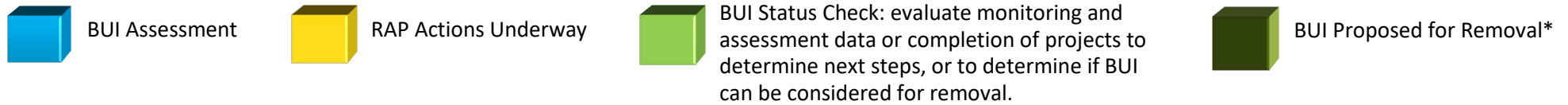
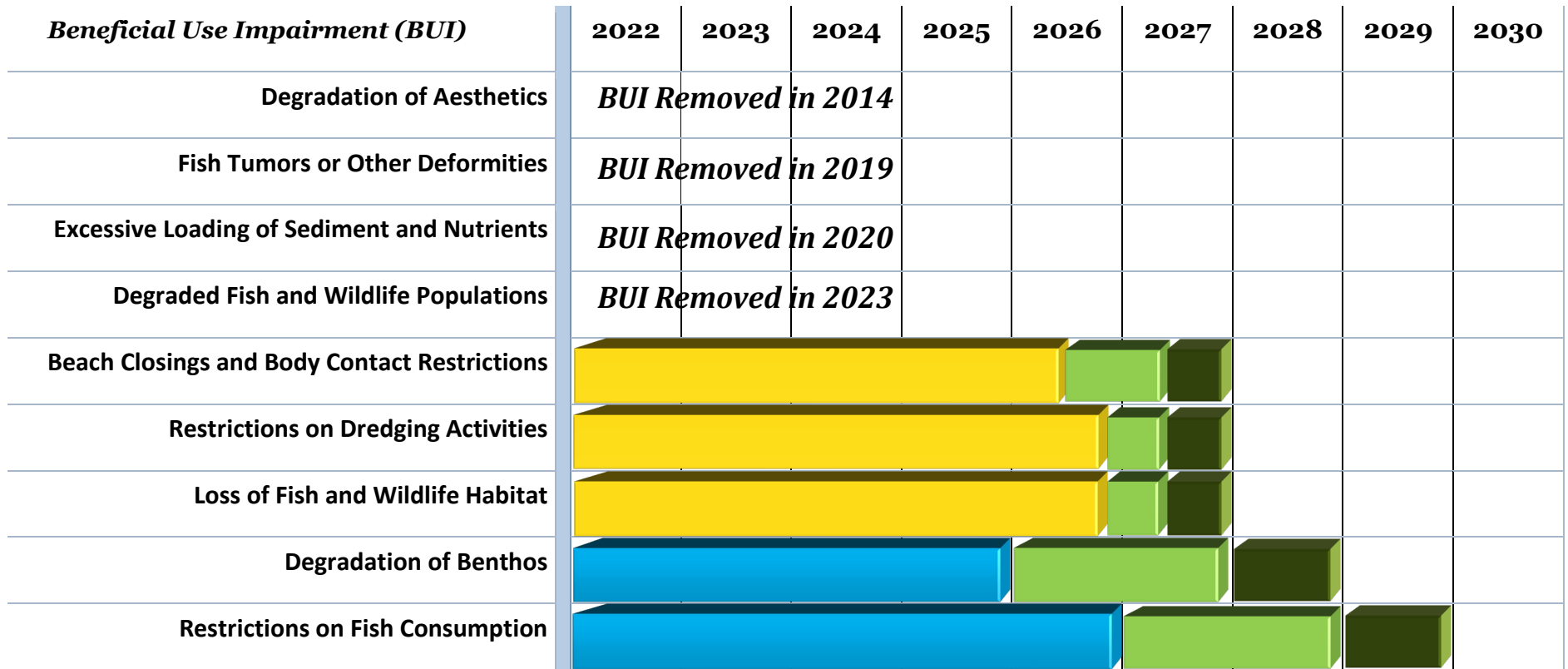


St. Louis River Area of Concern

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 2026 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 and there are two remaining management actions. A “no swimming” designation at US Steel/Spirit Lake site and “warning” signs at Crawford Creek and Munger Landing will need to be removed to complete the actions. Sign removal is dependent on the completion of associated remediation projects. BUI removal is anticipated in 2027.

Restrictions on Dredging Activities: There are eight remaining Wisconsin actions; six of these are remediation projects. Actions also include data system operations and a dredging alternatives plan. [Munger Landing](#) is a shared MN – WI project and remediation was completed in 2023. In-water habitat restoration at the site is underway and on-land vegetation restoration will begin soon. Munger Landing is anticipated to reopen to the public in the spring of 2024. The C. Reiss and C. Street slips are currently in GLLA discussions and remedial design phase. Tower Ave., General Mills and Oil Barge Dock Slips are in the pre-design phase. The anticipated BUI removal is 2027.

Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat: The five remaining WI actions are underway. Two are focused on manoomin (wild rice): for Allouez Bay and AOC-wide restoration. Restoration metrics will be 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. Little Balsam Creek fish passage phase 1 was completed (3/4 culverts). Phase 2 is the final barrier and the construction, led by DOA, will occur in 2024. When completed this project will open over 5 miles of Class 1 Trout Stream. [Pickle Pond](#) R2R construction was completed in 2023, with final planting and warranty to occur in 2024. The feasibility study for the Crawford Creek R2R site is being reviewed. Data gap investigation is in development for Areas A-C. If all actions remain on schedule, then the anticipated BUI removal will be 2027.

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 2028.

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 will be collecting 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.