



St. Lawrence River
Remedial
Action
Plan

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

St. Lawrence River (Cornwall) Area of Concern



Photo: Stephany Hildebrand

Prepared by: Georgia Bock, RAP Coordinator
Prepared for: St. Lawrence River Restoration Council

2021-2022



A YEAR IN REVIEW

This past year has been a busy one for the groups which are implementing the Remedial Action Plan (RAP). Many RAP partners were in the field completing on-the-ground projects or participating on one of our four new technical working groups. The RAP Coordinator and MCA RAP Coordinator worked collaboratively to develop communication materials, presentations and funding proposals to support RAP implementation and engage local communities. As a result, 2022-2023 is expected to be another busy year.



SLRRC MEMBERS

The St. Lawrence River Restoration Council (SLRRC) was formed in 1998 to oversee and address initiatives for the St. Lawrence River (Cornwall) Area of Concern (AOC). Designates are elected to the Council at the Annual General Meeting.

Abraham Francis	Mohawk Council of Akwesasne - Environment Program
Benoit Lebeau	Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Chris Moran	Citizen
Dale Phippen	Citizen
Dorothy Hamilton	SD&G Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association
Emma Tahirali	Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks
Idalia Milan	Eastern Ontario Health Unit
Jake LaRose	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Jeff Ridal	River Institute
Joe Arthur	Cornwall Lunker Club
Joff Cote	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
John Towndrow	Transition Cornwall +
Mark Kaddie	Citizen
Michael Fawthrop	City of Cornwall
Nick Cox	Citizen
Patricia O'hara	Great River Network
Richard Pilon	Raisin Region Conservation Authority
Sara Varty	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Shawna Rousseau	Glengarry Fish and Game Club
Stephanie Jaworski	Township of South Glengarry
William Robertson	Citizen
Wilson Smirle	ALUS

Committee Chair: Marco Vincelli

Vice Chair: Elaine Kennedy

Vacancies: Ontario Power Generation, Seaway Valley Divers, Glengarry Federation of Agriculture, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of Health

RAP Coordinator: Georgia Bock, River Institute

MCA RAP Coordinator: Britney Bourdages, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne

Projects

In the fiscal year 2021-2022, 17 RAP projects were funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Parks and Conservation, valued at over \$1,000,000. These project directly addressed the remaining impaired beneficial uses, with the ultimate goal of restoring this Area of Concern. The following are four examples of remedial projects being undertaken.



Natural Edge Project

Watersheds Canada is in year 2 of a 3-year project (2021-2024), working with 50 individual property owners in the Cornwall and Akwesasne areas to restore waterfront property by planting native species. This project addresses BUI #8 - Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae and BUI #14 - Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat.



Fish Contaminant Study

In 2021 the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the River Institute conducted the 2nd year of a 2-year fish contaminant study. The goal of this study is to address community concerns about levels of mercury and PCBs in the fish, as well fill a data gap in fish consumption studies around Akwesasne. This study helps address BUI #1 - Restrictions of Fish and Wildlife Consumption.



Agri-Action Stewardship

The purpose of this 3-year project is to facilitate the planning, design and implementation of agricultural stewardship projects within the AOC to improve the overall farm, watershed and shoreline health and resiliency. This project addresses BUI #8 - Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae.



Bainsville Bay Marsh

The Raisin Region Conservation Authority has a 3-year project to restore and enhance the form and function of Bainsville Bay Marsh, a Coastal Provincially Significant Wetland that has been impacted by human use. This will help address BUI # 14 - Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat.

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

2021

Facebook posts

E-Newsletter

Annual RAP Update Newspaper Spread

Cornwall Contaminated Sediment Strategy Updates

Cornwall Contaminated Sediment Strategy Video

Beach Closing Video

RAP video

St.lawrenceriverrap.ca website updates

Events/Presentations:

August 8, 2021 - RAP Eco-Day Booth

September 24, 2021 - Great River Cleanup

October 12, 2021 - St. Lawrence College

October 27, 2021 - 2021 River Symposium

What's coming in 2022?

Funky Fish Booklet

BUI Explainer Videos

Joint social media posts with RAP partners

E-newsletters

Website updates about current projects

RAP StoryMap

2022 River Symposium

...and much more!

Public Engagement on BUI Redesignations

When a BUI is assessed and shown to be no longer an environmental issue, the results will be provided to the AOC community for review and comments. In 2022, we are anticipating that there will be a public comment period for BUI #10: Beach Closings.

Stay tuned for more information!



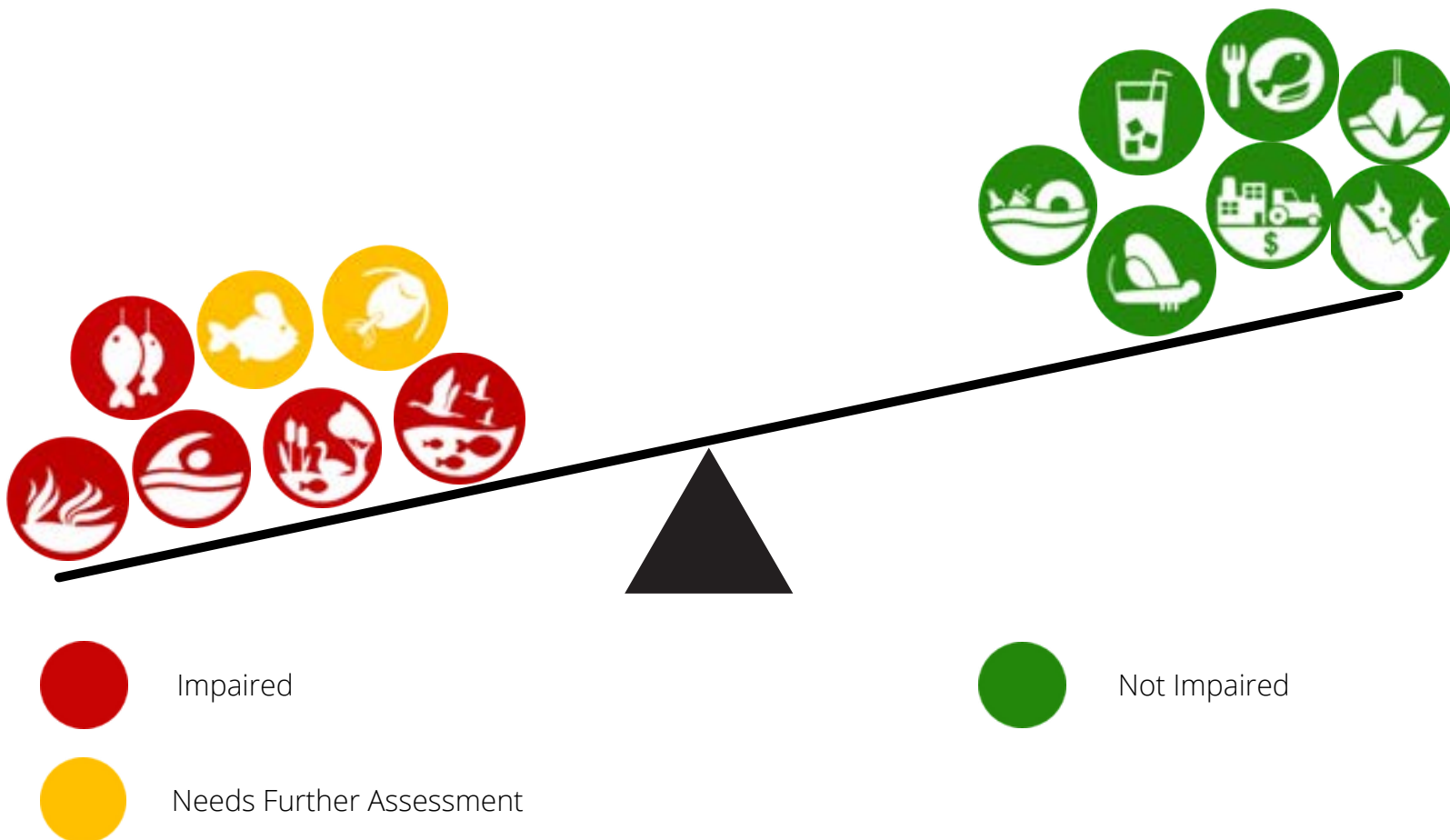
Georgia Bock, RAP Coordinator and Britney Bourdages, MCA RAP Coordinator posed for the Seaway News while discussing progress on the Remedial Action Plan



Charlottenburgh Park Beach, photo by Stephany Hildebrand

Status of Beneficial Use Impairments

Currently, there are 5 'impaired' BUIs, 2 that 'need further assessment', and 7 that are 'not impaired'



What's left?



BUI 1 - Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption



BUI 3 - Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations



BUI 4 - Fish Tumours or Other Deformities



BUI 8 - Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae



BUI 10 - Beach Closings



BUI 13 - Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations



BUI 14 - Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Moving Forward

In 2021, four technical working groups were established to assess the remaining BUIs.

Working Groups

1. Fish Consumption Technical Working Group



To provide the SLRRC with information and recommendations related to delisting criteria and status of the *Restriction on Fish and Wildlife Consumption BUI*. Next step is to confirm the BUI delisting criteria.

2. Fish Tumours Technical Working Group



To provide the SLRRC with information and recommendations related to delisting criteria and status of the *Fish Tumours and Other Deformities BUI*. The BUI assessment report is being updated and will be available for review in fall, 2022.

3. Water Quality Technical Working Group



To provide the SLRRC with information and recommendations related to delisting criteria and status of the *Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae BUI*, *Beach Closings BUI* and *Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations BUI*. The Beach Closings BUI assessment report will undergo community engagement in summer, 2022.

4. Fish & Wildlife Technical Working Group



To provide the St. Lawrence River Restoration Council (SLRRC) with information and recommendations related to delisting criteria and status of the *Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations BUI* and the *Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat BUI*. Background technical reports are being presented to the working group for review. A full assessment of both BUIs will take place during the next two years.

To learn more visit:
stlawrenceriverrap.ca



Thank you to Stephany Hildebrand for providing some of the photos used in this report

