

Saginaw Bay Coastal Initiative
Proposed Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) Work Group
Statement of Purpose
Proposed 2-26-09

Background

It is unanimous in the expressions of concern from business's, residents and visitors to the Saginaw Bay area that they do not like CSO's dumping into the Saginaw River. There is a shared acknowledgement that the sewage overflows negatively impact a multitude of community features: the water quality in our river and bay, our beaches, our fishing, our reputation statewide (or beyond) and our economy through our ability to effectively promote ourselves as an attractive location for growth or travel.

Approach

The CSO Workgroup is comprised of a variety of concerned community representatives from the Saginaw and Bay area who agree to dedicate time to work towards developing a CSO Prevention Plan for the Saginaw River. The CSO Prevention Plan will be informed through the following steps:

- Review the local history of CSO control and treatment and current regulatory status;
- Review the water quality of the Saginaw River and evaluate the relative contribution of pollutants from CSO's and other pollution sources,
- Explore community options with the costs for eliminating or reducing CSO's

The Workgroup will meet monthly during the day to review and discuss technical information, with periodic results to be presented at occasional evening Town hall meetings. Much of the information will be provided by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and local wastewater treatment operators, who share the concern for providing the most effective wastewater treatment possible at an acceptable cost. It is fully recognized that all participants share a common goal and will work together to explore and evaluate options, costs and benefits.

End Product :

Obtain community consensus on a Regional Strategy to Reduce/Eliminate CSOs/SSOs in the Saginaw River with priority improvements, benefits and costs identified.

Note: While it is recognized that there are other CSO's or other discharges from other communities into upriver tributaries – for the purpose of this workgroup, we will address only those into the Saginaw River.