



G.L.A.H. News

Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat

EARLY WINTER 2004

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 5

IN THIS ISSUE:

An Outstanding Event 3

Enhancing Local Decision Making 4

Sewage Dumping Gets Green Light (IL) 5

Wetland Advocates Speak Out (MI) 6

FREE CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TOOLBOX APPLICATION 7, 8

SPECIAL: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES RESOURCE 9, 10

Power Plants in Ohio Spewing Toxins (OH) 11

New Greenbelt Protecting Significant Areas (ONT) 12

Lake Superior Coastal Areas At Risk (WI) 13

Saving Hamilton's Red Hill Valley (ONT) 14

Notes of Interest 15

Give the Gift of Healthy Water This Holiday Season! 16

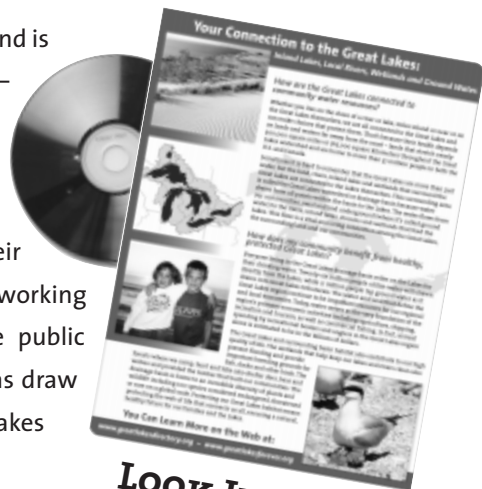
DID YOU KNOW?

The Great Lakes Basin is home to more than one-tenth of the population of the United States and one-quarter of the population of Canada, as well as nearly 25% of total Canadian agricultural production and 7% of American production.

DEAR GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE,

Increase the effectiveness of your local advocacy efforts while building a broader constituency to protect the Great Lakes!

Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network & Fund is pleased to introduce our 2005 theme – Great Lakes, Connecting Communities. Because many community-based groups lack the staff and funding needed to develop comprehensive communications of their own, GLAHNF and Biodiversity Project are working together to help your organization raise public awareness about local key issues, as well as draw attention to issues that plague the Great Lakes and their associated aquatic habitats and watersheds.



LOOK INSIDE!

The enclosed educational flyer is an example of the type of tools designed to benefit your local work by highlighting connections to the Great Lakes.

Your participation will help your community see how their local aquatic habitat issues are linked to the broader Great Lakes, as well as to environmental concerns in communities throughout the basin.

We'd like to invite you to participate in a new and unique collaboration – The Great Lakes Connecting Communities Toolbox Project. The Toolbox Project evolved from a desire to build an engaged Great Lakes constituency - individuals that are ready and willing protect the Lakes at the community and regional level. This effort began in 2002, when Biodiversity Project hired a national public opinion research firm to gain a better understanding of the public's connection to the Great Lakes. The resulting report, *Protecting the Great Lakes: Responsibility to Awareness to Action*, provides important data for anyone wishing to engage the public on the Lakes or aquatic issues locally and in the Great Lakes basin.

continued on page 2

DEAR GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE – CONTINUED



GLAHNEWS:

Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat News is published five times a year and distributed by the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. Funding for the publication is provided by readers' subscriptions, contributions, and a grant from the C.S. Mott Foundation.

Director: Jill Ryan

Program Associate: Marci Singer

Address correspondence to
Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat News,
c/o

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council,
426 Bay Street, Petoskey, MI 49770

Phone:
(231) 347-1181

Fax:
(231) 347-5928

Jill's extension: 106
e-mail: jill@watershedcouncil.org

Marci's extension: 107
e-mail: marci@watershedcouncil.org

Visit us on the web at:
www.glahabitat.org, and
www.GreatLakesDirectory.org

Disclaimer:

The Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat News is intended to provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas among citizens and organizations working to protect aquatic habitats in the Great Lakes Basin. The interpretations and conclusions presented in this newsletter represent the opinions of the individual authors. They in no way represent the views of the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, the C.S. Mott Foundation, subscribers, donors, or any organization mentioned in this publication.

The good news is that the report tells us that people living in the Great Lakes region have a deep sense of *pride* for the Lakes and, better still, that 94% of respondents have a sense of *responsibility* for their health. Unfortunately, the basin-wide survey also highlighted a serious problem – the public did not understand any specific threats to the Lakes or have a sense of urgency about protecting them.

Let's work together to protect our magnificent, valuable and vulnerable resources!

The health of our ecosystem is directly tied to how we, the residents, choose to live with the Lakes. Every choice we make about energy and water consumption, land use and invasive species management, even how we manage our yards and gardens, impacts the health of our precious ecosystem.

As you know, the Great Lakes are connected to each community within the Great Lakes Basin through surface and ground water. When you add in the many local issues – from land and water use to pollution - you have some complicated choices to make about a resource for which no single community can take responsibility.

By working together, our communications will engage the public to care about local issues, as well as their impact on the Great Lakes and their surrounding lands. Additionally, we will effectively convey the urgency, threats, and interconnected issues regarding their protection.

Strengthen your community-based public education efforts!

The Great Lakes – Connecting Communities Toolbox provides FREE, focused, ready-to-use content and communications products related to water quality and quantity issues, habitat protection and invasive species in the Great Lakes Basin. The collaborative effect of more than 200 community-based groups, like yours, in the Great Lakes Basin talking about aquatic habitat issues and their relationship to the Lakes in the same manner will raise the public profile of the Great Lakes' value and their threats. We hope that this increased public concern for the Great Lakes will also lead to increased public involvement in the protection of both the Lakes and the aquatic resources in their watersheds.

With support from the Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) of the Environmental Protection Agency, GLAHNF and Biodiversity Project are making a limited number of Great Lakes Connecting Communities Toolbox CD-ROMs available to groups, like yours, working throughout the Great Lakes Basin. The combined value of these professionally developed tools is nearly \$25,000, therefore we ask that you make an effort to use one or more of these products in 2005.

The Great Lakes Connecting Communities Toolbox CD-ROM is **free of charge** and will be available in early 2005. The enclosed application outlines the types of materials that will be included in the **free** toolbox.

Sincerely,

Jill Ryan

GLAHNF 2004 Grassroots Symposium



GLAHNF 2004 GRASSROOTS SYMPOSIUM BRINGS TOGETHER DIVERSE SPEAKERS FOR AN OUTSTANDING EVENT

Inspiring habitat protection stories, great conversations, and the opportunity to renew friendships and make new ones highlighted a wonderful weekend as nearly 50 attendees participated in the first ever Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund Grassroots Symposium. The Symposium was held October 15-17 in Toronto with speakers and participants from both the United States and Canada.

Kicking off the event was a wetlands workshop highlighting wetland policies, permits and regulatory tools by Julie Sibbing, Wetlands Policy Specialist for the National Wildlife Federation, Linda Pim of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and Molly Flanagan of the Ohio Environmental Council. The workshop was a great segue for the event, initiating discussions about how Canada and the U.S. can work together on wetlands projects that affect the Great Lakes Basin.

Jeffrey Potter, Director of Communications Programs for the Biodiversity Project, introduced the Great Lakes Connecting Communities Toolbox, which is profiled in the center of this newsletter. The Toolbox is being created to help local organizations raise public awareness about key issues through attention to the impact they have on the Great Lakes and their associated habitats and watersheds. For more information, please refer to the center of this newsletter or visit our website at www.greatlakesdirectory.org.

Real stories of grassroots habitat protection work were highlighted through a grassroots panel comprised of Pat Krebs and Pat Dwight, Co-Chairs of Friends of Sheldon Marsh, Mary Jo Cullen of Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay and Peggy Hutchison of the Grey Association for Better Planning. The panel told compelling stories of how GLAHNF helped them fight and win David and Goliath battles to save wetlands, groundwater aquifers and other places of power and beauty on our cherished Sweetwater Seas. "It's really grassroots," said a panel member of their success at getting others to help in their fight, stating, "it's all of us making noise that makes the difference."

A workshop on the contribution of pollution from factory farms and issues of liquid waste disposal and atmospheric deposition was presented by Andrew Hanson, attorney for Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc., and Maureen Reilly, an Ontario advocate of sustainable sanitation. Many

participants commented about the value of increased awareness to the problem of concentrating too much manure on too little land.

Andy Robinson of the Institute for Conservation Leadership made a compelling presentation about fundraising that had everyone on their feet, literally. The workshop provided great insight about who gives to non-profits and highlighted the fact that individual donors give about 75% of private dollars compared to just 11% for foundations. Participants found the entire workshop useful, but agreed that learning to "make the ask" and feeling confident making a list of prospective donors was most beneficial.



*Mary Jo Cullen shares project ideas
from Michipicoten Bay*

The event concluded with a keynote address by Glen Dale of the Shoreline Stewardship Association of Cloud Bay and Little Trout Bay. Glen shared the group's story of saving their beautiful and beloved Lake Superior shoreline from a trailer development.

In addition to the workshops mentioned above, the opportunity to network with grassroots groups was one of the most beneficial aspects of the symposium. Attendees appreciated networking with local, state,

provincial and national groups, sharing similar issues and seeing that they were able to make a difference. Many commented about how other's struggles and successes will impact their own efforts.

"I only knew one person when I arrived - it was great to connect with so many fellow activists," commented a participant. Another person added, "Excellent in all ways. I learned so much and realize how much more I need to learn and to become more involved. The personal stories were inspiring."

We were fortunate to have an excellent group of participants, good substance and great speakers for our first annual Grassroots Symposium. "This first Symposium far exceeded our expectations for attendance, information sharing, workshop quality and participant interest," said Jill Ryan, GLAHNF Director. "I can't wait until the 2005 Symposium!" We hope you'll join us.

Citizens' Environment Watch



CITIZENS' ENVIRONMENT WATCH ENHANCING LOCAL DECISION MAKING

By Mary McGrath

What do the Mayor of Pickering, Ontario - David Ryan, and the Mayor of Ajax, Ontario - Steve Parish, have in common, in addition to the fact that they both preside over two of the fastest-growing suburbs of Toronto?

They both attended Dunbarton High School's first ever community forum on Sustainable Urban Design. Students presented the results of their ecological monitoring in the East Rouge River and Duffins Creek watersheds, as well as their ideas to protect these ecosystems as part of a larger debate on the future of the Seaton Lands - a green space area in North Pickering threatened by urban sprawl.

The success of this event prompted Mayor Ryan to invite the students to make another presentation at a special town council meeting at Pickering's Town Hall the following month, where the Dunbarton students presented their data and ideas to local counselors and developers.

The students were part of the newly established Community Links and Field Studies Program, an applied Grade 11 Science course that is the brainchild of one of Dunbarton's science teachers, David Gordon. He created the program as a vehicle to introduce students to careers in biology and ecology and to increase civic participation.

Through a partnership with Citizens' Environment Watch (CEW) and support from GLAHNF and the local Rotary Club, Mr. Gordon engaged his students in the collection of valid scientific water quality data (using CEW's government-recognized protocol) for the first year of a ten-year community project that aims to gather long-term scientific information to study the impacts of urban sprawl in the Durham area and to enhance local decision-making. The high school students worked directly with CEW Monitoring Mentors, who are post-secondary student volunteers trained by CEW staff to lead youth through a series of in-class and outdoor sessions to assess local environmental quality.

In addition to hands-on field work, the course provides real-world experience to the students through part time co-op positions with local community groups, municipal governments and conservation authorities. Student registration in the course quadrupled this year! CEW is now working with Mr. Gordon to develop a best-practices case study of this project to disseminate to CEW's other participating high schools across Ontario.

As this story demonstrates, with GLAHNF support, CEW has strengthened the ability of youth in the Greater Toronto Area to protect and restore local aquatic ecosystems. They have used their data and knowledge to advocate for improved land-use planning and habitat protection, and to engage their community in environmental stewardship projects. Our program is a stellar example of an effort to build coalitions among new and diverse partners and build the capacity of local citizens to influence the development and enforcement of regulatory, permitting and assessment decisions.

Last year, due in large part to GLAHNF support, CEW was able to surpass our participation goals, engaging over 20 post-secondary student Monitoring Mentors from five community colleges and universities and more than 225 secondary students from nine secondary schools in five watersheds (Credit, Humber, Don, Rouge, Duffins Creek) in the Greater Toronto Area.

Monitoring is more than a form of active evaluation. It is a process of reconnecting people to the natural world. Like bird watching or nature photography, monitoring is an activity that engages people, especially youth, with their natural surroundings - it is a sensory, observatory experience that builds a sense of wonder and value. But it is also about more than just "being in tune." It is about generating local knowledge so that citizens can effectively advocate for the protection and restoration of aquatic habitats. CEW's programs validate this knowledge, making the knowledge creation process a democratic one.

Citizens' Environment Watch (CEW) empowers people in Ontario to pay attention to their local environment. We provide education, equipment and support to monitor ecosystem health and opportunities to participate in informed community decision-making and active stewardship.

CEW makes science, ecology and data collection accessible in concept and practice to community volunteers through training workshops and field sessions, community-based sampling protocols and field guides that teach volunteers to monitor air and surface water quality using biological indicators, such as benthic macroinvertebrates, as well as chemical and physical parameters.

Lake Michigan Basin Update



LAKE MICHIGAN FEDERATION

JOEL BRAMMEIER, LAKE MICHIGAN FEDERATION
220 S. STATE STREET, #1900 • CHICAGO, IL 60604
PH (312) 939-0838 EXT 4 • FX (312) 939-2708

E-MAIL: JBRAMMEIER@LAKEMICHIGAN.ORG • WEBSITE: WWW.LAKEMICHIGAN.ORG



FEDERAL COURT GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO SEWAGE DUMPING LAWSUIT

A federal court has cleared the way for the Lake Michigan Federation and its co-plaintiff, Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers, to press on with charges that the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's (MMSD) sewage dumping into Lake Michigan violates long-standing federal law. The September ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in Chicago allows the two groups to argue that MMSD has repeatedly violated the 1972 Clean Water Act by discharging raw sewage into Lake Michigan and Milwaukee's rivers since 1995.

Lynn Broaddus, executive director of Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers, says the ruling underscores the power the Clean Water Act gives to citizens. "We have the right and responsibility to insist on an end to sewage dumping," she says. The two organizations filed suit in U.S. District Court in March 2002, charging that MMSD had violated the Clean Water Act by discharging about 1 billion gallons of raw industrial and domestic waste to area waterways.

In September 2003, a lower court dismissed the groups' lawsuit, stating that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources had already taken action against MMSD. The groups appealed, saying the state provided too little enforcement, too late. The appellate court agreed. "We do not feel confident that the 2002 (DNR action) will indeed result in elimination of the root causes underlying the large-scale violations alleged by the plaintiffs, regardless of the state's and MMSD's self-serving statements that it is intended to do so," the court wrote in its decision.

The court also agreed with the groups' primary criticism of the DNR action: that it does not promise to bring an end to violations. "Compliance means an end to violations, not merely a reduction in the number or size of them," it wrote.

On Oct. 28, the Federation learned that the MMSD plans to appeal the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, a motion the Federation and Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers will oppose. In their lawsuit, the two non-profit groups call for a phase-out of sewage discharges, and for penalties that can be directed to community projects that discourage further waste dumping by the MMSD.

For more information, contact Laurel O'Sullivan at losullivan@lakemichigan.org or 312-939-0838x3.

GREAT LAKES PARTNERS

GREAT LAKES PARTNERS TO TACKLE KEY ISSUES AT SUMMIT

Top environmentalists from around the region are attending a lakewide summit this fall to seize on the convergence of three major policy initiatives to protect the Great Lakes. More than 20 environmental groups signed on to attend the eighth annual summit Nov. 21-22 at the prestigious Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. Co-hosted by the Lake Michigan Federation and the Johnson Foundation, "Lakewide Summit 2004: Community-Based Restoration for Lake Michigan," will focus on three critical Great Lakes policies now in the offing:

- *The Great Lakes Basin Water Resources Compact:* A binational agreement released this summer in draft form to promote sustainable water use and discourage harmful withdrawals and diversions of Great Lakes water inside and outside the basin.
- *Great Lakes Restoration:* Federal legislation for the Great Lakes that, if adopted, would set the standard for Great Lakes health and provide billions in federal funding to help make cleanup and rehabilitation a reality.
- *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement:* A landmark binational agreement to restore and maintain the integrity of the Great Lakes ecosystem; the United States and Canada are considering renegotiating the agreement.

Thirty years of efforts at the federal and state levels have resulted in important – yet limited – progress in restoring Great Lakes health. Networks of local groups can make a real contribution to long-term restoration, notes Jamie Morton, manager of outreach programs for the Federation.

Ann Brasie, executive director of the Watershed Center in Traverse City, Mich., agrees. "Often I am so caught up in day-to-day operations and projects that it is hard to keep up with basin-wide policy issues that affect the Grand Traverse Bay watershed," she says. "The summit is a great way to learn more about these policies and how we can carry them out at the local level."

This year's summit will capitalize on a rare window of opportunity to make real and lasting progress for the Great Lakes. The conference will be devoted to developing an "action agenda" to ensure adoption of the pending policy reforms, with an emphasis on successful approaches to current community-based restoration efforts.

For more information, contact Jamie Morton at jmorton@lakemichigan.org or 616-850-0745 ext. 12.



Lake Huron Basin Update - U.S. Side

CHRIS GRUBB, TIP OF THE MITT WATERSHED COUNCIL
426 BAY STREET • PETOSKEY, MI 49770
PH: (231) 347-1181 EXT 118 • FX: (231) 347-5928

E-MAIL: CHRISGRUBB@WATERSHEDCOUNCIL.ORG • WEBSITE: WWW.WATERSHEDCOUNCIL.ORG



MICHIGAN WETLAND ADVOCATES TELL DEQ "NO WAY"

At the close of a recent public comment period on a proposed Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) General Permit (GP) for vegetation removal on Great Lakes bottomlands (beach dooming), comments opposed (over 500) vastly outnumbered those in support (about 30) – a factor of 16 to 1. While the DEQ has not said if it will abandon the proposed beach dooming GP, the agency would be hard pressed to justify moving forward given the overwhelming opposition.

S.O.S. Tries, Fails to Convince Two Counties to Apply for Non-Existent GP

When a small group of property rights advocates known as Save Our Shoreline (S.O.S.) were successful in convincing the legislature to pass the 2003 beach dooming amendments, there was a provision in those amendments that said the DEQ *may* create a General Permit category for beach dooming activities. The General Permit is reserved for activities found to have no significant individual or cumulative impact on the environment. Given a May State Senate hearing (during which top wetland researchers demonstrated that “beach grooming” can damage the state’s valuable coastal wetlands) most wetland advocates thought DEQ would not create a beach dooming GP since it was not specifically required by the legislature.

Recognizing their loss at the State Senate hearing, and taking a page out of the Karl Rove political playbook, S.O.S. decided to take its case for the GP to individual counties. They tried and failed to convince both the Leelanau County Commission and Grand Traverse County Commission to apply to the DEQ for a non-existent beach dooming General Permit on behalf of all shoreline residents in these counties. In both cases, members of the Michigan Wetland Action Coalition (MWAC) – a network of wetland advocates across Michigan – helped to write letters and give testimony at county meetings on the S.O.S. proposal.

Wetland Advocates Harness the Power of the Internet to Comment on Proposed GP

Having failed to convince Leelanau County and Grand Traverse County, S.O.S. continued to put pressure on the DEQ to move forward with a GP category for beach dooming. In late July, the DEQ released the public notice for a proposed beach dooming GP. Michigan’s wetland advocates were determined to send the DEQ a strong message that further relaxing coastal wetland protection would not be accepted. To that end, MWAC teamed up with the Michigan Action Project (MAP) to post a form letter on the MAP website that

wetland advocates could personalize and submit – sending a fax to the DEQ.

Thanks to the actions of over 500 Michigan wetland advocates, the DEQ’s fax machine rang off the hook for several days straight. The DEQ has yet to indicate whether they will abandon the GP. Teaming up with the Michigan Action Project to generate faxes to the DEQ is just one example of how MWAC is using the internet to organize and advocate for strong wetland protection in Michigan. MWAC also hosts a web-site and sends out a bi-weekly email newsletter. You can check out MWAC on the web at: www.michiganwetlands.org.

MICHIGAN ACTION PROJECT

SAMPLE LETTER TO MICHIGAN DEQ SENT VIA THE MICHIGAN ACTION PROJECT

Mr. Jannereth

As a Michigander who values the health of the Great Lakes, I am writing to urge the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to abandon the proposed General Permit for Limited Removal of Vegetation on Specified Great Lakes Bottomlands. Coastal wetlands are tremendously important to the health of the Great Lakes. Healthy vegetation is critical to the proper functioning of these wetlands. Unfortunately, this permit ignores the value of coastal wetlands and sets the stage for further destruction.

During the recent low period, emergent coastal wetlands have appeared in exposed bottomlands. These wetlands are critical for providing fish and wildlife habitat, protecting water quality and preventing erosion as water levels begin to rise. Mowing this vegetation destroys habitat values and also disrupts the photosynthetic process that is critical to maintaining strong root systems, as well as nutrient and energy cycling in the wetland.

Public Act 14 of 2003 weakened the state’s wetland law by exempting certain “beach grooming” activities that can degrade coastal wetlands. However, it is important to note that the amendments allowed for, but did not require, the DEQ to establish a General Permit category for this type of activity. Given the testimony presented by wetland researchers at a May hearing of the state Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee about PA 14, as well as the reactions of the senators, I think it is a tremendous mistake for the DEQ to move forward with a permit that could encourage further damage. The DEQ must do its job to protect the public trust natural resources of the state, including coastal wetlands, by not establishing a General Permit for their destruction.

Sincerely,

Deadline for return: December 17, 2004

For a deadline extension please call 231.347.1181 ext. 107.

**Yes, I want to receive a copy of the Great Lakes –
Connecting Communities Toolbox!**

(Please complete the following information describing how you will use the toolbox
and how you will share your results with us.)

Organization Name: _____

Name of Project Coordinator: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Telephone No.: _____ Fax No.: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Website: _____

Please tell us about your current communications.

1. What is the primary aquatic habitat issue your group is currently undertaking?

2. What is the primary message you need to communicate to further the work of your organization?

3. How would you define the target audience for your communication? Please be as specific as possible.

4. How is your group currently communicating Great Lakes issues? (Please check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Postcards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paid Advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Door to Door or Phone Canvassing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release | <input type="checkbox"/> Email Campaigns |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free Public Service Announcements | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – Please Specify: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group or Issue Pamphlets | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letters to the Editors/Op-Eds | _____ |

5. Does your group currently have a full or part-time or volunteer outreach or communications staff person?

Please tell us how you will utilize the Toolbox.

6. Which of the following communications materials would your group most likely use? (Please check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-color print advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Password-protected bulletin board for Toolbox participants to share ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio public service announcements | <input type="checkbox"/> Targeted regional media contact lists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assorted Outreach items including: state park signage, educational posters and brochures, website content and Great Lakes drink coasters | <input type="checkbox"/> A ready-to-use Powerpoint presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release templates | <input type="checkbox"/> Tips for citizen involvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tips for strategic message development and delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast facts on the Great Lakes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media Outreach Materials including: media press kits, editorial letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalized advice for your outreach/communication work |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Public opinion data on the Great Lakes |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Links to useful Great Lakes related websites |

7. How will your group utilize the Great Lakes Connecting Communities materials to increase your aquatic habitat public education efforts?

8. What is the timeframe for this communication work?

9. Are there any other materials or communications tools you would like to see included on the CD-ROM?

Thank you for your interest in the Great Lakes Connecting Communities Toolbox. Materials will be distributed in early 2005.

(Fold on dotted line)

Place
stamp
here



*Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat News
c/o Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
426 Bay Street
Petoskey, MI 49770*

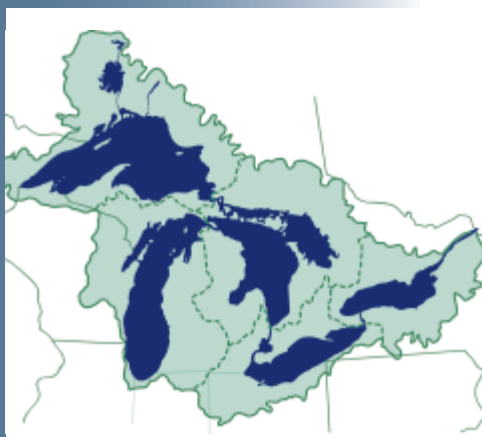
Your Connection to the Great Lakes:

Inland Lakes, Local Rivers, Wetlands and Ground Water.



How are the Great Lakes connected to community water resources?

Whether you live on the shore of a river or lake, miles inland or near or on the Great Lakes themselves, we are all connected to the Great Lakes and can make choices that protect them. That's because their health depends on lands and waters far away from the coast – lands that stretch nearly 300,000 square miles or 765,000 square kilometers throughout the Great Lakes watershed and are home to more than 37 million people in both the U.S. and Canada.



Sometimes it is hard to remember that the Great Lakes are more than just water, but the land, rivers, inland lakes and wetlands that surround the Great Lakes are connected to the Lakes themselves. This surrounding area is called the Great Lakes watershed or drainage basin because water *drains* from all points within the basin to the Lakes. The water flows from our communities, over land and underground (where it's called ground water) to the rivers, inland lakes, streams and wetlands that feed the Lakes. This flow is a vital and living connection among the Great Lakes, the surrounding land and our communities.

How does my community benefit from healthy, protected Great Lakes?

Everyone living in the Great Lakes drainage basin relies on the Lakes for their drinking water. Twenty-six million people utilize water withdrawn directly from the Lakes, while 11 million people tap ground water as it drains into Great Lakes tributaries. The water and land that define the Great Lakes region continue to be important resources for our regional and local economies. Today, water serves as the very foundation of the region's primary economic activities including agriculture, shipping, recreation and tourism, as well as commercial fishing. In fact, annual spending by recreational boaters and anglers in the Great Lakes region alone is estimated to be in the billions of dollars.

The Great Lakes and surrounding basin habitat also contribute to our high quality of life. The wetlands that help keep our lakes and rivers clean also prevent flooding and provide important breeding grounds for fish, ducks and other birds. The

forests where we camp, hunt and hike also shelter deer, bear and wolves and provided the lumber that built our communities. The drainage basin is home to an incredible diversity of plants and wildlife including 100 species considered endangered, threatened or rare on a global scale. Protecting our Great Lakes habitat means protecting the web of life that connects us all, ensuring a natural, healthy future for our families and the Lakes.

You Can Learn More on the Web at:

www.greatlakesdirectory.org ~ www.greatlakesforever.org



Working together, we can protect our Great Lakes.



You can make a difference.

The choices we make about how we protect land and water resources in our communities within the Great Lakes drainage basin affect the future of the Lakes themselves.

Careless and excessive land development and poor land management are rapidly destroying wetlands, shorelines and other critical habitats that are vital to the health of our local water resources and the Great Lakes. When we lose this habitat, we lose critical homes for native plants and wildlife, and places for our families to fish, boat, hike and just plain enjoy. Fortunately, solutions are available for us to make a difference for the Lakes and our communities today.

How can you help protect our vital Great Lakes resources?

• **Improve land-use planning policies.**

Perhaps the greatest threat to Great Lakes habitats, especially in shoreline and wetland areas, is the sprawling expansion of our cities and towns. Incentives for well-planned, "smart" growth initiatives, urban re-development, and protection or expansion of existing urban green space could go a long way toward controlling unchecked growth that contributes to traffic gridlock, long commute times and destruction of natural habitats and farmlands, among other things.

• **Protect family farms.**

Agricultural lands provide useful "corridors" for wildlife and serve as locations where water can seep back into the earth to recharge ground water. The agricultural community contributes to a regional sense of place. Land use plans, taxes, incentives and other creative programs can be designed to help encourage the protection of rural agricultural communities and the enhancement of farmland as wildlife habitat. Organic farming practices should receive special encouragement since they don't rely on toxic chemicals.

• **Encourage restoration and conservation.**

Degraded habitats, such as wetlands ditched or drained for agriculture and other development, can be restored and play a valuable role in improving the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem. Government programs that provide financial incentives, from matching funds to tax breaks, should be expanded with appropriate outreach to landowners in the Great Lakes basin.

Great Lakes Facts:

- The Great Lakes and their connecting channels form the largest fresh water lake system in the world, holding 18% of the globe's surface fresh water.
- Only 1% of the water in the Great Lakes system is replenished each year; the remaining 99% was a one-time gift from the melting glaciers!
- The Great Lakes shoreline extends 10,900 miles or 17,540 kilometers, equal to a distance nearly half-way around the world.
- All of the Great Lakes and their connecting channels are currently under fish consumption advisories for one or more toxic chemicals.
- The Great Lakes produce waves large enough to attract several hundred fresh water surfers each year.
- According to the Lake Michigan Federation, there was a record number of 1,473 beach closings and advisories for Lake Michigan in 2003.

To learn more and find out how you can help protect the Great Lakes, contact:

Attach Label here.





OHIO: HOME TO SOME OF THE NATION'S MOST DANGEROUS POWER PLANTS

Ohio's coal-burning power plants are among the nation's most dangerous for toxic air emissions, emitting thousands of pounds of mercury, arsenic, lead, and other chemicals into the air each year. And

that is bad news for Lake Erie.

The 28 largest coal-burning power plants in Ohio spewed an estimated 83 million pounds of hydrochloric acid, hydrogen fluoride, sulfuric acid and other toxic acid gases into the air in 2002, more than any other state. Acid gases are corrosive and can cause acute respiratory problems, as well as aggravate chronic respiratory ailments such as asthma.

Mercury from power plants has contaminated fish throughout the Lake Erie Basin including every lake, river, and stream in Ohio. Toxic mercury levels in fish often exceed the "safe" limit for women of childbearing age and young children, causing all of the Great Lakes states to issue fish consumption advisories.

"Many Ohioans fish to put food on the table, not just to catch and release. That's why we need strong federal protections right now. But the mercury reductions proposed by the Bush administration's plan are too little, too late," added David Celebrezze of the Ohio Environmental Council.

The EPA recently determined that many of the chemicals released from coal burning power plants pose a serious public health threat when released into the air by other industrial facilities. A controversial mercury rule proposed by the Bush administration would allow Ohio's power plants to continue releasing unlimited amounts of these toxics indefinitely, flying directly in the face of EPA findings.

Water pollution and contaminated fish aren't just bad for your health, they're bad for the economy. Power plant pollution is hurting the \$1.2 billion sport fishing industry in the Ohio portion of Lake Erie. It is estimated that a long-term decline in angling of just 25 percent due to the lake and stream-fouling effects of mercury would cost the state's economy \$308 million per year and jeopardize many of the 10,782 jobs in Ohio that depend on fishing.

"Sport fishing is the backbone of Lake Erie's travel and tourism industry. As a business owner and a tournament fisherman, we need to take care of the mercury problem now, not a generation from now," said Gary Lowry, owner of Maumee Bait and Tackle in Maumee, Ohio.

And mercury isn't the only problem threatening air and water quality in and around Lake Erie. Power plant emissions ranked Ohio among the top 10 states for emissions of five other toxic chemicals that are not controlled:

- Number 4 for arsenic emissions – which can cause lung cancer – at 8,482 pounds
- Number 5 for chromium emissions – which can damage the respiratory tract – at 11,789 pounds
- Number 8 for dioxin emissions – a potent carcinogen, even in small amounts – at 19 grams
- Number 10 for lead emissions – extremely dangerous even in small doses – at 8,214 pounds

"It's clear that mercury is just the tip of the toxic iceberg. Ohio power plants are releasing tons of the most dangerous chemicals ever known, but the Bush administration plan will keep the public completely unprotected from these toxic substances. The public would be far safer if the administration would stop mangling and start enforcing the Clean Air Act," said Nic Nicolet, Field Organizer for the Ohio Public Interest Research Group.

Clean air and water advocates are charging that the Bush administration has bent the law to let power plants off the hook, putting the public at increased risk for serious health risks from exposure to toxics known to cause cancer, developmental defects and breathing disorders.

Under the Clean Air Act, once the EPA determines that an air pollutant is hazardous, it must set strict controls on it, called maximum achievable control technology standards. In 2000, the EPA concluded that power plants are a source of emissions of more than 60 toxic air pollutants, including mercury. The agency officially labeled power plants a "source category" for air toxics and determined that it was "appropriate and necessary" to require maximum achievable reductions for all power plant air toxics, as required by the Clean Air Act.

The Bush administration's mercury rule proposed in 2003, however, de-listed power plants as a "source category" of air toxics. This action relieves power plants of any obligation to control more than 60 hazardous air toxics, including lead and mercury.

"The EPA has gone out of its way to avoid controlling hazardous air toxics," said Molly Flanagan, Great Lakes Director for the Ohio Environmental Council. "It ignored its own stringent findings, scuttled tough recommendations from an expert task force, then cut and pasted key portions of its deceptive mercury rule from utility industry memos. That may be covering all the bases for the electric industry, but it's strike three for the public health."



POSITIVE ACTIONS BEING TAKEN TO PROTECT SIGNIFICANT AREAS.

The New Greenbelt

In the works for many months, in late October 2004 the Ontario government introduced legislation enabling the creation of a Greenbelt Plan for an area totaling 1.8 million acres (720,000 hectares). It covers the area of the existing Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the existing Niagara Escarpment Plan, and one million acres newly protected from urban sprawl. The new lands are in the Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron watersheds, in the so-called “Golden Horseshoe” at the western end of Lake Ontario, north and west of Toronto and Hamilton.

This is a part of Ontario with some of the best farmland in all of Canada, dwindling woodlands and wetlands, and intense urban development pressure. With some exceptions, no development or site alteration will be permitted within key hydrologic features or key natural heritage features within the Natural Heritage System. Included in “key hydrologic features” are streams, natural lakes/shorelines, seepage areas and springs, and wetlands. Included in “key natural heritage features” are significant habitat of endangered, threatened and provincially rare species, fish habitat, wetlands, life science areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs), significant valleylands, and some other important areas.

Further details about the Greenbelt Plan, including maps, are available at www.greenbelt.ontario.ca

Environmental organizations applaud the government’s move in releasing the draft Greenbelt Plan and the draft Greenbelt Act (Bill 135). The bill is expected to be passed by the Legislature before the Christmas break. The Greenbelt Plan may pass by that time as well, at the end of the one-year urban boundary freeze the government placed on Greenbelt lands. Establishment of the Greenbelt Plan has been rather hurried, and while the Plan may not actually be approved until early 2005, it will be retroactive to December 16, 2004.

While generally positive about the draft Greenbelt Plan, environmental organizations are concerned that because it covers only a small part of southern Ontario, it will encourage developers to “leapfrog” over the Greenbelt and continue their sprawling habits elsewhere. Ontario Nature has, for the past year, called for a southern-Ontario-wide “greenway” – environment-first land use planning that protects natural core areas and connecting natural corridors from urban encroachment. If all of southern Ontario were covered with Greenbelt-style planning, then there would be no place for developers to leapfrog to. There is enough land in the Golden Horseshoe already approved

for urban development to accommodate anticipated population growth for 30 years or more, negating the need to sprawl into our precious wetlands, woodlands and farmlands.

For further information on the Greenbelt from environmental non-government groups, please visit the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance at www.Greenbelt.ca and Ontario Nature at www.ontarionature.org

Grassroots Group Activity Profile



The Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club (ECFNC) has been actively promoting nature conservation within the Lake Erie watershed since 1985. Their successful projects include the purchase of part of Stone Road Alvar on Pelee Island and implementation of the Natural Habitat Restoration Program (NHRP) through which they collect, process and distribute native shrub and tree seeds for sale and propagation.

Recently, ECFNC have installed a bald eagle nesting platform on Peche Island in the Detroit River at Windsor. This is a dot of green among industries and residences, but eagles enjoy nesting there. The nesting platform will allow scientists from the bald eagle recovery team to monitor the nest over the long term to determine species health. As eagles are a top predator, monitoring their health will give an indication of watershed health. ECFNC has also worked to improve wetland habitat at the Holiday Beach Conservation Area on Lake Erie near Windsor by getting a road removed. This helped restore the natural water flow and reduce access to the area, in the hopes that prothonotary warblers may return.



COASTAL AREAS AT RISK ON WESTERN LAKE SUPERIOR

Large-scale construction is planned for Douglas County, Wisconsin's eastern-most Lake Superior County, raising concerns for the future health of Western Lake Superior's coastal wetlands and rivers. *GLAHNews* readers may recall the news of the 2002

sale of Clough Island, a previously uninhabited island in the St. Louis River just up river from Lake Superior. Developers have proposed plans for a condominium complex and golf course on the island. Presently there is no access by bridge or services such as city water and sewer service to the Island. In addition to Clough Island, other parcels adjacent to nearby coastal wetlands are under consideration for waterfront development.

While the region's coastal wetlands, river mouths and other near-shore habitats are attractive to developers for their beauty and ready access to water, they are also known for their warm waters and rich supply of food sources. Because of these rare (for Lake Superior) characteristics—offering shelter and food for so many of the Lake's young and adolescent fish species—they are called "the nursery of Western Lake Superior," by biologists. Not surprisingly, their warm, shallow reaches do not end at the Douglas County line, extending from the St. Louis River to the Bad River watershed east of Ashland, supporting a rich and diverse food web featuring zooplankton populations many times higher than that found in Lake Superior's deeper, colder relatively barren depths.

How and when accelerated construction may affect Lake Superior's aquatic habitats remain uncertain. In response, a growing number of local grassroots, regional groups, educators and researchers have expressed concerns about the possible impact of multiple developments in this sensitive and unique area and have begun working together on strategies for improved public information and monitoring.

Michipicoten Bay; still waiting on environmental assessment designation.

Early this spring, concerned citizens from the Great Lakes and beyond rallied in support of the Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay (CCMB) as the Ontario Ministry of Environment proposed to designate a controversial trap-rock mine planned for the site as subject to Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act. In all, more than 7,000 letters, emails and faxes flooded into the Ministry's Environmental Bill of Rights Registry in favor of the assessment. Six months later, there is still no news from the Ministry about the proposed mine's designation.

In a related action, Ontario did designate the township (and mining activities therein) as subject to a different law; the Aggregate Resources Act. This move by the province doesn't measure up to their previously and very publicly stated concerns about the project. In a statement released shortly thereafter, CCMB reiterates their earlier position; "although the Aggregate Resources Act may be a vehicle to regulate the operation (if it is found to be appropriate), it in no way alleviates all of the concerns that gave us cause to request an Environmental Assessment."

More information about Michipicoten Bay is available at: www.ccmb.ca.

New metallic mines for Michigan, Minnesota

After more than a century of Iron mining Lake Superior's Minnesota and Michigan Iron Range communities, new proposals are afoot to mine Copper, Nickel, Zinc, Platinum and Palladium. Near Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota Polymet Mining has proposed to extract 800 million tons of ore from a site near the town's older taconite mines. Impacts to local lakes, streams and Wetlands, though anticipated, have not yet been identified.

Upstream from Lake Superior in the Salmon Trout watershed northwest of Marquette, Michigan, Kennecott Copper has proposed a copper, nickel, zinc mine. Government officials at all levels—from federal to local, including congressman Stupak and governor Granholm—have voiced reservations and outright opposition to the project. Local residents and officials continue to meet with Kennecott in an effort to ensure the area's high quality waters will be protected.

Docks and Dredging; a Minnesota solution

The 2003 settlement lawsuit in Minnesota may pave the way for assessment of cumulative impacts to aquatic habitats in the state. At issue was the proposed construction of a commercial scale 150' long dock with an accompanying five foot deep channel slated for Double Bay – a three foot deep cobble bay – north of Hovland, Minnesota. Arguments, depositions, the case and the decision all point to the reluctance of the Minnesota DNR to assess potential for cumulative impacts as a cause for the issuance of this permit. Publicity from the Double Bay settlement earlier this year combined with the work of Double Bay's supporters has resulted in talks with state officials and revealed an earlier DNR decision, which did assess a cumulative impact on a Northeastern Minnesota inland lake.



WHO WILL SAVE HAMILTON'S RED HILL VALLEY?

There is a valley at the western tip of Lake Ontario that stretches to join sparkling bay with towering cliffs. Once, the fishery in this bay was the largest of all the waters of Lake Ontario. Today, the commercial fishery is long forgotten. Once, the

creek that ribbons its way down from the escarpment had thirteen brothers and sisters, each fuelling our lake with their waters. Today, they are buried, forgotten. Just this one remains.

In 1929, the city said, "Enough. This valley "shall be parkland that is outstanding on this continent."

Barely had their promise been uttered when new voices rang out. "Progress!" the prophets of 1951 cried. The park became a highway-in-waiting, biding its time until the architects of tomorrow could tame it.

The city plotted. It consulted. It studied. And by 1985 it had a plan – "Pave it!" the councilors did not look to Toronto, where a waterfront expressway choked off access to beaches and forced local businesses to close. They did not learn from Moncton or Boston, either.

No, instead, the city lined up its permits and waited. Fourteen years rolled by and the city found itself in court. PCBs, it seems, were leaking from one of its old landfills into the one remaining creek. The city knew about it, but stayed silent. "Guilty," they plead and paid one of the largest environmental fines in Canadian history.

"No more public consultation," said the province, then promised \$110-million to help the project along.

Today, the city is blasting gaping holes in the towering escarpment, though it promised it never would. It is plotting to dig up that old, once leaking landfill and to ship the poisons to someone else's community. It is tearing up trees by their roots, calling those who object, "losers," and putting those who come near into jail.

This city that plead guilty to poor guardianship in the valley now uses lobbyists to capture the ear of Queen's Park – at \$375 an hour. This city that once promised, "parkland that is outstanding on this continent" now sues, or tries to sue, people or government agencies standing in the way of progress.

So, Waterkeeper wrote to the provincial government with our concerns. Surely a criminal record and a well-documented history of environmental insults warrant some independent scrutiny? They should, we wrote, under Ontario law. It was a compelling argument – but it may have fallen on deaf ears.

Laws, it seems, are not enough. Speaking in 1961, Robert Kennedy said, "All the high rhetoric ... all the high-sounding speeches ... are meaningless unless people - you and I - breathe meaning and force into them." His meaning has never been clearer.

The citizens have done their part, bringing administrative challenges, civil actions, holding celebrations and protests, even living in the trees for 105 days. They have been ridiculed, intimidated and, by the media, ignored. All because they want a say in the future of the place where they live.

435 days have passed since Waterkeeper wrote its first letter to the Minister of Environment. We are not asking for favors or for special consideration, just noting that the law, in this valley, is being ignored – and asking that this wrong be righted. The expressway has not yet been built. There is still time. Yet, the province has been silent.

When we wrote, the trees were still standing. The escarpment was whole, the landfill untouched. Today, the valley is raw. And the silence from Queen's Park speaks volumes.

To see the devastation of the Red Hill Valley, please watch our video from August's Literary Fest under the "Multimedia" section, www.citizenlab.org.



Notes of Interest



THANKS!

GLAHNF would like to thank our generous 2004 supporters.

William Wagner
Kendra Axness
Edith Maynard
John Massman
William & Betty Henne
Carol Schneider
Jack Huggins
Bonnie Hay
Donald Geiger
Dane Mutter
Jeffrey Potter
Thomas Jansen
Jennifer Medema
Cynthia Westerman
Mary Jo Cullen
Elizabeth McCloskey
Kate Pilacky
Sandra Bihn

Sierra Club - Midwest Office
Southeast Environmental Task Force
Dunkirk High School Earth Science Club
Cedar Creek Wildlife Project

Joseph Duggan, Pheasants Forever National Office
Nancy Nelson, Skyline Planning and Preservation Alliance
Lisa Kutschbach Brohl, Lake Erie Islands Chapter,
Black Swamp Conservancy

WEBSITE RESOURCES:

Pet, Water Garden Industries, Resource Agencies Unite to Create a New 'Habitattitude™' on Aquatic Invasive Species.

A new website, www.habitattitude.net, will help consumers to learn more about responsible behaviors and how to prevent the spread of potential aquatic nuisance species. The site includes information on federal and state laws and statutes that regulate aquatic organisms, recommended alternatives to releasing plants and animals, instructions on how individuals and clubs can get involved and detailed information on some of the more problematic aquarium and water garden species that have created problems with our native aquatic systems.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



*Institute for Conservation Leadership
Upcoming Workshops,
December 3, 2004,
Your Best Board in Toronto, ON*

February 3-6, 2005,
Shared Leadership I in Norcross, GA

Feb. 27 - March 4, 2005,
*Executive Director Leadership Program in
Marine on St. Croix, MN*

March 10-13, 2005, *Shared Leadership II in Asilomar, CA*

October 2005 (TBA), *Leadership Learning Exchange*

For complete descriptions, please visit
www.icl.org/programs-workshops

RESOURCES

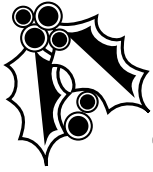
"Managing in Hard Times" - Free Copies Available

Thanks to generous support from the Moriah Fund, the Gund Foundation, and the McKnight Foundation ICL published "Managing in Hard Times" earlier this year. This 56-page publication is a joint effort of ICL and the Environmental Support Center and offers resources and best practices for planning, assessing, and managing financially during these trying economic times.
Email icl@icl.org to receive your free copy.

Book and CD Deliver Superior Science

Superior Science, Stories of Lake Superior Research and a related CD offer the public a chance to experience Lake Superior through the eyes of researchers. Author Sharon Moen, of the University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program, based this 72-page soft cover book on presentations given by some of Lake Superior's finest scientists through the *Superior Science for You!* Limited supplies are available for \$2 each (ISBN 0-9638011-6-3). The compact disk, *Superior Science for You!*, features PowerPoint slides and video files of the series presentations (it does not contain the book text) and is available for \$1.50. Both products can be ordered from Minnesota Sea Grant: (218) 726-6191, seagr@d.umn.edu, www.seagrant.umn.edu.

GIVE THE PERFECT GIFT!



***Looking for the perfect gift for
everyone on your list this holiday season?***



Give the gift that will keep on giving for generations to come –
the protection of the rivers, lakes and wetlands in the Great Lakes Basin.

By making a gift donation to GLAHNF in someone's name, you assist local grassroots groups in engaging the public on local water issues. Your gift of healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands will outlast the eggnog and fruitcake this holiday season and will be a gift everyone can enjoy year-round.

To make a donation, please provide the name and address of your gift recipient and indicate "gift" after his/her name on the enclosed envelope. You may also make a gift donation by calling 231.347.1181 ext. 107. Your gift will be announced to your recipient with a beautiful card depicting an image of the water his/her gift will protect.



**Thank you and happy holidays
from all of us at GLAHNF!**

Printed on Recycled Paper



**Great Lakes
Aquatic Habitat
Network & Fund**
*Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat News
c/o Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
426 Bay Street
Petoskey, MI 49770*

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Petoskey
PERMIT NO. 108