsor's Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER), Environment Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Service, Ministry of the Environment, and the Ministry of Natural Resources continue to study the condition of the Detroit river as part of the DRCC's delisting strategy---including sediment & water quality, wetland condition, fish populations and contaminants in fish just to name a few! All of these studies help us assess progress toward delisting the Detroit River.

Habitat



Shoreline Fish Habitat Restoration at Lafarge Inc.

The purpose of the project was to construct an engineered soft shoreline and provide fish habitat enhancements along 176 metres of shoreline, bringing the project to a total of 357 metres of restored Detroit River shoreline. Lafarge Inc., as the property lessee, and the Windsor Port Authority, as the property owner, built a strong partnership to complete this important project. The work included placement of rock clusters as well as other fish habitat features. This shoreline project builds upon earlier riparian enhancements on the adjacent properties by Amico, Morterm Ltd. and Sterling Marine Fuels Ltd. Kudos to all of our industrial partners for being so pioneering in this field! These industry-led projects will help to improve shoreline fish habitat and help prevent shoreline erosion. We hope other Detroit River landowners will be inspired by your commitment and consider fish-friendly alternatives for their shoreline too!



Peter Berry, Windsor Port Authority

Expansion of the Fighting Island Fish Spawning Reef

After major success was achieved in 2008 with the construction of a spawning reef near the north-east corner of Fighting Island, an expansion of the reef took place in 2013. An assessment of Detroit River flow and bottom conditions revealed that only a few locations throughout the Detroit River are as ideal for this type of restoration work, so several U.S. and Canadian organizations partnered once again to complete the design and construct a 0.49 hectare (1.2 acre) expansion to one of the fish spawning reefs at Fighting Island. This now totals 0.89 hectares (2.2 acres) of reef available for species such as Lake Sturgeon, Walleye, and Lake Whitefish. This St. Clair Detroit River Systems Initiative led project received a 2013 Department of the Interior (DOI) Partners in Conservation award, which is one of the highest recognitions bestowed on organizations by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

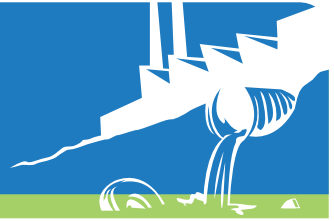


Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Implementation

The primary focus of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) is to implement large scale habitat restoration projects in priority areas of the Detroit River AOC, as identified in the BCS Report. In 2013-14, a total of 12.2 hectares (30.5 acres) were restored to Carolinian upland forest or tallgrass prairie at five sites. All project decisions were guided by the priorities outlined in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and are consistent with the habitat priorities of the Detroit River RAP.

Over the last 17 years, the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) has implemented the Rural Non-Point Source (NPS) Pollution Remediation Program. The program aims at reducing rural non-point source pollution (e.g., nutrients, suspended solids and bacteria) in the Detroit River's watershed through the implementation of Best Management Practices. In 2013/14, five buffer strips were planted, two soil erosion control structures were installed, and five fragile land retirement (tree planting) projects and six septic system upgrade projects were completed.

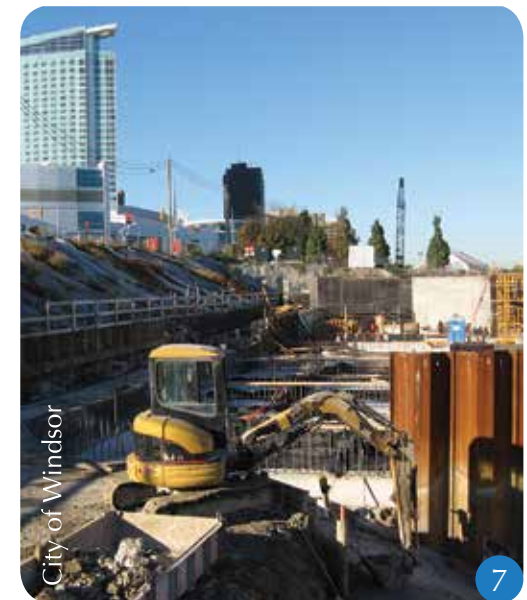
Point / Non-Point Source



Award Winning Combined Sewer Overflow Treatment System!

This Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Retention Treatment Basin (RTB) incorporates innovative technology that considerably reduces the footprint of a conventional treatment system. In 2013, the CSO RTB captured 737.1 million litres (ML or megalitres) of combined sewage that would have previously been discharged untreated directly to the Detroit River. That's the equivalent of almost 300 Olympic-sized swimming pools of water!

Through computer modeling, actual analytical and flow monitoring data, the City of Windsor conducted a study that concluded the CSO RTB performance exceeds design criteria as defined in provincial guidelines. The RTB is located unobtrusively under a riverfront parking lot adjacent to Windsor's picturesque Festival Plaza where major festivals and events are regularly held throughout the year. In recognition of this accomplishment, the City of Windsor was the recipient of a Canadian Water & Wastewater Association (CWWA) utilities excellence award for innovative technologies for the design and construction of the facility.





This has been an exciting year! Here are some of the important projects we worked on in 2013.

Ojibway Shores: On July 3, 2013 the Windsor Port Authority (WPA) hosted a public meeting to announce its plans for developing fifteen hectares on the waterfront. The Public Advisory Council (PAC) and other members of the environmental community urged the WPA not to undertake any development, at least in the short term. The

Port listened! Following the meeting, it was agreed that a full biological inventory would be carried out in 2014.

Petcoke on the Detroit Riverfront: The PAC was active in opposing the storage of petroleum coke on the US side of the river near the Ambassador Bridge and further downstream. Petcoke is derived from oil refinery processes and the fine dust has been suggested to cause adverse respiratory effects. In concert with environmental groups and local governments on both sides of the river, Michigan authorities forced the removal of the petcoke. In April, another request to pile the petcoke was rejected by Michigan authorities.

Windsor Airport Tree Planting and Joining of the Airport Woodlots: Although not a PAC project, several individuals lobbied City of Windsor officials to allow the trees. Fortunately, the DRCC and ERCA had funds and resources available to plant over eight acres of the 21 acre site last May. Students from David Suzuki School enjoyed an educational tree planting experience.

BioBlitz: As part of the Ojibway Shores study, the Essex County Field Naturalists have scheduled a BioBlitz for June 28, 2014. Over a 24-hour period participants will survey flora and fauna in the Ojibway Complex through to the Spring Garden Natural Area. Come out and help us demonstrate that this is truly one of the most bio-diverse regions in Canada!

Finally, I wish to thank the many individuals who work so diligently on behalf of the river. Some are affiliated with environmental groups, others are not. Organizations include the Field Naturalists, Citizens Environment Alliance, Little River Enhancement Group, Local 200 of the Canadian Auto Workers, and Friends of Canard River. Thanks to all. A special salute goes to hardworking former RAP Coordinator Natalie Green now enjoying life with her husband and daughter in Florida.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Henderson, Chair
Gord Harding, Vice Chair

The Detroit River Canadian PAC is a group of citizen volunteers and representatives from non-government organizations dedicated to improving the health of the Detroit River ecosystem. If you are interested in getting involved in the PAC, please contact the RAP Coordinator.



An Area of Concern is a location in the Great-Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin that has been identified as severely polluted or degraded.

Acronyms

AOC	Area of Concern	GLIER	Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research
BCS	Biodiversity Conservation Strategy	MOE	Ministry of the Environment
BUI	Beneficial Use Impairment	NPS	Non-Point Source
CSO	Combined Sewer Overflow	PAC	Public Advisory Council
CWWA	Canadian Water & Wastewater Association	RAP	Remedial Action Plan
DOI	Department of the Interior	RTB	Retention Treatment Basin
DRCC	Detroit River Canadian Cleanup	WPA	Windsor Port Authority
EC	Environment Canada		
ERCA	Essex Region Conservation Authority		

Detroit River Canadian Cleanup

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