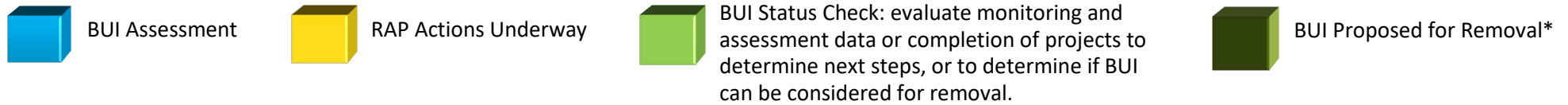
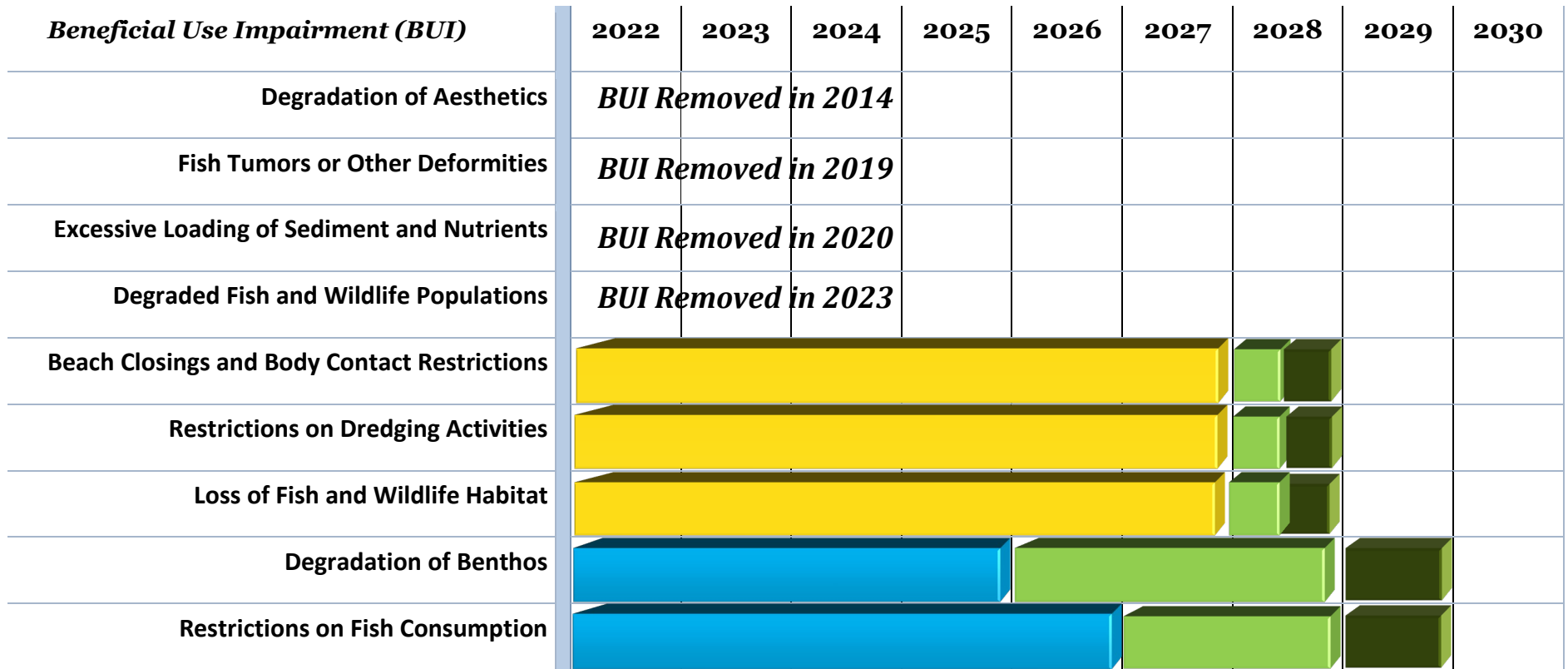


St. Louis River Area of Concern

Beneficial Use Impairment Removal Timeline*



* BUI removal dates are approximate based on best professional judgement. Results from BUI assessments and technical team recommendations may alter these dates. More information about each BUI can be found in the Remedial Action Plan posted on the Wisconsin DNR website <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/GreatLakes/StLouis.html>.

Projects and Milestones

The St. Louis River AOC has made significant progress towards BUI removal and has a goal to substantially complete all construction projects by the fall of 2027 and to consider the AOC for delisting by 2030. Status and key tasks for the remaining BUI's are listed here.

Beach Closings and Body Contact Restrictions: Four management actions have been completed with the removal of body contact restrictions from Munger Landing and the US Steel/Spirit Lake site. A “warning” restriction is still present at Crawford Creek. BUI removal is anticipated for 2028 after remediation is completed at Crawford Creek and permit compliance is documented for wastewater and stormwater permittees within the SLRAOC.

Restrictions on Dredging Activities: There are six remaining Wisconsin actions; four of these are remediation projects. Actions also include data system operations and a dredging alternatives plan. Site remediation and restoration was completed in 2024 at [Munger Landing](#) (shared MN – WI project) and the C. Reiss Dock. [Remedial Options Action Reports](#) were completed for the Oil Barge Dock Slip, Tower Avenue Slip and General Mills Slip and these projects advanced to the pre-design investigation phase. Partner recruitment is also underway. The C. Street Slip is at 60% design. The anticipated BUI removal is 2028.

Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat: The three remaining WI actions are underway. Two are focused on manoomin (wild rice): for Allouez Bay and AOC-wide restoration. Restoration metrics were evaluated in 2024. There is a strong environmental justice component to manoomin restoration: this is an excellent example of a holistic approach to returning a vital cultural resource to the Ojibwe people. Despite poor seed availability in 2024, manoomin restoration continued with seeding 280 pounds on three acres. Herbivory management and monitoring continued and the 2014 Wild Rice Plan was updated as the [St. Louis River Estuary Manoomin Restoration Stewardship Plan](#) in Mar. 2024. Construction of a bridge on the Gandy Dancer Trail over [Little Balsam Creek](#) was completed in late 2024; removal of this final barrier opened over 5 miles of Class I trout stream. [Pickle Pond](#) habitat restoration and stormwater improvements were completed in 2024. The focused feasibility study for the Crawford Creek R2R site is in progress. If all actions remain on schedule, then the anticipated BUI removal will be 2028.

Degradation of Benthos: Post construction monitoring is the only management action in this BUI and is occurring at multiple sites. This work has begun at the reference sites and at each aquatic habitat site where construction has been completed. The post-construction data will be compared to the pre-construction biological data already collected and benthic metrics will be used to assess the outcomes of aquatic restoration projects. In total, 718 and 1,347 stations have been visited to assess the benthic macroinvertebrate and aquatic macrophyte communities, respectively. Construction schedule and benthic recovery dictates sampling timelines. Anticipated removal goal is 2029.

Restrictions on Fish Consumption: All four management actions are underway. The results of the 2017 mercury study management action were published by USGS in the [Science of the Total Environment Journal](#) in 2021. It assessed sources of mercury in AOC and reference site fish and led to the identification of data gaps in the understanding of mercury in the AOC. Additional mercury and PCB sampling was collected in 2021 to address data gaps. Data analysis was completed in 2023; a final report is in process and will be reviewed by the Technical Team. MDNR/WDNR/FdL Fisheries collected fish in 2024. Recovery monitoring of fish consumption advice is planned after completion of remediation and restoration projects. To remove this BUI, there will need to be a decreasing trend in PCB and mercury fish tissue with robust 2013, 2019, 2024, 2028 sampling efforts. Anticipated removal goal is 2029.