



Thunder Bay Public Advisory Committee  
c/o North Shore Remedial Action Plan Office  
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#### Update on Thunder Bay RAP related activities

### GLSF

The Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (GLSF), administered by Environment and Climate Change Canada, is mandated to deliver federal responsibilities to restore degraded Canadian Areas of Concern (AOCs) in the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. The Fund helps to address federal commitments under the 2012 Canada – United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) and the 2014 Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA).

Priority for GLSF funding will be given to those proposals that directly address projects/priority actions in current RAP Stage 2/Stage 2 Update Reports and Implementation Work Plans for the relevant AOC.

In 2016 GLSF three proposals were submitted for the Thunder Bay AOC of which one was funded:

- Design & Implementation of Stormwater Low Impact Development on the McIntyre River, EcoSuperior Environmental Programs

In 2016 GLSF also continued to fund the McVicar Creek Restoration Plan Implementation, a project of The City of Thunder Bay with GLSF since 2015.

### North Harbour Overview

Approximately 390,000 m<sup>3</sup> of sediment in the North Harbour is contaminated with mercury and wood/pulp fibre as a result of many years of paper mill operations, and requires management. The paper mill started operation in 1918 and closed in 2007 under different owners (Abitibi Consolidated Inc., Employees Group, Cascades Fine Papers Group Inc., Thunder Bay Fine Papers, and Superior Fine Papers. See Table 1). The mill is currently owned by Reliance Development Corporation). The majority of the water lot on which the contaminated sediments are situated are owned by Transport Canada and are managed by the TBPA pursuant to their Letters Patent under the *Canada Marine Act*.

In 2008, MOECC, ECCC, Abitibi Consolidated Inc. (ACI) and Cascades Inc. entered into an agreement to establish the Thunder Bay North Harbour Sediment Steering Committee to develop a sediment management strategy for the site. Since that time the Steering Committee has overseen various geotechnical, sediment quality and sediment options investigations.

In April 2009, ACI filed for bankruptcy protection. In June 2010, ECCC, Cascades, and the TBPA filed claims in the ACI bankruptcy. ECCC's action was taken to ensure that ACI financial responsibility for remediation of contaminated sediments in Thunder Bay Harbour would be considered in bankruptcy proceedings consistent with application of the polluter pay principle. While the TBPA claim was ultimately unsuccessful, Cascades and ECCC were each awarded a settlement which was premised on a portion of the lowest cost remedial option under consideration at that time paid in shares in the restructured company. ECCC's shares were converted to cash at \$0.03/dollar and are being held in a Specified Purpose Account for use in project implementation.

In 2014, the Mill's sewage lagoon was dredged under MOECC order. The dredged material was dewatered using geotubes, and placed in the Mill's on-site landfill which was lined with geotextiles to prevent seepage of contaminants into the ground. The sewage lagoon is currently empty.

In 2013-2014, ECCC, Cascades and MOECC took further steps in the sediment management options assessment. The contaminated sediment management process is a fifteen step planning and implementation process (Table 2). The public and stakeholders were consulted on these options (Step 7) to help select a preferred management option. Based on the sediment management options assessment and consultation with the public, local stakeholders, First Nations and Metis Nations in 2014, dredging and disposal of the dredged material at the Mission Bay Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) or at an on-site Engineered Containment Facility (ECF) to be built at an estimated cost of \$40-50 million (2014 dollars) was recommended<sup>1</sup>. The Mission Bay CDF is managed by the TBPA on behalf of TC. This completed Step 7 of the sediment management process. Step 8, which presumes the involvement of the property owner/manager could not be initiated without having the active involvement of either TC or the TBPA.

The Canada Marine Act established port authorities as arm's length entities in 2000. Under the Act, TC has limited opportunities to influence the operations of port authorities. Provisions exist within the Canada Marine Act (Section 25) whereby a port authority can apply to TC for contribution funding to address issues including the capital costs of infrastructure, environmental sustainability and security. To date, the TBPA has not made such an application to address the cleanup of the TBNH site.

As stated in Minister McKenna's response to the PAC's letter of March 18<sup>th</sup> 2016, Environment and Climate Change Canada officials continue to engage representatives from the Port Authority, Transport Canada, the province of Ontario and other stakeholders to identify a preferred sediment management solution. Transport Canada has stated that the Port Authority is in a better position than they to comment on the preferred management solution.

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<sup>1</sup> MOECC received a letter dated August 5, 2016 from the Métis Nation of Ontario stating that they are withdrawing their support for the Project until they can properly assess the potential impact that the Project may have on Métis rights, interest and way of life.

<b>Table 1: Mill Ownership</b>		
<b>Owner</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Abitibi Consolidated Inc.	1918-1993	Bankrupt as of 2009
Employees Group	1993-1997	
Cascades Fine Paper Group Inc.	1997-2007	
Thunder Bay Fine Papers	2007-2009	Operated the mill for 4 months. The mill closed in 2007.
Superior Fine Papers	2009-2012	Did not operate the mill
Reliance Development Corporation	2012-present	Did not operate the mill. The mill site is still known as Superior Fine Papers.

<b>Table 2 Contaminated Sediment Management Process Steps</b>	
<b>1.</b>	Compile all historical information and data to date
<b>2.</b>	Identify and address any sediment chemistry data gaps
<b>3.</b>	Identify and address any biological (toxicological, community structure) data gaps
<b>4.</b>	Ascertain stability of sediment
<b>5.</b>	Determine whether there is a concern based on the COA Decision-Making Framework
<b>6.</b>	Assess scientifically-sound sediment management options
<b>7.</b>	Consult the public and stakeholders to help select a preferred management option
<b>8.</b>	Project Steering Committee and property owners select preferred management option
<b>9.</b>	Develop a communications plan
<b>10.</b>	Consult public, stakeholders, First Nations and Métis on the final selection
<b>11.</b>	Develop engineering design/conduct environmental assessment
<b>12.</b>	Secure funding and agreements (identify project manager)
<b>13.</b>	Hire a contractor(s) to implement the preferred option
<b>14.</b>	Undertake environmental and construction monitoring
<b>15.</b>	Develop and implement a long-term environmental monitoring plan

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