

Contaminated sediment contributes to the impairment of several beneficial uses in the Niagara River AOC. According to the 2000 Status Report (NYSDEC 2000), sediment remediation has been completed at three embayment sites and contaminated sediment has been removed at five locations along the Niagara River and lower reaches of its tributaries. Remedial actions have been initiated as areas of contaminated sediment are identified through monitoring and funding, usually from potentially responsible parties, is obtained. For example, contaminated sediment removal from Gill Creek has resulted in lower PCB levels in black crappie, largemouth bass, white perch, brown bullhead and bluegill. This remedial action contributed to the removal of a specific fish consumption advisory for Gill Creek (NYSDOH 1999). No dedicated funding mechanism exists to address contaminated sediment problems. Determination of the funding required to address the remaining contaminated sediment sites is needed in order to confirm the overall budget needed to address this environmental problem.

Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) are recognized as significant sources of water quality problems in the AOC. The city of Niagara Falls, Ontario is currently designing a full-scale demonstration project that will treat a CSO at the point of discharge rather than separating sewers. If successful, this option would provide treatment for a fraction of the typical cost. In Niagara Falls, New York, efforts to reduce CSO and groundwater flow from the Falls Street Tunnel to the Niagara River have reduced the input into the River of mercury by 70 percent, tetrachloroethylene by 85 percent, and four other priority chemicals by almost 100 percent, relative to the 1980s inputs (U.S. EPA and NYSDEC 2000). CSOs in the New York portion of the AOC continue to adversely impact water quality. Addressing these water quality impacts will be difficult and costly.

## Recommendation

### **Quantify Remaining Needed Remedial Actions and Associated Budget Requirements.**

**To date, considerable expenditures have resulted in significant environmental benefits to the AOC and the downstream waters of Lake Ontario. In the New York portion of the AOC, substantial future expenditures will be required to more fully address issues such as fish or wildlife habitat, contaminated sediment and combined sewer overflows. An outline of the remaining major remedial actions with an estimate of associated funding needs and a subsequent commitment of funding would benefit the long-term effort to fully restore the beneficial uses in U.S. portion of the Niagara River AOC.**