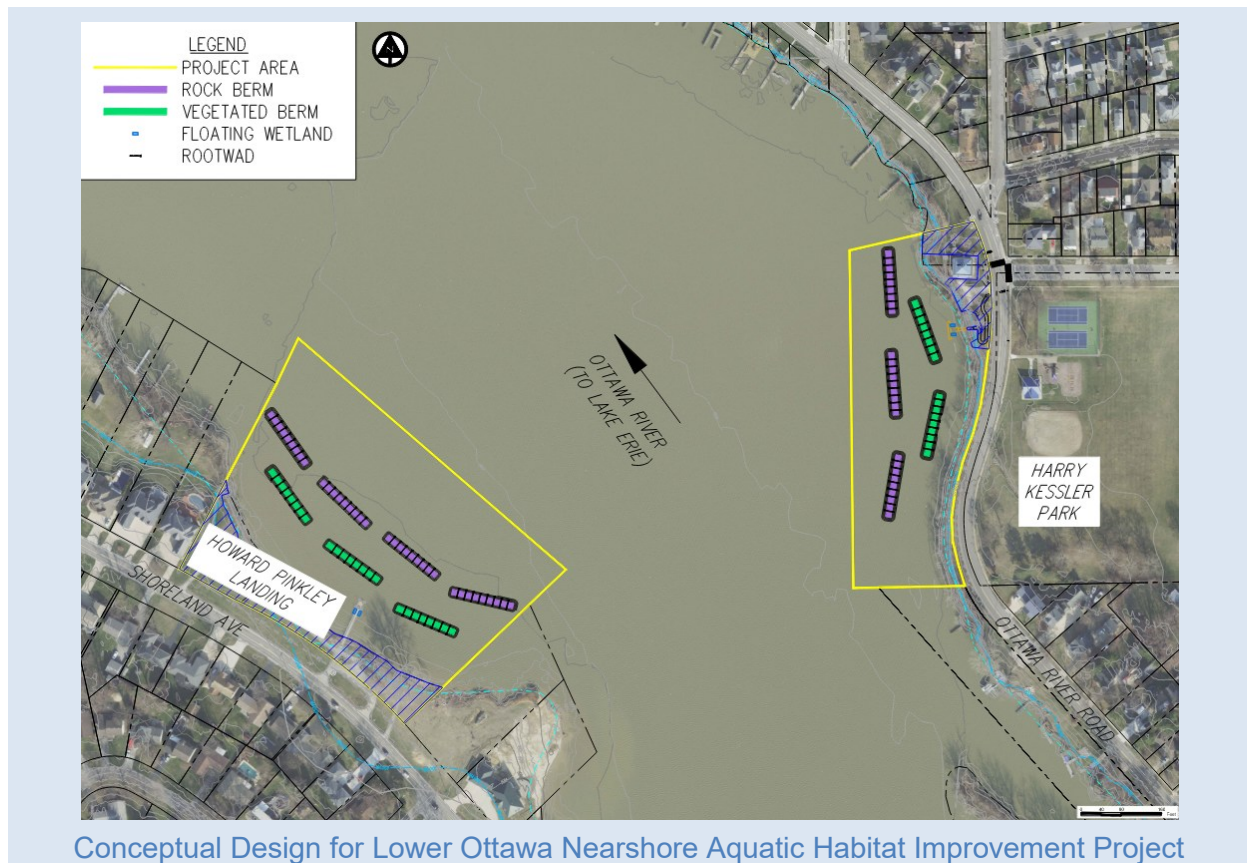


Maumee Area of Concern Habitat Restoration

The **Lower Ottawa Nearshore Aquatic Habitat Improvement Project** will create instream habitat in the nearshore area of the Ottawa River along Harry Kessler Park and/or Howard Pinkley Landing in the Maumee Area of Concern (AOC).



Enhance ~2.5 acres of nearshore river habitat through installation of berms and rootwads

Create wetland habitat by installing floating wetlands and vegetated berms

Protect ~1,200 linear feet of shoreline

The City of Toledo is implementing this project to help address three aquatic biological beneficial use impairments (BUIs - BUI 3a: fish populations, BUI 6: benthic populations, and BUI 14a: loss of fish habitat) and to provide:

Environmental Benefits

- Improve river habitat conditions for fish and bugs
- Preserve existing shoreline

Economic Benefits

- Enhance kayaking opportunities with calm water areas protected by berm features
- Improve fishery

Community Benefits

- Provide educational opportunities for students and teachers at Ottawa River Elementary School

Funding is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

Background of the Area of Concern (AOC)



Designated as an Area of Concern (AOC) under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 1987, the Maumee is one of the largest AOCs in the United States. The area has a two-century history of development, contamination, and degradation that led to the impairment of water flowing into Lake Erie and the need for focused restoration efforts. Located in Northwest Ohio, the **Maumee AOC** comprises 787 square miles that includes approximately 23 miles of the lower Maumee River, as well as other waterways such as Swan Creek, *Ottawa River* (Ten Mile Creek), Grassy Creek, Duck Creek, Otter Creek, Cedar Creek, Crane Creek, Turtle Creek, Packer Creek, and the Toussaint River.

The AOC enjoys strong support from federal, state, and local agencies, as well as stakeholder forums that support and guide habitat restoration projects, including technical assistance for monitoring.

History of Project

This project is the culmination of many years of effort to develop restoration projects in the Maumee AOC. One of the final areas targeted for identification of restoration projects was the lacustrine portion of the mainstem of the Ottawa River, an area just downstream of a Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) dredging project in 2009-2010. This GLLA project addressed approximately 250,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment (PCBs, PAHs, and heavy metals) and removed significant amounts of pollution from the Ottawa River. Although there have been improvements since then, unfortunately sampling of fish, benthos, and fish habitat suggests the lacustrine portion of the Ottawa River remains impaired and restoration projects are still needed to improve fish and benthic populations and fish habitat.

Project Progress and Schedule

This project includes two possible project areas on opposite sides of the Ottawa River at river mile 2.5 in Toledo. The engineering and design phase began in spring 2025 with Verdantas being selected as the design consultant. Both project areas currently have conceptual designs developed and the initial site characterization activities have been completed to support final design. Final construction documents are expected to be completed in early 2026 and construction is tentatively anticipated to begin in fall 2026.

Funding and Partners

The GLRI funding for the engineering, design and permitting of the in-stream habitat project is focused on the nearshore areas at Harry Kessler Park and/or Howard Pinkley Landing. A total budget of \$2,600,000 is anticipated for construction. The City of Toledo and the Ottawa River Elementary School directly south of Harry Kessler Park completed designs to install trail access and a dock for which they are seeking separate funding. The project is managed locally by the City of Toledo with support from the Ohio EPA and the Maumee AOC Advisory Committee.

For More Information

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