

October 18, 2007 - Rep. Slaughter Announces EPA Grant to Study and Improve the Buffalo Niagara River

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"The Buffalo River Watershed is the lifeblood of our local community. These funds are essential to better understand the environmental problems that plague the Buffalo River so that we may continue its successful remediation," Rep. Slaughter said. "With this grant, we can take a giant step forward in our effort to restore the Buffalo River, protect it from future environmental degradation, and ultimately remove it from the US/Canadian Great Lakes list of greatest environmental areas of concern."

"The water flowing through the Buffalo River and our other Great Lakes tributaries is our region's most important revitalization asset," said Julie O'Neill, Executive Director of Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper. "This EPA grant award will help facilitate the clean up of the Buffalo River and support the tremendous investment that is taking place at the foot of Main Street in the City of Buffalo. We are grateful for the EPA's continued support of Riverkeeper's role in the Buffalo River's revitalization."

This agreement provides the funds necessary to continue the Remedial Action Plan, which monitors water quality throughout the Buffalo River Watershed, identifies potential toxins in river bottom sediments, and conducts inactive hazardous waste site remediation. Additionally, the funding will be used to gather information on the loss of fish and wildlife in the area, the reduction of microscopic plant and animal populations, and the abnormal levels of nutrients and algae. This information will help Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper effectively restore the Buffalo River to its natural health and beauty with the goal of removing it from the US/Canadian Great Lakes list of greatest environmental areas of concern.

The Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper has served as the Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) coordinator since 2003. In October 2005, they were awarded a five year \$499,000 grant from EPA - Region 2. Since the grant, the Riverkeeper has pulled in nearly \$3 million in additional federal, state and local funding to restore the River.

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