

# Ruddiman Creek/Pond Dredging Project Will Remove Contaminants

**Muskegon Lake Area of Concern**

Muskegon, Michigan

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## For more information

If you would like more information on the Ruddiman Creek/Ruddiman Pond project, you may contact one of the following team members:

Marc Tuchman  
Project Manager  
Great Lakes National Program Office  
(312) 353-1369  
tuchman.marc@epa.gov

Don de Blasio  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
EPA Region 5  
(312) 886-4360  
deblasio.don@epa.gov

Sam Borries  
Remedial Project Manager  
EPA Region 5  
(312) 353-8360  
borries.samuel@epa.gov

To reach EPA staff toll-free, call (800) 621-8431, 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., weekdays.

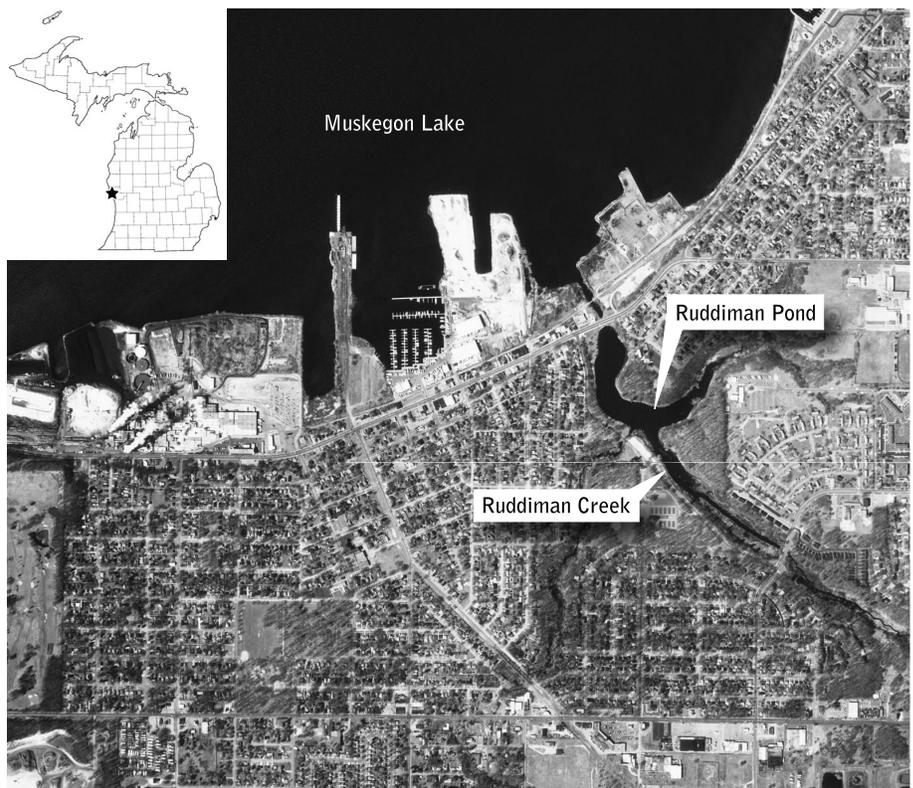
Mike Alexander  
Team Supervisor  
Michigan DEQ  
(517) 335-4189  
alexandm@michigan.gov

To learn more about the Great Lakes Legacy Act, please visit [www.epa.gov/glla/](http://www.epa.gov/glla/)

The long-awaited cleanup of Ruddiman Creek and Ruddiman Pond will begin soon, according to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes National Program Office and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The federal and state agencies recently agreed on details of the cleanup plan. Work on this Great Lakes Legacy Act project may begin as soon as mid-August.

Ruddiman Creek and Ruddiman Pond are part of the designated Muskegon Lake "area of concern" or AOC. Contaminants are present at high enough concentrations that they can affect human health, wildlife and aquatic life. Currently the main branch of Ruddiman Creek is posted as a no swimming, fishing or recreation area due in part to contaminated sediment. EPA and Michigan DEQ, in partnership with a local public advisory council, have developed a contaminated sediment removal and site cleanup project for the creek and the pond.

The \$10.6 million project is expected to take about nine months to remove about 80,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment (mud). Under the Great Lakes Legacy Act of 2002, \$6.9 million or 65 percent of cleanup costs are paid for with federal funds. The other 35 percent or



*This is an aerial view of the area where contaminated sediment will be removed from Ruddiman Creek and Ruddiman Pond.*

\$3.7 million must be non-federal, in this instance funds from the state's Clean Michigan Initiative.

The main contaminants of concern include cadmium, found in the sediment with a maximum level of 25 parts per million; chromium, found at 5,900 ppm; polychlorinated biphenyls, usually called PCBs, found at 6 ppm; and lead, found at 1,200 ppm. This project will remove a substantial amount of these contaminants: an estimated 2,800 pounds of cadmium, 320 pounds of PCBs, 204,000 pounds of chromium and 126,000 pounds of lead.

### **Project details**

The sediment removal and cleanup project will have different approaches for the creek and the pond. Creek sediment cleanup includes road construction to get

access to the creek. The creek will be diverted and temporary walls will be constructed so the sediment can be removed under dry conditions. The pond will be dredged and any resuspended sediments will be controlled with barriers called silt curtains. The curtains will hold the material stirred up during dredging. Contaminated sediment will be hauled by truck to a licensed landfill near Muskegon, and sampling will be done during and after the project to make sure contamination levels are reduced.

Finally, after sediment cleanup, the creek and pond will be reconstructed and water flow patterns restored. Bare sections will also be replanted with native species of flowers, trees and grasses.

### **About the Great Lakes Legacy Act**

Although discharges of toxic substances into the Great Lakes have been reduced over the last 20 years, high concentrations of pollution remain in the bottom of some rivers and harbors. That poses a potential risk to people and wildlife. As a result, states have issued advisories in most locations around the Great Lakes against eating locally caught fish. The tributaries and harbors identified as having pollution problems are known as "areas of concern," or AOCs. There are 31 AOCs on the American side of the Great Lakes. Ruddiman Creek is part of the Muskegon Lake AOC.

Congress passed and the President signed the Great Lakes Legacy Act of 2002 to address the problem of contaminated sediment in these 31 areas. The Legacy Act authorizes \$270 million in funding over five years for cleanups. Fiscal Year 2004 was the first in which Legacy Act funds were available for projects, and Congress appropriated \$10 million. For the current fiscal year, Congress appropriated \$22.3 million.