The Blue Tower Turning Basin area of the Buffalo River is almost ready to get its share of shoreline habitat restoration work by Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper. (T.J. Pignataro/Buffalo News)

Habitat restoration expected to continue at two Buffalo River sites

By T.J. Pignataro (http://buffalonews.com/author/tpignataro/) | Published June 12, 2017 | Updated June 12, 2017
Habitat restoration work by Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper is expected to continue in the Buffalo River at the Blue Tower Turning Basin near Katherine Street and the Buffalo Motor and Generator Corp. property near the Michigan Avenue lift bridge.

That work will include removing debris and invasive plants from the river. Then, restoration efforts can begin by planting native species in the river to provide habitat for aquatic life, according to Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper's permit application (http://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20170607_reg9.html#914020112900001). Plans also call for root wads and logs to be installed in these areas to protect the new plantings.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation tentatively approved Riverkeeper's application, but wants public comment before a final decision.

Comments can be made by June 22 by writing to Lisa M Czechowicz, NYSDEC Region 9 Headquarters, 270 Michigan Ave., Buffalo, N.Y., 14203.

"The purpose of the project is to restore and enhance the ecological function of the river to address the Buffalo River
Remedial Action Plan’s Beneficial use Impairment for loss of fish and wildlife habitat and to provide effective and sustainable designs for restoring the naturalizing shorelines,” according to the DEC's description about Riverkeeper’s application.

Pending DEC permit approvals, Riverkeeper officials said they tentatively plan construction on these Buffalo River restoration projects will start in early July.

Other projects at the Buffalo Color peninsula, Ohio Street boat launch and Old Bailey Woods would be rolled out in succession, as approved, in mid-July, October and November respectively, according to Riverkeeper.