

Onondaga Lake's extreme makeover

The Post-Standard Friday learned of New York state's plan for cleaning the industrial pollution from Onondaga Lake. The plan, to be formally announced Monday, calls for Honeywell International to spend \$449 million on a variety of projects. The state plan is a modification of the plan Honeywell submitted to the state earlier this year. It wants the company to dredge 2.65 million cubic yards of mercury-contaminated sediment and cover — or cap — another 579 acres with different types of materials depending on the depth.

Both the capping and the dredging are significantly more than proposed by Honeywell, which divided the lake into nine sections to develop its cleanup plan. Below is a look at what the company proposed. The state plan is similar except for the increases in capping and dredging, particularly in areas 1 and 2. The state could not be more specific Friday.

■ **Recreational/habitat buffer:** In sections 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7, a thin layer of sand would be placed over a rock layer that would protect the cap from erosion. The buffer would extend from the shoreline to about 2 feet of water depth. The sand would provide a recreational buffer more suitable for wading.

■ **Habitat suitable for submerged aquatic plants:** This area would be created over about 47 acres in sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7.

■ **Fish spawning habitat:** Areas suitable for fish reproduction would be built with a gravel layer over about 130 acres of isolation cap within sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 at depths ranging from 5 feet to 15 feet.

- ① **In-lake waste deposit:** Dredge about 130,000 cubic yards of sediment, cover 84 acres with an isolation cap (consisting of sand, sediment and other organic materials).
- ② **Causeway:** Dredge about 170,000 cubic yards, cap about 16 acres.
- ③ **Sediment from Allied waste beds 1 through 8:** Dredge about 12,000 cubic yards, cap about 20 acres.
- ④ **Mouth of Nine Mile Creek:** Cap about 75 acres. New aquatic habitat would be established to replace 6 acres of habitat lost from other parts of the lake. Emergent wetland would be established over 10 acres of an isolation cap. The wetlands would be established from the shoreline to depths of 1 to 2½ feet, providing cover and nursery areas for young fish. The wetlands would also dissipate wind-wave energy and help stabilize the shoreline.
- ⑤ **Northern shore:** Habitat enhancement.
- ⑥ **Ley Creek to 700 feet south of Onondaga Creek:** Dredge about 46,000 cubic yards of sediment, cap about 94 acres.
- ⑦ **700 feet south of Onondaga Creek to in-lake waste deposit:** Dredge about 150,000 cubic yards of sediment, cap about 38 acres.
- ⑧ **Lake bottom:** Cap about 20 acres with a thin layer.
- ⑨ **Wetlands:** Possible soil removal in the northwest and southeast corners of the lake.