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# DETROIT RIVER CANADIAN CLEANUP

[detroitriver.ca](http://detroitriver.ca)



Restoring Our  
River, Together!



# The Detroit River And Its Watershed



Over the past 100 years,

the Detroit River and its watershed have experienced large amounts of industrial, urban, and agricultural development, which has led to the river becoming highly degraded.

As a result, the Detroit River was listed as one of the **43 Areas of Concern (AOC)** under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 1987.

## Areas of Concern

are sites around the Great Lakes where the aquatic ecosystem has been degraded to cause a change in the chemical, physical or biological integrity sufficient to cause impairments to **beneficial uses** of the Great Lakes.

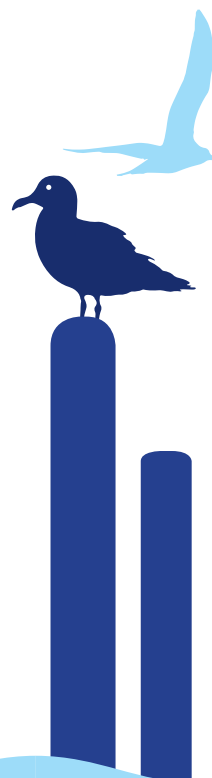
## What is a Remedial Action Plan?

A RAP or Remedial Action Plan is an AOC-specific cleanup plan for restoring the environmental quality of an AOC, such as the Detroit River. The RAP is administered locally in accordance with the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) and the Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA).

AOC-specific Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) are being implemented by local RAP Implementation teams to restore **beneficial use impairments** and ultimately remove the Detroit River from the list of AOCs under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement; a process commonly referred to as “de-listing” the AOC.

## What are Beneficial Use Impairments?

The 1987 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement listed **14 beneficial uses**, as listed at right. Using scientific studies and data, the status of each beneficial use was determined as being impaired or not impaired. On occasion, there was insufficient data to make a status determination and so these beneficial uses were deemed to require further assessment (RFA).



# About the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup

The Detroit River Canadian Cleanup (DRCC) is a partnership that is responsible for implementing the Detroit River RAP to **protect, restore, and enhance the Detroit River ecosystem.**

The DRCC formed in 1998 to implement the RAP in collaboration with its many partners, including Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Essex Region Conservation Authority, City of Windsor, University of Windsor, and others to improve the health of the Detroit River and remove it as a Great Lakes Area of Concern.



## This Objective is Achieved By:

- implementing actions in the Detroit River Canadian Remedial Action Plan (RAP). Successes to date include a sturgeon reef at the tip of Fighting Island, hundreds of metres of softened shoreline, and removing thousands of pounds of trash from the river
- contributing to projects that improve the environmental condition of the Detroit River
- conducting studies and monitoring to assess changes in the environmental condition of the Detroit River through the DRCC's Monitoring and Research, Habitat, and Point/Non-Point Source Pollution Working Groups
- supporting public involvement and input into the Canadian Detroit River RAP process through the Public Advisory Council and Education and Public Involvement Work Group



## Beneficial Use Impairments

● impaired    ● requires further assessment    ● not impaired

status as of April 2020



Restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption



Tainting of fish and wildlife flavour



Degraded fish and wildlife populations



Fish tumours or other deformities



Bird or animal deformities or reproductive problems



Degradation of benthos



Restrictions on dredging



Eutrophication or undesirable algae



Restrictions on drinking water



Beach closings



Degradation of aesthetics



Added costs to agriculture and industry



Degradation of phytoplankton and zooplankton populations



Loss of fish and wildlife habitat



The background of the right side of the flyer is a photograph of a city skyline with several tall buildings. Overlaid on this is a graphic of a seagull in flight, colored in a light blue and dark blue gradient.

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## Want to Get Involved?

You can participate in restoring the Detroit River and its watershed through cleanups, tree plantings, and volunteering at outreach events. You can also get involved by joining the Public Advisory Council or becoming a friend of your local watershed. Contact us for more information!

**Detroit River Canadian Cleanup**  
[www.detroitriver.ca](http://www.detroitriver.ca)

**311-360 Fairview Avenue,  
Essex Ontario, N8M 1Y6**

- [postmaster@detroitriver.ca](mailto:postmaster@detroitriver.ca)
- [detroitrivercanadiancleanup](https://www.facebook.com/detroitrivercanadiancleanup)
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