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# EPA Deputy Administrator Announces \$35 Million Sediment Cleanup to Restore St. Louis River in Minnesota

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Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator Janet McCabe joined state, Tribal and local officials to announce the \$35 million cleanup will begin this summer at the Thomson Reservoir in Carlton, Minnesota. The EPA is investing more than \$22 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for the project in partnership with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and a non-federal partner to clean up dioxin-contaminated sediment in the Thomson Reservoir on the St. Louis River.

“Thanks to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the historic funding made possible by President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, significant progress is being made to protect public health and the environment and clean up the St. Louis River Area of Concern,” **said EPA Deputy Administrator Janet McCabe.** “I want to thank our state, local, and Tribal partners for their commitment to our cleanup efforts and I look forward to seeing the progress that we will make once the Thomson Reservoir project getting underway this summer.”

“This vital project and investment moves us one step closer to our ultimate goal of removing one of the Great Lakes’ most important waterways from the Great Lakes Area of Concern List,” **said MPCA Deputy Commissioner Peter Tester.** “In partnering with federal, state, local, and tribal governments, as well as other stakeholders, our work to restore and revitalize the St. Louis River will support healthy families, recreation, and a vibrant local economy well into the future.”

“Projects like cleaning up the Thomson Reservoir are possible thanks to the federal funding provided from President Biden’s Infrastructure Law. This isn’t just about safeguarding our waterways, it’s about protecting the St. Louis River’s ecosystem, and ensuring the health and well-being of our communities,” said Sen. Tina Smith. “It’s always great to see federal resources making a tangible difference in local communities. I’m glad I could help make this project possible.”

Cleanup at the 330-acre Thomson Reservoir will protect human health, wildlife, and the environment from legacy contamination left behind by historic industrial activity. The EPA, MPCA and a non-federal partner will work together under a [Great Lakes Legacy Act](#) voluntary partnership to apply a thin layer of activated carbon pellets over 225,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment. The activated carbon rapidly binds to contaminants in the sediment, preventing accumulation in bottom-dwelling organisms, safeguarding the aquatic food chain, and protecting human health.

The project is part of the larger effort to restore and delist the St. Louis River as a [Great Lakes Area of Concern \(AOC\)](#). This is the seventh and final project agreement between MPCA and EPA to complete sediment remediation work in the St. Louis River AOC. Under the agreement, EPA is responsible for 62.5% of the total project cost of approximately \$35 million. The other 37.5% will be funded by MPCA and a non-federal partner.

EPA's portion of the funding comes from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's \$1 billion investment to accelerate cleanup and restoration of the Great Lakes. The agency is leveraging this funding with annual Great Lakes Restoration Initiative appropriations and funding from other sources for partnership projects to finish cleanups and restoration at the remaining 22 United States AOCs. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding directly supports 11 of these cleanups including those in the St. Louis River AOC.

More information about the St. Louis River AOC is available on [EPA's webpage](#).

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