

Dow dredging on schedule

SO FAR, NO NEGATIVE IMPACT OBSERVED

By SCOTT STEPHENSON
The Observer

Dow Chemical Canada's clean-up of the St. Clair River bottom opposite its Sarnia site

is continuing on schedule.

"We're better than half-way," company spokesperson Birgit Lacey commented Wednesday, to update the status of the \$10 million project.

"Things are going pretty well as we would expect in a pilot phase where we are using technology that we haven't used in these conditions before," said Lacey.

At the end of May, the company began using a gigantic underwater vacuum cleaner to

suck up and dispose of mercury and chemical laden sediment it dumped decades ago in the St. Clair River.

Studies have confirmed the contaminants were fixed in the sediment and not impairing drinking water quality or harming the environment.

If the test segment, to be completed this month, involving a 500-foot long section of river proves a success, Dow will proceed to completely remove a 3,000 foot stretch of river bottom just offshore from the Sarnia site. That work could proceed between August and October.

So far, laboratory tests have not revealed any adverse affects on drinking water quality in the river.

"There's nothing really out of the ordinary. We're not seeing any levels of the material that we're measuring for. Most of them are non-detectable, or apparent anywhere in the river," said Lacey.

The sediment being removed is being pumped into a specially constructed holding pond on shore. The water will be removed, treated and returned to the river, and the leftover sand and gravel buried at a company landfill.

A mixture of clean sand and gravel is being added to the bottom of the river to prevent erosion, along with rocks and logs to create fish habitat.

Lacey said, so far, weather hasn't been a factor. The project is on schedule to conclude at the end of the month.

"It's not really playing a significant role. The only thing in the weather that stops our work is thunder and lightning and there hasn't been a whole lot of that in the daytime," she said.



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A recent aerial view of Dow's dredging project, including the run off-pond (foreground).

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