



What's been done to help the Sheboygan River heal?

The healing process was given a boost in 2012, with more than \$83 million in tax dollars and private funding. Projects improved fish and wildlife habitat and removed more than 15,000 dump truck loads of contaminated sediment containing more than one ton of PCBs.

This tremendous effort is due to the collaboration and partnership of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the City of Sheboygan and Sheboygan County, and the cooperation of Pollution Risk Services (Tecumseh Products Company) and Wisconsin Public Service.



The painted turtle prefers shallow water with lots of plants and logs, where it can bask in the sun and find plants, snails, crayfish, insects and small fish to eat. It is Wisconsin's most common turtle.

The Sheboygan: a *healing* river



From U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (updated January 2013)



Projects made the river cleaner & deeper

Dredges scooped or pumped out pockets of sediment contaminated with PCBs and PAHs. The sediment, some toxic, was hauled to special landfills in Wisconsin and other states.



What are PCBs?

PCBs are chemicals used in the U.S. from 1929-1978 to stabilize liquids and plastics. They have been linked to reproductive problems in fish and wildlife and people, and cancer in animals. They bio-accumulate in fish, wildlife and people.

What are PAHs?

PAHs are chemicals produced when materials burn incompletely. PAHs can cause cancer and other ailments, such as skin rashes.

Projects improved fish & wildlife habitat

For more than a century, river habitat has been neglected and injured, resulting in Sheboygan River native fish and wildlife population declines. Projects restored, enhanced and connected wetlands and floodplain forest. This was done by:

- ▶ planting native trees, shrubs and other plants
- ▶ stabilizing eroded shorelands
- ▶ identifying, mapping and controlling invasive plants
- ▶ reclaiming historic wetlands
- ▶ installing habitat structures, such as nest boxes, boulders and logs



Biologists discovered (from top) coho, chinook and steelhead fry naturally hatch in Willow Creek, a Sheboygan River cold-water tributary.

What's next?

Biologists will monitor fish and wildlife communities to assure that project goals are being met. Biologists will also continue to monitor contaminant levels in fish and wildlife to determine when the consumption advisories can be lifted.

Follow advisories to avoid or limit eating fish and waterfowl caught in the Sheboygan River and Harbor until samples show that PCB levels in the food chain have dropped.

Monarch butterfly on purple coneflower



Everything is connected

Healing the river helps reduce health threats, improves habitat, and boosts recreation and economic vitality. By doing this, we also help to heal the Great Lakes ecosystem – the largest fresh surface water resource in the world.



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