



# G.L.A.H. News

Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat

GREAT LAKES: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

SUMMER 2007 VOLUME 15 ISSUE 2

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*John Richter, President Friends of the Jordan River shares an update on the proposed injection well at a meeting and his concerns about the potential risks, social injustice, and need for a longterm solution to address the contamination. Photos by Lucien Joubert and Jack Moran, courtesy Friends of the Jordan River Watershed.*

## CONTAMINATED LEACHATE DISPOSAL

**A** proposal to dispose of contaminated leachate from the exclusive Bay Harbor Resort in an underground injection well 30 miles away is causing concern among area residents. The proposal calls for locating the injection well in the small rural community of Alba, MI. Friends of the Jordan River Watershed and Alba citizens are raising many questions and demanding answers.

There was overwhelming concern expressed at the June 13, 2007 Alba public hearing, demonstrating the need to take additional time to ensure the proper information has been gathered, studies have been done, and that the people in the surrounding area are given time to fully understand the proposal and have their concerns addressed.

CMS Energy, the landowner responsible for the cleanup at the Bay Harbor Resort, has been working on the proposal with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality since October 2006. But residents only learned about the proposal this April. The Friends of the Jordan River Watershed requested a 30-day extension for public input from both agencies. At the time of printing, the extension for comments was granted by the EPA with a new deadline of July 27.

Alba is a valuable groundwater recharge area for many area trout streams, and groundwater is a source of drinking water. The area’s geology, hundreds of shallow gas wells, and service as a groundwater source for many trout streams do not sound like ideal qualities for the location of an injection well to dispose of contaminated water.

*continued on page 13*

## SAVE A TREE

### SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:



Please e-mail Sandy at [sand@glhabitat.org](mailto:sand@glhabitat.org) if you have any changes to your contact information. If you wish to receive GLAHNF correspondence electronically, please include your email address and be sure to note “electronic subscription” in the subject of your e-mail.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

### TAKING A BREATH



JILL RYAN

Our lives are so packed with activities and "must dos" these days I have trouble finding time to step back, take a deep breath and consider the big picture. Sometimes

I feel like a tennis ball bouncing from task to task and activity to activity. This is of course true not only of our personal time but our work and activist time. It is not that we intend to take on more than we can handle, we simply take things on because we want to see change or action in things important to us.

Because I know the stress and seemingly endless list of things that "must be done" when running a grassroots advocacy campaign, I am guessing that you might feel this same stress to press on and get things done. I hope that this summer you will remember that break in the action almost always helps the situation and makes us more effective and efficient.

Whether we are spending time getting the word out about a public meeting, collecting information and research, articulating the fine points of an issue or just fighting with a particularly difficult computer issue we can always benefit from stepping back, looking at the problem from different angles and finding new solutions. I hope you can step back this summer both from the immediate tasks at hand and from the overall "must dos" of life in order to create new perspective and more fully enjoy this great place in which we live.

*Our lives are not determined by what happens to us but by how we react to what happens, not by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life.*

*A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events, and outcomes. It is a catalyst, a spark that creates extraordinary results.*

– Anon

*Jill M. Ryan*



## GLAHNF Awards!

### ANNOUNCING GLAHNF SPRING AWARDS!

We are excited to announce the projects most recently funded by the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund. Of 35 worthy applications received for the Spring 2007 grant cycle, 11 projects were funded, totalling \$34,167.

In the **Lake Erie Basin**, EarthWatch Ohio will use its newspaper to promote awareness of and involvement in Great Lakes issues. Articles will highlight the work that Ohio-based environmental groups are doing to protect the Great Lakes and encourage readers to take an active role. The newspaper will be free at libraries, coffee shops, health food stores, retail shops, colleges & universities, medical & office buildings, etc.

The East Michigan Environmental Action Council will organize meetings with Detroit community social, environmental, and environmental justice organizations to discuss and promote how the community can be an advocate for urban water issues. Workshops will make clear the connections between the struggle for access to water, issues of privatization, and larger state and global water protection issues.

The Niagara River Area Property Owners Group is working to prevent development of a 230-acre significant wetland. The Town of Fort Erie voted to proceed with the development of a golf course on the site. This project provides support for the Group's work to prepare for a final, critical Ontario Municipal Board hearing and judgment.

On **Lake Huron**, The Indian Mission Conservation Club is pursuing Natural Areas designation for two state parks on northeast Michigan's Lake Huron shoreline, Negwegon and Thompson's Harbor, both noted for their undeveloped shorelines and wide variety of significant and diverse natural communities. The



Visitors and residents enjoy the beach at Jean Klock Park in Benton Harbor, MI. The City is trying to move forward with plans to develop the park as a private golf course. Photo courtesy of Friends of Jean Klock Park.

shorelines of both parks are threatened. Natural Areas designations for the parks will help ensure protection of their natural features and prohibit intensive development.

On **Lake Michigan**, the Friends of Jean Klock Park in Benton Harbor, MI are defending the park against development of a private golf course. The Friends maintain that the City of Benton Harbor's lease to the developer to build part of the golf course is illegal based on a 2004 Consent Judgment intended to preserve Jean Klock Park.

The Watershed Watchers are continuing their legal efforts and a media campaign to protect over 100 acres of wetlands from expansion of the West Bend, WI municipal airport. This project will watchdog the Environmental Impact Study proceedings and support a media campaign to highlight the inadequate need for expansion and lack of alternative sites' research, and to remind decision-makers of the expectations for an open, fair, and thorough Environmental Impact Study.

In the **Lake Ontario Basin**, the Adirondack Communities Advisory League (the League) of Boonville, New York is continuing a Clean Water Act citizen's suit against the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority (OHSWA) filed in June 2006. The suit aims to hold OHSWA accountable



## GLAHNF Awards continued

for allowing excessive sediment to enter Moose Creek during landfill construction, and to ensure that the stream will be protected now and in the future. This project will provide for continued legal services for the League during the discovery period of the lawsuit and help keep the public informed through the League's publications.

Quinte Watershed Cleanup (Bay of Quinte, Belleville, Ontario) is conducting a campaign to influence property owners and educate the general public on the importance of naturalized shorelines and the use of native plants when replanting shorelines. The campaign will include advocacy to encourage local governments to initiate policy change, a small public contest to encourage planting and acknowledge the property owner that has made the greatest change in one season, and incentives for local nurseries to ensure native plant materials are available for customers.

On *Lake Superior*, the Anishinabek of the Gitchi Gami will engage Fort William First Nation citizens in developing a draft vision for the long-term health of the watershed. Located on the shore of Lake Superior adjacent to the city of Thunder Bay, Ontario, the community will create a vision for the protection of its aquatic communities and sustainable use of its water resources. Once finalized, the

watershed vision will be used as a tool to foster ecosystem-based decision-making.

A quarry is proposed on the shore of Lake Superior at Michipicoten Bay. Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay appealed the municipal re-zoning proposal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). To prepare for the OMB hearing, this project involves media coverage and advocacy for the issues, including technical expertise to assess environmental impacts and help with fundraising and media coverage.

Duluth Open Space and Urban Wilderness is working to counter a disturbing trend toward selling public lands. This project seeks to prevent the loss of public lands and the resulting degradation of waterways by designing and executing a bottom-up strategy for the protection of public lands and watercourses. The strategic plan will elevate public lands protection through economic, political, public and legal approaches. Duluth Open Space and Urban Wilderness will publicize and promote the final plan.

As always, we are encouraged and inspired by those who work so hard to make these and many more, similar projects flourish throughout the Great Lakes. We are honored to support your efforts!



*Fun in the sun on Lake Superior's Michipicoten Bay, Ontario, where Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay is struggling to prevent location of a quarry. Photo courtesy of Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay.*

## GLAHNEWS:

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### Staff:

Jill Ryan, *Executive Director*  
jill@glhabitat.org

Ann Baughman, *Outreach Specialist*  
ann@glhabitat.org

P.O. Box 2479  
Petoskey, MI 49770  
(231) 348-8200

Sandy Wilmore, *Grant Program and Publications Manager*  
sand@glhabitat.org  
8733 Pine Avenue  
Gary, IN 46403  
(219) 939-1655

Cheryl Mendoza, *Regional Policy and Network Advisor*  
cheryl@glhabitat.org  
700 Fulton St., Suite A  
Grand Haven, MI 49417  
(231) 571-5001

### Board of Directors:

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Wendy Cooper, *Georgian Bay Land Trust*

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# Basin-wide News

## GREAT LAKES WATER CONSERVATION ON THE MOVE!

By Cheryl Mendoza, GLAHNF Regional Policy and Network Advisor



The development of laws solidifying the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and Agreement is on the rise, thanks in part to all of you who continue to put pressure on decision-makers to make sure we properly care for our Great Lakes. The challenge now is to make sure the Compact and Agreement result in the strongest possible protections for the

Great Lakes. The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and companion Agreement are the product of over four years of negotiations between the eight Great Lakes Governors and Premiers of Ontario and Quebec.

With input of a 39-member advisory panel and thousands of citizens, the Compact and Agreement provide guidelines for sound water management, preventing harm to our magnificent water resources and stopping far off diversions. For the Compact to become legally binding, each of the eight Great Lakes state legislatures must pass the Compact and gain approval from Congress. On the Canadian side, the provinces have agreed to implement similar laws to ensure the entire Great Lakes basin is protected. Here is what's happening in each of the states and provinces, along with contact information for getting involved.

**New York** - The Senate will be coming back in mid-July and is expected to take up the Compact. To learn how to get involved, contact Katherine Nadeau of Environmental Advocates of New York (518) 462-5526 or knadeau@eany.org

**Pennsylvania** - A stakeholder group is developing language to implement the Compact, which could be introduced as early as August. To learn how to get involved, contact Mark Gorman of Pennsylvania Environmental Council at (814) 332-2946 or mgorman@pecpa.org.

**Ohio** - The Compact is expected to be introduced in the House this fall, for the second time. To learn how to get involved, contact Kristy Meyer at the Ohio Environmental Council, (614) 487-7506 or kmeyer@theOEC.org.

**Indiana** - There will be public meetings in lakeshore areas this August and September. The Compact and implementing legislation is expected to be introduced in January of 2008. To learn how to get involved, contact Molly Flannagan at National Wildlife Federation at (734) 769-3351 or Flanaganm@nwf.org

**Illinois** - The Compact has passed out of the legislature (see story on page 5) and is awaiting the Governor's signature. To learn how to get involved, contact Joel Brammeier of the Alliance for the Great Lakes at (312) 939-0838 or jbrammeier@greatlakes.org.

**Wisconsin** - The Compact is expected to be introduced in September or October. To learn how to get involved, contact Melissa Malott at Clean Wisconsin, (608) 251-7020 or mmalott@cleanwisconsin.org.

**Minnesota** - The Compact was passed in February of 2007. To learn how to get involved, contact Julie O'Leary at Minnesota Environmental Partnership at 218-727-0800 or julieoleary@mepartnership.org.

**Michigan** - The Compact has been introduced in the House and Senate. To learn how to get involved, contact Grenetta Thomassey at Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council at grenetta@watershedcouncil.org or 231-347-1181.

**Ontario** - Legislation was passed in June. To learn how to get involved, contact Sarah Miller at the Canadian Environmental Law Association, (416) 960-2284 or millers@lao.on.ca.

**Quebec** - A new law to implement the Agreement is under development and expected to be completed in one year. To learn how to get involved, contact Marc Hudon at Nature Quebec at (418) 543-9681 or hudo@videotron.ca.

## How did you like our Stormwater Publication?

By now you should have received our 2007 success stories publication, *Let it Rain: from Runoff to Renewal*. (If you have not received these materials and would like to, contact Sandy at sand@glhabitat.org or 219.939.1655.) Please help us maintain and improve our publication services by completing an ever-so brief survey regarding these materials. It will help us deliver resources that are useful to you! Visit <http://www.glhabitat.org/SuccessStories/success.htm> and click on the survey link to fill in the survey in less than five minutes.

*Thank You!*

# Basin-wide News



## FISHING INTERESTS URGE LEGISLATION AND SHIPPING MORATORIUM TO COMBAT INVASIVE SPECIES

By Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Last month during the 52nd annual meeting of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, the Canadian and U.S. committees of advisors presented the commission with a rare binational resolution urging the passage of aquatic invasive species legislation and calling for an immediate moratorium on ocean-vessel access to the Great Lakes until adequate ballast water regulations are implemented. The committee-representing recreational and commercial fishing, aboriginal communities, the public-at-large, and academia-expressed deep concern over the continued influx of aquatic invasive species into the Great Lakes and disappointment over the Canadian and U.S. Governments' inaction to remedy this serious problem.

"The Great Lakes have now been invaded by at least 183 non-native species, many of which cause major harm to the interests of the people I represent," said Canadian committee chair Dr. Terry Quinney of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. "The problem is, once a species becomes established, control, let alone eradication, is virtually impossible. These invaders-like zebra mussels and round gobies-reproduce, spread, and cause irreversible damage and severe economic loss."

"Despite all we know about the harm from invasive species, governmental action to stop these invasions has been woefully inadequate," said U.S. committee vice-chair Mike Ryan of the Northwest Indiana Steelheaders. "Each new invader has the potential to destroy the fishery that is so valuable to the people of the United States and Canada. By neglecting to take appropriate action, the governments are essentially placing a "welcome mat" at the doorstep of the Great Lakes inviting new invaders, and it is stakeholders like us and the next generation that are paying the price."

"The resolution reflects widespread agreement across two countries that the situation needs to change, and it needs to change now. Our resolution simply says that ballast water-the primary way in which these invaders enter the Great Lakes-must be managed, and until it is, ocean vessels are not welcome in our waters," said



*Ships carrying ballast water on the Great Lakes.*

Dr. Quinney. "Since transportation alternatives exist, it is our responsibility to use them to protect our valuable fishery."

"The resolution presented to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and its Commissioners reflects binational agreement, and advisors encourage the commission to convey our will to government in the strongest possible terms," said U.S. committee chair Ed Sander of Rochester New York.

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*For more information contact:*

*Dr. Terry Quinney, Chair, Canadian Committee of Advisors:  
705-748-6324*

*Mr. Ed Sander, Chair, U.S. Commission Committee of Advisors  
585-544-1830*

*Mr. Michael Ryan, Vice-Chair, U.S. Commission Committee  
of Advisors 219-926-7938*

## Lake Erie Basin Update - Ontario Side



### FRIENDS OF FORT ERIE'S CREEKS TACKLE INVASIVE PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

Yvonne Hopkins, Project Coordinator

Several native species of vegetation in the Fort Erie, Ontario area, including the swamp rose mallow, are being forced into extinction by the spread of purple loosestrife. By crowding out the native vegetation, loosestrife diminishes the area's ecological value. No waterfowl will nest in the plant, no fish will survive in the clogged waterways, and no animal will graze on the loosestrife or burrow between its dense web of roots.

The Friends of Fort Erie's Creeks decided to introduce *Galerucella* beetles to eat the loosestrife foliage and are seeing some success. They have been battling loosestrife manually for over 10 years and biologically for three. Since release of *Galerucella* beetles in 2004,

loosestrife on their study area has been reduced from 80% to 60% coverage. Read more about the Friends' efforts on their website: <http://www.friendsofforteriescreeks.com/>.

You can help control purple loosestrife by cutting the plants back (particularly the flowering spikes, since each plant produces up to 2.7 million seeds/yr.), or digging or hand pulling. Digging and hand pulling are best done when the plants are young and roots can be most readily removed, since any part of the root left in the ground can re-sprout. Be sure to contain the plants completely for disposal, since the seeds may not be destroyed!

# Lake Superior Basin Update



## CITY PARK HOUSES STORMWATER SOLUTION

By Carol Martin, Lake Superior Conservancy and Watershed Council



“Pretty much everything we put on our lawns ends up in the St. Mary's River sooner or later,” says Don Elliot, City of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario's Director of Engineering Services. Dog poop, solid waste, fertilizers, and pesticides from the streets, lawns, and farmers' fields in the St. Mary's River and Lake Superior watersheds wash into the river and lake with stormwater runoff, says Elliot. But the city's sanitary

sewer system hasn't had an overflow since sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) tanks were commissioned, installed in Bellevue Park in 2004.

Overflows have happened in the past during significant hydrological events like heavy rainfall or swift snowmelts, he said. “If you combine stormwater runoff from cross connections with sanitary sewage you can increase your volume by as much as ten times.”

Elliot explained that, since 1968, it's been illegal to cross connect weeping tiles that drain fields below ground or roof leaders or gutters to sanitary sewer systems in homes in the city, but homes built before then can still have this sort of connection. When there is a storm, water from the roof and yard of that house drains directly into the sanitary sewer system, significantly increasing the volume of water in the system and the subsequent risk of overflow at one or more of the city's treatment plants.

“If hydrological capacity is reached at any of our treatment plants then we take remedial steps such as eliminating a step or two in the treatment process to speed up the flow, but sometimes overflows cannot be avoided,” said Elliot.

The city has installed meters to warn of impending overflows and in the event of one will communicate a warning to people downstream of the threatened plant. Elliot says statistically an overflow event can be expected about every five years and the Sault would likely overflow in three locations at the same time if the hydrological event were torrential enough to cause overflow.

Downpours in the Sault have been torrential enough for the SSO tanks in Bellevue Park to be used on at least three occasions since they were commissioned, said Elliot. When the volumes at the East End Sewage Treatment Plant got dangerously high, sewage water was diverted to the 12,000 cubic meter tanks to be held for processing. The tanks haven't yet reached their 4 million gallon capacity, but Elliot says it is likely to happen during a torrential downpour in the spring or fall in the next few years.

Elliot says the City does not treat stormwater runoff and that it is typically not treated anywhere by much more than settling time in catch basins. “After a couple of weeks of hot dry weather, if there is a big enough downpour you can see the solid litter, dog poop and brown dirt flushing straight out into the river.”

While larger bits of solid waste typically settle in catch basins in the city, sometimes a deluge will even break those loose and wash them out to the river, said Elliot. He said that people really need to think about where things go when they wash their cars, change their oil, or flush their radiators in their driveways. “Even in very minute quantities, engine coolant is highly toxic.”

Elliot said the most dangerous wastes are the ones that can't be seen. “It's very diluted but there are sufficient amounts of bacteria and phosphates as well as chemicals used in fertilizers and herbicides to be concerned about.”



Sanitary sewer overflow meter and location of the overflow tank at Bellevue Park, Sault Ste. Marie. Photos by Carol Martin.

The stormwater management issues facing Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario are similar for hundreds of communities throughout the Great Lakes Basin: a lack of infrastructure, little to no collection or treatment, and minimal regulations that address stormwater and guide development. Stormwater is truly one of the largest sources of pollution to the Great Lakes. It also provides an opportunity for citizens, organizations, and decision-makers to work together to reduce the pollutants and the volumes of stormwater. The Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund recently produced excellent publications that provide tips on how to get your community engaged in improving its stormwater management. We hope these tools will give you tips about what you can do personally and in your community to address stormwater.

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For more information, contact Carol Martin at [shria@shaw.ca](mailto:shria@shaw.ca).  
For resources on addressing the negative impacts of stormwater, as well as harnessing its many benefits, check out GLAHNF's latest success stories publication, Let it Rain: From Runoff to Renewal online at <http://glhabitat.org/SuccessStories/success.htm>

# Lake Michigan Basin Update



## ILLINOIS JOINS MINNESOTA IN PROTECTING GREAT LAKES WATER

By Jamie Cross, Alliance for the Great Lakes



In a monumental step forward for the basin, Illinois legislators unanimously approved the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact in May. The new Illinois law comes after Minnesota became the first state in the region to pass the Great Lakes Compact into state law earlier this year.



*Lake Michigan breakers along Chicago's shoreline.  
Photo courtesy of Alliance for the Great Lakes.*

The Compact provides uniform and binding water use standards for the region. Among its key protections are water conservation measures to minimize damage to Great Lakes ecosystems, public participation, enforcement, and state flexibility to go beyond the minimum protections in the Compact.

The Compact also governs new or increased water withdrawals, and clamps down on wasteful water use. Furthermore, new or increased water "diversions" to places outside the Great Lakes watershed will be banned, with some exceptions. "This is a huge step for protecting the waters we all revere," said Joel Brammeier, associate director for policy at the Alliance for the Great Lakes. "In order to keep decision making here, states need to pass laws at home – now – that guarantee our fair control of Great Lakes waters."

Illinois' move comes at a critical time when other states, such as Wisconsin, are considering permitting new water diversions. The community of New Berlin recently submitted a revised application for Lake Michigan water to Wisconsin DNR after their first application was scrutinized and deemed deficient by other states and members of the public.

"Like Minnesota and Illinois, Great Lakes states should be focused on passing the Compact, not permitting new diversions," said Brammeier. "Adding new permits is starting a game without everyone knowing the rules."

Many Illinois groups, including the Illinois Environmental Council, Environment Illinois, Openlands Project, and Prairie Rivers Network played a crucial role in gaining support for the Compact. Faith-based organizations like Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church in Chicago organized letter-writing campaigns in support of this regionally critical legislation.

While Illinois is exempt from the sections of the Compact governing diversions, its use of Lake Michigan water will continue to be governed - and controlled - by a Supreme Court consent decree. Now it is up to the remaining six states to support a sustainable future for Great Lakes waters by passing the Compact into law.

Once passed by all eight Great Lakes states, the Compact moves to the U.S. Congress for final ratification. The Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec are considering a complementary agreement that mirrors the Compact - an agreement that Ontario's legislature recently endorsed.

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*For more information contact Joel Brammeier,  
associate director of Policy at the Alliance for the Great Lakes,  
at [jbrammeier@greatlakes.org](mailto:jbrammeier@greatlakes.org) or 312-939-0838 ext. 224.*



# Lake Huron Basin Update



## A CALL TO ACTION ON WATER LEVELS

By Mary Lee, President, Georgian Bay Association

*This article reprinted with permission from GBA UPDATE, Vol. 17 No. 2*

**B**ack in 2005, we reported on a six-month study conducted by W.F. Baird & Associates Coastal Engineers for the Georgian Bay Association (GBA) Foundation and the growing drain hole in the St. Clair River. Recent data show that the hole has become even bigger. In fact, three times more water than previously thought is escaping every day. If we continue to lose our water at this rate, we're going to lose more wetlands. Wetlands are the spawning and nursery habitat for Georgian Bay's aquatic life. The International Joint Commission has told us that when the St. Lawrence Seaway was built, environmental impacts were not considered. Now they must be, and that is why the research funded by the Foundation and undertaken by McMaster University wetlands biologists is so important.

### What you can do to help

We need your help because sustained low water levels will impact wetlands and water quality. Many of our communities in enclosed bays, where circulation is limited, are at increased risk for algal blooms if the water keeps going down. And climate change is expected to make the situation much worse.

Stay informed, get involved, and make your voice heard. Check our website for details on public meetings and please write to the International Joint Commission ([www.ijc.org](http://www.ijc.org)) and your government representatives asking that they act quickly.



*Georgian Bay kayakers take a break and enjoy the scenery. Falling water levels threaten Georgian Bay coastal wetlands. Photo courtesy of Aziza Healing Adventures.*

We need mitigation soon. Examination of the St. Clair River erosion and potential mitigation measure was added to the Upper Lakes Study in May of 2005. At the time, it was to be conducted at the start of the Study, with possible mitigation solutions as early as 2009. Georgian Bay can't wait for the entire Upper Great Lakes Study to be completed, but unfortunately this is now a distinct possibility.

Mitigation measures have been contemplated before. For example, there is an outstanding order for mitigation in the St. Clair River on which no action has been taken. On three subsequent occasions, mitigation structures have been designed but not constructed. In fact, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has admitted that at one point foundations were actually built but that the work was never completed.

GBA has worked long and hard to get both Canada and U.S. politicians onside and the funding approved for the St. Clair study. We have members of our water levels committee on both the Canadian and U.S. Public Interest Advisory Committees and the Science Technical Advisory Committees. But the problem is now urgent.

Three-dimensional modeling could determine where rocks should be placed in the river to prevent further erosion. Previous IJC and USACE plans have called for permanent structures but these need further research as the riverbed has changed significantly.

The GBA Foundation funded the Baird work that documented the increased conveyance capacity of the St. Clair River (the outflow of Lake Huron). This huge diversion of water was previously unknown to any government agency. Now it is three times bigger. GBA has to ensure that our governments find the appropriate solutions.

Because this is such a huge undertaking for our organization, we are once again reaching out to other groups on both sides of the Great Lakes including the shipping industry. We're planning a bi-national press release and will be speaking about water levels at many venues over the summer. You will be hearing more. If anyone has any other suggestions please contact Mary Muter at [mmuter@sympatico.ca](mailto:mmuter@sympatico.ca).

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For more information, contact GBA at [gba@georgianbay.ca](mailto:gba@georgianbay.ca) or visit <http://www.georgianbay.ca>



# Lake Huron Basin Update - Ontario Side



## WORKING TOWARD A PESTICIDE FREE LAKE

By Ray Letheren, Friends of Bayfield River, Bayfield, Ontario



The frog had five legs. Why? Humans use chemical pesticides to enhance crop and lawn development and appearances. While not the sole cause, these chemicals may act as a growth hormone, a protein that is suspected of causing abnormal development. Can this frog issue be translated to human development? No person is prepared to voluntarily expose oneself to tests involving pesticides, so we

are required to accept that what is happening to this bell-weather amphibian could be happening to humans.

Studies throughout Europe, Canada and the USA have demonstrated a relationship between cancer and other abnormal conditions and pesticide use. A US study shows women golfers have a significantly higher rate of breast cancer than the general population. A Saskatchewan study shows that farmers have a higher rate of testicular cancer. A recent Swedish study drew a relationship between Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and pesticides. Canadian and Russian studies find that children have immune system alterations and a higher risk of infectious disease. An Ohio based producer of a commonly used pesticide warns in its product fact sheet (required by US law), "overexposure may affect the central nervous system".

Some of the commonly used pesticides are 2,4-D, Mecoprop, and Dicamba. These are classified as phenoxy herbicides that impact the living creature by blocking the transmission of nerve impulses and inhibiting mineral conductivity across the nerve cells. It is estimated that, in addition, there are up to 250 inert ingredients that are not identified.

US and Canadian federal laws empower municipalities to "protect the health and safety" of citizens. From coast to coast in Canada, towns and cities have followed the lead of the small Quebec community of Hudson by enacting legislation to restrict the use of non-essential (cosmetic) pesticides. Their right to enact a by-law was upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada. More than 125 communities now have by-laws in place, protecting 47% of the Canadian population.

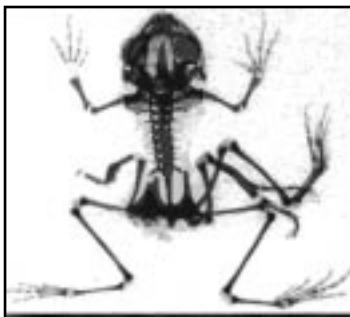


Photo courtesy of Ray Letheren.

Still, it remains a struggle for others to move municipal councils to adopt legislation. There are two recurrent issues cited: 1) the pesticide use in small towns is insignificant compared to agricultural use and 2) the fear that once urban areas have bylaws the agricultural industry will be targeted.

Community groups will continue to press their respective Councils to engage in

discussion on the pesticide issue while joining forces with Pesticide Free Ontario to seek provincial legislation to restrict the use of cosmetic pesticides. Perhaps with the environment regarded as the number one issue facing Canadians, the time is right. Visit [www.pesticidefree.ca](http://www.pesticidefree.ca) for resources and updates.

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Sources referenced in this article include the Canadian and American Cancer Societies, David Suzuki Foundation (2007), Rachael's Environmental Health (2004), Ontario College of Family Physicians review of over 600 publications on the hazards of pesticides (2004), The Responsibility of Municipalities: a legal opinion (Melissa McDonald, LLB), and the "Making the Right Choices" report by the Canadian House of Commons joint committee on Sustainable Development (2000).

For more information contact: Geoff Peach, Coastal Resources Manager, The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation, at (519) 523-4478 or [geoff.peach@lakehuron.on.ca](mailto:geoff.peach@lakehuron.on.ca) [www.lakehuron.on.ca](http://www.lakehuron.on.ca)

## GRASSROOTS ACTION

### LAWN CARE THAT DOESN'T COST THE EARTH

*Lawn Care That Doesn't Cost The Earth* is a series of five articles produced by Pesticide Free Ontario with funding from the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network & Fund. These are fun articles for building awareness and personal action and promoting the elimination of cosmetic pesticides. Below is an excerpt from Article 3, written by Susan Koswan.

Article 3: *To amend or not to amend: the zen of composting and using what you have*

*If our consumer society had its way, we'd be buying annuals every year, hauling in yards and yards of topsoil, fertilizing four times a year and spraying pesticides to kill every bug and weed that had the misfortune to find its way into our yard. The golf course lawn, the flower border, the strategically placed one point two trees ...*

*But what price are we paying for this photo-op? The impact of our lawn and gardening choices don't stop at the edge of our properties and we must consciously decide whether to be beneficial, benign, or harmful to our world.*

*I admit I wrote "zen and composting" with my tongue firmly in my cheek, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that the path to gardening (and environmental) enlightenment leads directly from that pile of decomposing garden and kitchen scraps in your yard.*

For complete articles visit <http://www.pesticidereform.ca/glhabitat.htm>.

# Lake Erie Basin Update - U.S. Side



## A FULLY FUNDED FARM BILL: THE HEALTH OF OUR LAKES DEPENDS ON IT

By Trent A. Dougherty, Ohio Environmental Council



Farmers are stewards of the land. Yet, because of rising production costs and the influx of large-scale agriculture, it can be difficult for farmers to put habitat and water quality first. The Conservation section of the 2007 U.S. Farm Bill contains a host of programs and incentive for farmers of all sizes to conserve land and waters, especially those of the Great Lakes. If the waters of the Great Lakes are to be

restored, the federal government must make these Farm Bill Conservation Programs a top priority. More farmers apply for the conservation programs than funding allows each year, yet as energy concerns dominate the landscape there is fear that even fewer funds will be available. The need for increased conservation of water and habitat and the desire of farmers to be involved in conservation mandate full funding.

While there are over half a dozen important conservation programs within the Farm Bill, much of the money allocated in the Great Lakes Basin goes to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Results of the CRP program include:

- reduced soil erosion,
- reduced sedimentation in streams and lakes,
- improved water quality and wildlife habitat, and
- enhanced forest and wetland resources.

The Program encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover, filterstrips, or riparian buffers.

Of particular importance for Lake Erie is how CRP lands filter the nutrient phosphorous from farm field runoff that would otherwise enter the Lake. Phosphorus is added to farmland as an important nutrient for crop growth. However, there can be too much of a good thing, especially when uncontrolled runoff and soil loss finds its ways into the waters of the Great Lakes Basin.



*Farm Bill conservation programs keep runoff episodes such as shown above from entering waters of the state.  
Photo courtesy of OEC.*

Dissolved phosphorous levels in Lake Erie are rising at devastating levels, leading to oxygen depletion, algae growth, and the return of the dead zone.

Acres under the CRP program must be increased under the new Farm Bill. But with the reemergence of the desire for energy independence and the President's desire to create more ethanol plants, there is risk that land currently set aside for wildlife habitat and water quality conservation may be put back into production.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has temporarily halted new enrollments in the program, and though it will probably not release CRP land this year, the pressure to do so will only increase. Energy considerations must be additional to, and not replacement for, the existing goals of the Conservation Title programs. We can develop many sources of clean energy, but we have precious few sources of clean water and wildlife habitats.

It is important that our lawmakers hear from those of us who wish to seek greater protection for our Great Lakes. A recent Healing Our Waters - Great Lakes Coalition (HOW-GLC) report, "Cultivating Restoration: How Farm Bill Conservation Programs Help Heal Our Great Lakes," sets out detailed recommendations for the Farm Bill that promote agricultural land conservation and aid the cause of Great Lakes restoration. The HOW-GLC report can be found at [http://restorethelakes.org/FINAL\\_HOW%20Report.Cultivating%20Restoration.pdf](http://restorethelakes.org/FINAL_HOW%20Report.Cultivating%20Restoration.pdf).

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*For more information contact OEC Staff  
Attorney Trent A. Dougherty at [trent@theoec.org](mailto:trent@theoec.org).*

### U.S. AGRICULTURE AROUND THE GREAT LAKES

- The Lake Erie Basin has the largest percentage of land in agriculture in the Great Lakes states. Lake Erie waters help to moderate coastal temperatures, making the growing season there last up to three weeks longer than farther inland, benefiting fruit farms, orchards, nurseries, and vineyards along the shoreline.
- Farms on the U.S. side of Lake Ontario's Basin yielded \$1.1 billion dollars in apples, onions, cabbage, and meat and dairy products in 1997.
- Six of the top 10 agricultural counties in Michigan are in the Lake Michigan Basin, with tart cherries, grapes, and Christmas trees being the top harvests.
- Huron County, in Michigan's thumb region, produces more dry beans than any other county in the nation.

Michigan Sea Grant, 2000. Great Lakes Facts: Lake Michigan Basin, Lake Huron Basin, Lake Erie Basin, Lake Ontario Basin (MICHU SG 00 403-406)

# Lake Ontario Basin Update



## GEARING UP TO APPEAL THE LAFARGE ALTERNATIVE FUELS PROJECT

By Krystyn Tully, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper



In March, Clean Air Bath, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper, Loyalist Environmental Coalition, and The Tragically Hip rock band won the opportunity to appeal the Ministry of the Environment's approvals for the Lafarge Alternative Fuels Project.

A few years ago, Lafarge began exploring the possibility of burning tires, plastics, bone meal and other waste materials in its cement kiln in Bath, Ontario. From the very beginning, environmentalists and residents raised concerns about the impacts the "alternative fuels" project might have on local air and water quality. Tire-burning, in particular, attracted people's attention because it has led to increases in emissions of dioxins, PAHs, and metals in other communities. Non-governmental organizations, private citizens, local governments, and others documented their concerns in a number of submissions to the Ministry of the Environment.

One year ago, Lafarge asked the Ministry of the Environment for certificates of approval for air emissions and waste disposal so that it could launch the project. Waterkeeper and dozens of others used the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) process to inform the Ministry of possible environmental impacts, ask questions about the process, and make recommendations to ensure clean air and water and fair decision-making.



Photo courtesy of Lake Ontario Waterkeepers.

In early summer 2006, our worries about pollution in the Bath Creek and Lake Ontario grew. Lafarge asked for a revised waste disposal permit last summer - this time for its 30 year-old cement kiln dust landfill. Lafarge dumps an average of 28,521 tonnes of cement kiln dust into its landfill each year, roughly the equivalent of the domestic waste created by 94,000 people. CKD is the dust captured from the cement kiln's exhaust gas by the air pollution control system. It is a corrosive, toxic substance.

Leachate from the landfill is released untreated into the Bath Creek, which runs from the landfill through the town of Bath and into Lake Ontario. Lafarge is allowed to continuously discharge into the creek as long as monthly monitoring does not indicate greater than 50% mortality to fish. In 2001, Lafarge reported two of these mortality tests where all organisms died at 100% concentration. Runoff from the landfill includes contaminants such as Silver, Aluminium, Cadmium, Iron, Nickel, Strontium, Zinc, Phosphate, and Phenols.

After carefully documenting our concerns about air pollution, water pollution, and the potential cumulative effects of so many so-called "alternative fuels," we were very surprised when the Ministry of the Environment approved the Lafarge Alternative Fuels project on the eve of the winter holiday last December. Every group and every citizen who had commented during the EBR process scurried to find legal representation to ask the Environmental Review Tribunal for permission to appeal the approvals within our allotted 15 days.

To win an opportunity to appeal the approvals, each party had to show that no reasonable person could have made the same decision as the Ministry of the Environment, and that the Ministry's decision could result in significant harm to the environment. In its April 5, 2007 decision, the Tribunal declared that our groups had met this test.

The Tribunal's decision opens the door for Clean Air Bath, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper and Gord Downie, Loyalist Environmental Coalition, and The Tragically Hip. The groups will be represented by Rick Lindgren of the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Rob Wright of Sierra Legal Defence Fund, and noted environmental lawyer Joseph Castrilli.

With two years of research and comment under our belts and with the appeal to the Environmental Review Tribunal just beginning, this is a long process. It's also a milestone for Waterkeeper, the other participants, and everyone who has commented on any environmental permit in Ontario in recent years. As members of the community, we have a lot to contribute to the decision-making process. The Tribunal's decision is vindicating. We are finally being heard.

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For more information contact Krystyn at [Krystyn@waterkeeper.ca](mailto:Krystyn@waterkeeper.ca) or visit <http://www.waterkeeper.ca>.

*In a related effort, the Gaia Defense League is initiating a public awareness campaign opposing the construction of a waste tire to energy facility in Erie, PA. For more information and to get involved, contact Marty Visnosky or Cathy Pedler of the Gaia Defense League (814) 454-7523 [cpedler@mercyhurst.edu](mailto:cpedler@mercyhurst.edu).*





# Inspiration Gallery: Connecting Artists to benefit the Great Lakes



Diane Mahn, an artist from Madeline Island, Wisconsin never goes anywhere without a trash sack. And the Lake Superior beaches in her area are the better for it. "I have actually been picking up trash on ALL of the islands beaches (and roads and other places) for years.

But that is not all that Diane Mahn has been doing. As an artist, her appreciation of the Great Lakes can be seen in her art, such as

"Down the Drain." She is also the founder of a group of artists known as PASS Arts (Political ARTivits Serving Society) in which artists use their art to benefit social, political and environmental causes.

"The Great Lakes are very special to me, and saving and protecting them are my personal crusade."

Diane Mahn has generously donated the use of "Down the Drain" to GLAHNF. You too can enjoy this beautiful art in the form of notecards. To purchase the notecards, Green Earth Greetings will print them and send them to you. The Great Lakes Aquatic Network and Fund will receive a portion of the proceeds.

Photographer Steven Huyser-Honig is enthralled with the beauty of the Great Lakes region and devoted to helping preserve it for future generations. Every time someone purchases one of his fine art prints, Steve contributes 10% to an organization working to preserve the lighthouses, land, and water resources of the Great Lakes region.

The Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund (GLAHNF) is one of four nonprofits Steve supports. So we'd normally get a quarter of his "tithe" on each purchase.



As a benefit to fellow GLAHNF supporters, he's offering a special promotion that will

- greatly multiply the power of your purchase to benefit GLAHNF, and
- let you own a beautiful print for less!

From now through September 30, whenever you enter the promotional code "GLAHNF" at checkout, two nice things will happen. Steve will double his usual contribution to 20%... and designate it exclusively to the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund. And as an extra benefit, **you will receive a 10% discount on your purchase.**

To see more of Steve's work, make a purchase, and support the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund, visit <http://www.greatlakeseditions.com>. Be sure to join his mailing list, so you'll know when he has new images, special offers, and more. And check out his blogs. If you're interested in Great Lakes environmental news, you will enjoy Great Lakes For All. If you share Steve's passion for lighthouses, you will enjoy Lighthouses Forever.

## ***Want to be a Featured Artist?***

If you are an artist and are interested in supporting our efforts to protect the Great Lakes, please contact us about opportunities to:

- Feature your art;
- Connect to our network of over 1,800 individuals and organizations, and
- Do your part to help the Great Lakes remain healthy for the future.

For more information on how to be a featured artist, contact Ann at [ann@glhabitat.org](mailto:ann@glhabitat.org).

# Continued Stories



## CONTAMINATED LEACHATE DISPOSAL

John Richter, President of the Friends of the Jordan River, objects to the proposal. "The Michigan State University professors we are working with on another project have identified the Alba area as a primary source of groundwater for the Jordan River. Any contamination of the groundwater from this injection well would ultimately harm the Jordan River," stated Richter.

According to Dr. Warren Wood of the MSU Geological Sciences Department, "There must be hundreds or thousands of oil and gas wells in the area, any one of which could leak if the hydrostatic pressure is increased by injection of fluids." The well would be 2,100 feet deep, approximately 900 feet deeper than drinking wells are at the area.

What is the best way to deal with the contamination from Bay Harbor? This debate is ongoing, but certainly there are valid alternatives worthy of further consideration.

Among the many questions that arise - does it make sense to move the contamination from one community to another, potentially impacting two places? Is it fair? Will this approach solve the problem or simply transfer it?

The Friends of the Jordan River Watershed are working with others to document citizens' concerns, collect information on the risks and alternatives, and facilitate public input within the 30-day extension period.

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*For more information or to send comments go the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed website, [www.friendsofthejordan.org](http://www.friendsofthejordan.org).*

## Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network's 4th Annual Grassroots Symposium October 19-20, 2007



Join us for a weekend of networking, trainings, and fun! GLAHNF's Symposia are energizing and provide practical information to make your organization more effective. This year, the conference will be at the Illinois Beach Resort and Conference Center in Zion, IL, directly adjacent to the Illinois Beach State Park. The Park boasts incredible lakeshore, dune and swale, sprawling marshes, and oak savanna; hosts over 650 species of plants; and is a favored rest area for migrating birds.



*Illinois Beach State Park.  
Photo courtesy of Illinois Department of Natural Resources.*

### **Get the early discount rate!**

Register online ([www.glahabitat.org](http://www.glahabitat.org)) or contact Sandy ([sand@glhabitat.org](mailto:sand@glhabitat.org), 219.939.1655) by August 31 to receive the members' early discount rate of \$150. (cost will be \$175 after August 31.) The non-member early discount rate is \$200 (\$225 after August 31).

**Visit our Great Lakes Calendar at [www.glahabitat.org](http://www.glahabitat.org)**



# GLAHNF Needs You - Become a Member Today!

For the past 11 years, the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund has been proud to provide financial resources to over 500 grassroots groups working on improving the Great Lakes environment. These projects:

- Protected valuable wetlands on shorelines and roadsides;
- Restored impacts from invasive species, such as purple loosestrife;
- Provided permanent protection of habitat; and
- Built community support for our Great Lakes.

### Now GLAHNF needs your help.

GLAHNF is now an independent organization. This step was taken in order to ensure GLAHNF's long-term sustainability and continued ability to provide local groups with *financial, technical, and networking assistance* when it is needed most.

Your support will build a strong foundation for GLAHNF, just like the work you do helps build a healthy foundation for the Great Lakes.

**GLAHNF's mission** "*building effective community-based citizen action to protect and restore the water quality of the Great Lakes basin...*" remains the same.

Being a member brings many benefits (see box below) but perhaps the most important is knowing that your contribution enables a chain reaction of supporting citizens who take responsibility for keeping our Great Lakes healthy.

## MEMBER BENEFITS

### Membership benefits include:

- Supporting grassroots efforts
- Advancing protection of the Great Lakes-a global treasure
- Quarterly Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat News
- Action alerts
- Access to "Members Only" tools
- Access to GLAHNF's network of over 1,800 organizations and individuals twice per year for assistance with grassroots efforts (with donations of \$100 or more)
- Member pricing benefits
- Name printed in newsletter and annual report

In addition to the individual membership benefits, organization member benefits include:

- Access to GLAHNF's network of over 1,800 organizations and individuals twice per year for assistance with your grassroots efforts
- Discounted GLAHNF membership rates for your organization's members (\$35)

### Membership Levels:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$25                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Member \$50   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$100                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$100<br><i>(budget under \$200,000)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$250                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$250<br><i>(budget over \$200,000)</i>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the Lakes \$500                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Founder's Circle \$1,000                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer's Circle Pledge \$84 or greater a month |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I want to receive update emails from the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund.

Please don't print my name in the newsletter or annual report.

Check enclosed (Please make checks payable to GLAHNF or Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund)

Charge to VISA MC (circle one)

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

The Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit and all donations are tax deductible in the United States. Sorry, Canadian tax receipts are not available.

Mail to: Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund P.O. Box 2479, Petoskey, MI 49770 or donate online at <http://www.glahabitat.org/donation.html>



# Thank You



## ***Thank you to the following 2007 donors, volunteers, and in-kind contributors.***

Kendra Axness  
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Betty Luebke  
Joan Rasmussen  
Effie Stevens  
Lester Stevens  
Virginia Stolt

## **Action Alert Updates!!**

**Many of you caring about the Great Lakes made your voices heard by acting on two action alerts GLAHNF send out. *It made a difference - thank you!***

### **Invasive Species**

Calling your members of the U.S. Congress and asking them to pass strong invasive species legislation this year, in part, helped result in new invasive species legislation in the Coast Guard Reauthorization Bill. While the bill still needs to be strengthened, we now have our first-ever federal protections from invasive species on the horizon.

### **Great Lakes Water Conservation**

Many of you signed onto suggestions to strengthen regional water conservation efforts that are now under consideration by all Great Lakes states and provinces. One of the first tasks under the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and Agreement is to develop basin-wide water conservation and efficiency objectives. A draft of these objectives was released for public comment. Overall, the regional conservation objectives need more specificity and clarity to provide progressive guidance for policymakers. As is, it will be difficult for policymakers to fashion water conservation and efficiency programs that accomplish the goals of the Compact and Agreement. Your continued involvement will help strengthen these conservation standards and enable effective implementation of water conservation programs! See story on page 4 for details.



**WARNING:**

**NO MORE SWIMMING  
NO MORE FISHING  
NO MORE DRINKING WATER  
NO MORE  
GREAT LAKES**

**TAKE A FEW MINUTES AND URGE CONGRESS TO  
PROTECT THE GREAT LAKES**

The Great Lakes hold one fifth of the world's fresh water supply and provide drinking water to over 30 million people. Yet each day, our Lakes are damaged economically and ecologically by untreated sewage, industrial pollutants and invasive species. Unless we invest in a solution today, the price we will pay tomorrow will be much higher and future generations may never experience the Lakes as we know them. Fortunately there is a solution—you. You can sign a petition to urge Congress to pass the Great Lakes Collaboration Implementation Act, a comprehensive regional plan that dedicates funding to protect our drinking water, economic future and way of life. Log on to [www.healthylakes.org](http://www.healthylakes.org) to let your voice be heard.



**ENTER THE GREAT LAKES PHOTO AND STORY CONTEST  
BY AUGUST 15 TO WIN PRIZES.**

visit [www.healthylakes.org](http://www.healthylakes.org)



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