



G.L.A.H. News

Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat

GREAT LAKES: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

WINTER 2006 VOLUME 14 ISSUE 5

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Please read
Important
Article Below



Photo courtesy of Jane Elder.

GREAT LAKES AQUATIC HABITAT NETWORK AND FUND MAKING CHANGES DESIGNED TO CONTINUE PROGRAM SUCCESS

By Jill Ryan, Executive Director

As you may know, the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund is currently undergoing some change. GLAHNF will now be its own nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. These changes are intended to make the organization more sustainable over the long-haul, so that we may continue to support the wonderful work you do. We do not anticipate changes in services; we will continue to provide grants programs, publications, networking assistance and more.

citizen action to protect and restore the water quality of the Great Lakes basin.

What this change means for you:

- new contact information for GLAHNF
- programs offered will remain the same
- staff locations are diversifying to reach new areas of the region
- increased opportunities for joint fundraising projects with GLAHNF

If you have any questions or concerns about this transition, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to this change as a way of ensuring GLAHNF's long-term future.

The more things change, the more they are the same.

– Alphonse Karr

Please Take Note! ADDRESS CHANGE

Please note
GLAHNF's new
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Grassroots Symposium Success



2006 SYMPOSIUM SUCCESS



We were once again very pleased with this year's symposium! Thank you so much to everyone who was able to make it and for those of you who couldn't you were missed! Approximately 60 advocates gathered at Algoma University College in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. People car-pooled, flew and bused from as far away as up-state New York/Toronto and Thunder Bay/Duluth. Workshops included: Technology for Non-Profits, Fundraising, Stormwater Best Management Practices, and Values-Based Communications.



Congratulations to Judy Trembl!

This year we were honored to present the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund Grassroots Citizen-Advocate Award to Judy Trembl of Luxembourg, Wisconsin (Brent Denzin of Midwest Environmental Advocates accepted the award on Judy's behalf as she was unable to attend the symposium).

The Department of Natural Resources in Wisconsin has been working for over four years to adopt tighter regulations for the largest animal operations to control the runoff of liquid manure from frozen or otherwise saturated soils. The Trembls had a terrible experience in which one of these large operations contaminated their drinking water well (as well as a nearby stream) with liquid manure that had run off of adjacent fields. They and their small children, the youngest of which was six months old, became deathly ill. With Midwest Environmental Advocates, the Trembls successfully sued the large farm operation and recovered damages for their well and medical costs. Judy and her husband did not stop there. At great time and personal expense they became the strongest advocates for the regulations to ensure that no other parent need take their six-month-old to the emergency room. Judy has become an incredibly effective spokesperson for reasonable manure regulations. She has testified at hearings, spoken to media, educated many neighbors and groups, and organized other mothers to advocate for the health of their families.

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Grassroots Symposium 2007

Next year we'll be in the Lake Michigan Basin; we hope that you can join us!

Lake Ontario Basin Update



CLEAN WATER PRIMERS AVAILABLE TO HELP ONTARIANS, CANADIANS

By Krystyn Tully, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper



In 2004, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper began researching and drafting a series of manuals called the "Clean Water Primers." The idea for the Primers stems

from the demand from policy-makers, analysts, volunteer groups, and the media who are increasingly searching for comment on a wide range of water-related issues.

The Clean Water Primer is a reference guide that includes "everything you ever needed to know," including applicable laws and policies, precedents, history, etc on a particular subject. Each primer will also include expert analysis describing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and emerging issues in the field. Over time, the individual publications will create an important resource library for policy-makers around the Great Lakes and across Canada.

The Primers were designed with grassroots groups and citizens in mind – people without legal training who are using legal processes to help protect aquatic habitats. The first two are available now:

Primer #1: Taking water from the Great Lakes: a citizen's guide to the policies, rules, and procedures that protect Ontario's waterways

This Primer provides a step-by-step guide to water-takings and diversions in Ontario. It helps readers comment on new water-takings, improve existing permits, and hold people and corporations accountable for taking water without proper permits. This Primer also provides an important context for anyone participating in the ongoing creation of Ontario-United States agreements on water use.

There is an introductory section that provides a history of water-taking conflicts and agreements on the Great Lakes. This helps to put the current Water Resources Agreements into context. The

rest of the Primer is divided into sections that correspond to the kinds of water-takings issues you might have in your community:

- a proposed withdrawal that threatens your water supply
- an ongoing withdrawal that has no permit
- a permitted withdrawal that is having impacts on the environment

The Primer then walks you through the different legal tools you can use to resolve each kind of issue.

Primer #2: An Introduction to Canadian Environmental Law and Tools

This Primer was prepared specifically for use in Waterkeeper's Clean Water Workshop, but it is a handy tool for anyone working on environmental issues in Canada. It provides a brief introduction to environmental laws (such as the Fisheries Act and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act) and tools (such as judicial review). This Primer will remain in draft form until Summer 2007 so that students and Waterkeepers can offer suggestions for improvement.

This Primer provides a brief introduction to every major federal environmental law in Canada, the tools that these laws create for citizens, and the process that you go through to help protect your environmental rights. It covers topics such as private prosecutions, access to information requests, and petitions to the federal government.

Coming soon... Clean Water Primers on the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, U.S. water-taking rules, Ontario laws and tools, and more! A special thanks to the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation for its support of the Clean Water Primer project.

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The Clean Water Primers are available free of charge. You can read them online or request a hard copy by visiting Lake Ontario Waterkeeper's web site: www.waterkeeper.ca/primer

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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.

SAVE A TREE



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emily@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.

Lake Superior Basin Update



PRESSURE BUILDS TO CLEAN-UP SEWAGE IN THE ST. MARY'S RIVER

By Brian Christie, Lake Superior Conservancy and Watershed Council



In a recent issue of G.L.A.N. News (Vol. 14 Issue 3) writer Joanie McGuffin reported ongoing concerns with pollution in the St. Mary's River in the vicinity of Sault Ontario's east-end sewage treatment plant. Residents of Sugar Island Michigan living immediately opposite the plant, continued through the summer to contend with beach closings

and no body contact orders issued by the Chippewa County Board of Health due to water-borne health hazards including coliform and E. coli counts beyond the capacity of instruments to measure, and offensive materials that accumulated on their beaches.

Sugar Island residents complained about the presence of "pop-ups" in the river, chunks of sediment that break loose due to gaseous activity, suggesting this material might in fact be raw sewage released by the 50 year old primary level sewage treatment plant. Some 25 years ago the International Joint Commission (IJC) recognized the St. Mary's River as an environmental "hotspot" and among other things recommended that the east-end plant be upgraded to provide secondary level treatment.

For 16 years the Binational Public Advisory Committee for the St. Mary's River Remedial Action Plan (BPAC) had highlighted the issue of contaminated sediments and defined them as "areas of concern" designated for clean-up. Indeed, in 1992 the Canadian and Ontario governments had committed to taking the lead in this clean-up effort.

Sugar Island residents launched a petition writing campaign aided by the BPAC to bring their concerns directly to area politicians. Some Island residents collected water samples for analysis. The Chippewa County Department of Health was persuaded to undertake more comprehensive and strategic water testing. Lake Superior State University students were engaged to conduct the field work. Dr. Joan Rose of Michigan State University, a world-renowned water expert and chair of the U.S. EPA Science Advisory Board – Drinking Water Committee was requested to review the results.

Water samples were taken from the river above and below the east-end sewage treatment plant on both sides of the river and analyzed for microbiological qualities. Preliminary findings were released in July. The analysis found evidence of fecal bacteria, viruses and parasites coming from the Ontario outfall pipe and described the water quality at that same "boil site" as being inferior when compared to the U.S. "boil site." During field work Chippewa County Health Department staff noted a lot of floating solids and a lot of murky water emanating from the old outfall pipe. However, the floating solids were not sampled or analyzed.

This August a 77 million dollar state-of-the-art secondary-level treatment plant came on line at the east-end plant site. That same month a small group of Sugar Island residents applied more pressure by filing a civil suit against the Public Utilities Commission in Sault Ontario. The PUC oversees operation of the city's sewage and water treatment infrastructure. The suit alleged that the PUC was responsible for damages to properties on Sugar Island caused by waste materials from the east-end sewage treatment plant.

Throughout the summer a flurry of public meetings and private consultations were organized by local Canadian and U.S federal politicians and state representative. Excursions on the river provided elected officials with a close-up view of the situation. Michigan Congressman Bart Stupak and Sault Ste. Marie Member of Parliament Tony Martin wrote letters of concern to the Canadian Minister of the Environment. They also wrote letters to the U.S. Secretary of State and Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs to highlight the significance of this international situation. A "diplomatic note of concern" was sent from the State Department in Washington to Ottawa.

The IJC wrote to Environment Canada requesting that they more closely monitor discharge from Sault Ontario's east-end treatment plant. State Representative Gary

McDowell engaged in correspondence with Sault Ste. Marie Mayor John Rowswell over the city's dismissal of Dr. Rose's preliminary findings and continued refusal to take responsibility. Representative McDowell even offered to provide Michigan



Bay Mills Water Quality Specialist Amanda Bosak, visited Masta Bay on the north side of Sugar Island on Friday, June 23 to see firsthand the materials at the center of controversy. Bosak said it is normal to have some sort of white foamy discharge on the water's surface due to the fine organic material of the water system. But when oily, brown sludge and large pieces of material appeared she was disturbed. "I have never seen anything like this," she said. "It's disgusting." Photo by Bay Mills News Reporter, Shannon Jones.

continued on next page

Lake Superior - continued



engineers to supervise operation of the new sewage treatment plant, if that would help. Environment Canada put a bureaucrat in Toronto on the file as did the EPA in Chicago. Out of all this activity came a protocol which calls for the various levels of government and local health agencies to share information to facilitate investigation of complaints, provide for better monitoring of the St. Mary's River and development of short-term and long-term solutions to the problem.

On November 8th a treaty was signed between the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Garden River First Nation, Bay Mills Indian Community, and Batchewana First Nation expressing their concerns and hopes regarding the preservation, protection and enhancement of the waters of the St Mary's River. The treaty unites the efforts and influence of the four tribal nations bordering the St. Mary's River to persuade governments to rehabilitate the waters and ecosystems so they are once again safe for human use. Signers of the treaty were wise enough not to lay-blame or

point fingers, and remained optimistic. Garden River Chief, Lyle Sayers put it succinctly, "It's not going to get any better if they don't fix the problem."

Notwithstanding the bubbling sewage issue, other cleanup activities were underway on the river. Tannery Bay dredging moved ahead as did the clean-up of coal dust and tar laden sediment at Algoma Steel's docking facilities. Engineering studies commenced to determine the nature and extent of contaminated sediments in two hot spots including parts of the river adjacent and downstream from the east-end sewage treatment plant. Will the river again be safe for human contact? There appears to reason for hope.

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For more information:

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Lake Michigan Basin Update



DIVERSION PROPOSAL THREATENS CAREFULLY NEGOTIATED GREAT LAKES PROTECTIONS

By Cheryl Mendoza, Manger of Water Conservation Programs, Alliance for the Great Lakes



We probably all agree, besides acting as home for fish and wildlife, the Great Lakes provide drinking water and immeasurable quality of life for 40 million people throughout the region. Despite this, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is considering a proposal to divert Lake Michigan water outside the Great Lakes Basin in New Berlin, Wisconsin. New Berlin faces a federal deadline to stop

pumping radium-laced water from its wells on the western side of the city.

While this may be the easiest option for New Berlin, it is certainly not the only option. New Berlin's proximity to Lake Michigan does not excuse its responsibility to use water resources wisely and efficiently. New Berlin's current water conservation measures are glaringly weak, comprised of a sprinkling restriction limited to even or odd days, an optional leak detection test offered to customers who request them, and a leaflet offering conservation tips apparently available on the City's website, though we could not find it there. Aggressive conservation programs have helped countless communities around the United States meet their water supply needs. There are seemingly endless examples of such programs in existence that New Berlin could adapt.

Aside from New Berlin lacking a responsible water conservation program, the WDNR is ignoring their obligation to a federal law

called the Water Resources Development Act. The language in the law is clear: "No water shall be diverted or exported from any portion of the Great Lakes within the United States, from any tributary within the United States of any of the Great Lakes, for use (emphasis added) outside the Great Lakes basin unless such diversion or export is approved by the Governor of each of the Great Lakes States."

Finally, moving forward with this proposal could also hinder, possibly indefinitely, first of its kind, legally binding protections for the Great Lakes – called the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact - ensuring a healthy economy and ecology for today's and future generations. The Compact and the related Agreement with two Canadian provinces are the result of six years of difficult negotiations between 10 jurisdictions and numerous stakeholders. Approving diversion proposals without this legally binding system in place would result in a loss of interest from state legislatures and Congress to approve a final, binding Compact. This gives regional stakeholders no legal recourse for bad diversion decisions.

Each day we wait to build stronger protections for the 20% of the world's fresh surface water in our backyard, the risk of losing our lakes forever grows.

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To learn more contact Cheryl Mendoza at 616-850-0745 ext. 13 or cmendoza@greatlakes.org.

Lake Huron Basin Update - Ontario Side



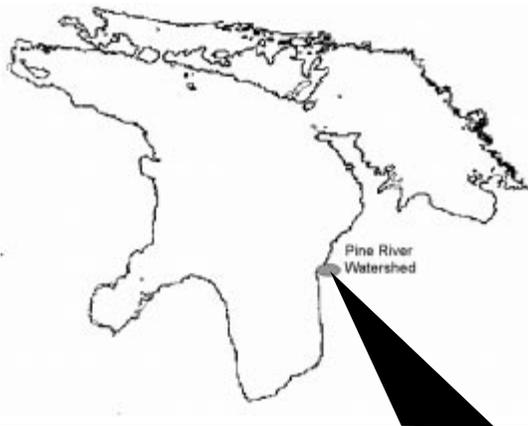
PINE RIVER WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT – A RECIPE TO WIN

By Geoff Peach, Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation, and Doug Brown, Lurgan Beach Association and founding chair of the Pine River Watershed Improvement Network

Posted beaches warning against swimming and mounds of rotting algae washing up on beaches are a powerful motivator for grassroots action. Beaches in the Township of Huron-Kinloss have been plagued with these problems in recent years, giving local cottagers concern that their beach was no longer swimmable and that their property values could be affected by deteriorating water quality. More fundamentally, they were becoming concerned that the special coastal environment to which many sought refuge was becoming polluted by expansive farming operations and increasing shoreline development.

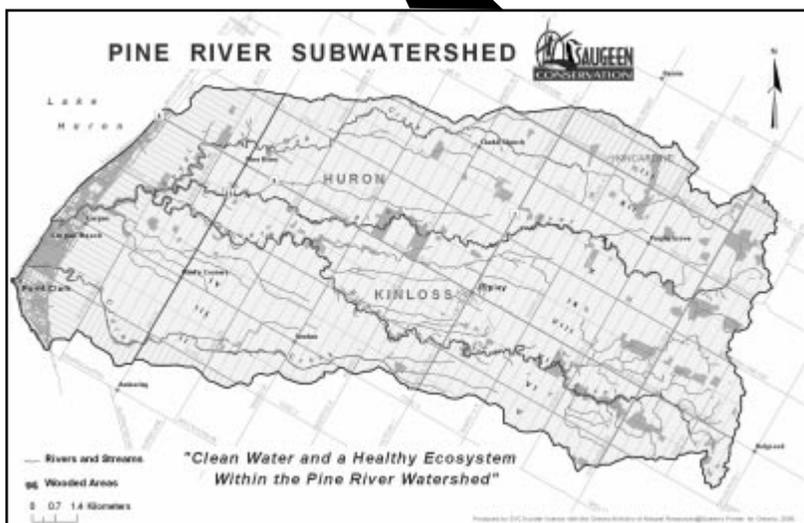
The Township of Huron-Kinloss is mid-way along Ontario's Lake Huron shoreline, and is drained by the Pine River watershed. Water testing by the municipality over the past nine years has indicated that the water draining out of the Pine River into Lake Huron has been chronically polluted with high bacteria and nutrients. Nearshore lake testing by the local Health Unit has also suggested that bacterial impairment of local beaches has become a chronic problem in recent years.

Three beach associations in Huron-Kinloss, representing about 700 cottagers, identified these water quality concerns as far back as the late 1990s. The Association presidents met regularly to discuss this common issue of concern. Recognizing that water impairments originated well beyond the shoreline, the Lurgan Beach Association and the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation pulled together a working committee represented by cottagers, farmers, the municipality, the Coastal Centre, Health Unit, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Pine River Boat Club, and the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority to discuss how local water quality improvements could be made. Calling itself the Pine River Watershed Improvement Network (Pine River WIN), the objective from the outset was to take a positive, collaborative approach to water quality improvement. The committee wanted to make a concerted effort to avoid the traditional finger pointing between farmers and cottagers that beset other communities along the lakeshore. Having people work together from the beginning was considered the key to the success of this committee.



A number of guest speakers were invited to speak to the committee on topics ranging from nutrient management to natural channel design. As the committee became more knowledgeable and confident, it decided that, to better facilitate the planning and execution of action related projects, it needed to become a "Committee of Council." In 2005, Township Council officially recognized the committee, giving it status as a Committee of Council.

The committee then decided that, global study and planning was helpful but specific targets and projects were necessary. Otherwise, committee interest would wane. They also decided that given the fact that the watershed was primarily farmed land, action projects should be targeted to assisting local farmers. Using the motto "keep it simple," initial projects would include fencing cattle from the river, planting trees, developing buffers, and construction of cattle crossings. Stimulated by the possibility of funding from Environment Canada's "Adopt-a-Watershed Pilot Project" (December 8, 2005), the committee worked to secure funding, find local partners and begin implementation. By spring 2006, projects were underway.



continued on page 11

Lake Huron Basin Update- U.S. Side



A MERCURY LOOPHOLE THE SIZE OF A CEMENT PLANT

By Chris Grubb, with contributions from Bill Freese, Huron Environmental Activist League



An environmental struggle in northeast Michigan involving grassroots activists, the state Department of Environmental Quality, and a local cement manufacturer has illuminated a disturbing fact for many in that community and around Michigan: mercury emissions from cement plants – which can be on par with emissions from coal-fired power plants – are virtually unregulated by state and federal clean air agencies.

Alpena, Michigan is located on Thunder Bay of Lake Huron. Growing up, I always thought of Alpena as that place my friends went to play in a big hockey tournament every year. It's not all hockey pucks and ice fishing, though, according to Bill Freese, a resident of Alpena and director of the Huron Environmental Activist League (HEAL). Alpena is home to the Lafarge North America cement plant: the largest cement plant on the continent. That was their claim to fame. What they have now is nothing to brag about.

A Freedom of Information Act request from the state shows that of four criteria pollutants, SO₂, NO_x, PM₁₀ and VOCs, the City of Alpena has a higher level of the first three than the City of Detroit. But recently, Freese and HEAL have been focused on the mercury emissions from the facility.

Last year, state regulators learned the cement plant emits up to 580 pounds of mercury per year – about 10 times higher than previously believed. For comparison's sake, the state's largest coal fired power plant generates emissions of around 600 pounds of mercury per year, and the total mercury emissions from utilities around the state is about 2,500 pounds per year (i.e. Lafarge would make up about 1/5 of the overall). When the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) tried to issue a permit that would limit the facility's emissions to 390 pounds per year the matter wound up in the Circuit Court for the County of Alpena. The court found the MDEQ's decision to limit Lafarge's mercury emissions to 390 pounds per year to be arbitrary, capricious, and unauthorized by law. The court said MDEQ exceeded its authority because the state has no specific regulations dealing with mercury emissions from cement plants.

Likewise, even after two court rulings instructing it to do so, the EPA has not set nationwide limits on mercury from cement plants. That may change soon. After demands from grassroots activists, legal action by groups like Earthjustice, and prodding from the National Association of Clean Air Agencies, the EPA is reconsidering its position and will announce a decision in December.

Lafarge has pledged voluntary cutbacks and the MDEQ has created a taskforce with representation from government,



Lafarge Plant, courtesy of Bill Freese.

environmental groups, and industry to create mercury emissions rules for the industry. But it's unclear what kind of cutbacks Lafarge is willing to undertake and how aggressively the state will work toward developing those regulations. An obvious cutback that Lafarge could make is to replace the fly ash it currently adds to other raw materials for cement production with less mercury-contaminated fly ash. The current fly ash, from a Canadian coal burning power plant, produces over half the total emissions while representing only five percent of the raw materials by volume.

Meanwhile there are warnings to limit fish consumption because of mercury contamination in all of the state's inland waterways, including lakes and streams near Alpena. What's more, according to a recent Associated Press article, "96 percent of the plant's mercury is the type that tends to settle close to home and accumulate in fish..."

It's important for state and federal agencies, as well as elected officials, to hear from grassroots advocates on this issue. Clearly, mercury emissions from cement plants can have the same damaging effects as mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants. Michigan regulators have stepped up to the plate by going beyond the federal mercury regulations for coal-fired power plants. They should follow their own lead and take bold action to drastically reduce mercury emissions from cement plants too.

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Visit http://www.earthjustice.org/our_work/campaigns/cement-kilns.html for more info on cement plant mercury emissions.

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Lake Erie Basin Update - Ontario Side



RECOVERY STRATEGY FOR FISH AT RISK OF THE ESSEX-ERIE REGION

By Shawn Staton, Fisheries and Oceans Canada



Location of the Essex-Erie study area within southwestern Ontario.

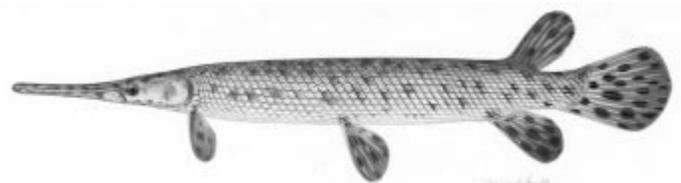
A comprehensive, ecosystem-based recovery strategy for fish species at risk has recently been drafted for a large region of southwestern Ontario. The Essex-Erie Recovery Strategy includes the drainages of Lake Erie west of the Grand River watershed, the land draining into the Detroit River, and the land draining into Lake St. Clair west of the Thames River watershed. This project complements existing watershed-based recovery programs in southern Ontario (for the Sydenham, Ausable, Thames, and Grand Rivers) that aim to preserve freshwater biodiversity in priority watersheds of the Carolinian zone.

The ecosystem approach taken by the Essex-Erie Recovery Team* in the development of the strategy is particularly suited for the species-rich watersheds of southern Ontario. With 18 fishes at risk found within the study area threatened predominantly by land use, a multi-species approach provides an ecologically sound and cost-effective solution, which allows stakeholders to participate in a single planning exercise for all species. The fishes at risk known from the study area, include two species listed as Endangered (pugnose shiner and northern madtom), five as Threatened (eastern sand darter, lake chubsucker, spotted gar, black redbhorse and channel darter) and 11 species listed as Special Concern. A substantial portion of the Canadian range of several species occurs within the study area.

In preparation for the development of the Recovery Strategy, the Recovery Team collected and synthesized existing information essential to understanding the various watersheds and their associated species: species at risk (trends in distribution over time, habitat needs and threats), the physical environment and land use, and water quality conditions. The resulting recovery strategy addresses the recovery needs for all 18 fishes at risk, but places the highest conservation priority on Endangered and

Threatened species. Several primary core areas were identified based on the presence of existing populations of high priority fishes at risk. Coastal wetland habitats, including Point Pelee, Rondeau Bay and Long Point Bay supporting populations of spotted gar and lake chubsucker are particularly significant. Other primary core areas include the Detroit River, the south shore of Lake St. Clair and Big Creek (Long Point Region). Recovery actions to reduce identified threats, such as habitat loss and sediment and nutrient loading within the drainages of these primary core areas, have been given highest priority within the recovery strategy.

The Recovery Team is wasting no time getting to work on implementation of the recovery strategy. Already, a Stewardship Working Group has been formed and funds have been obtained through the Government of Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk. Working Group partners, including conservation authorities and county stewardship councils are working with landowners in priority areas to improve habitat conditions for fishes at risk. Stewardship projects, such as riparian plantings, livestock exclusion and soil erosion reduction, can reduce nutrient and sediment inputs and improve water and habitat quality. Although initial funding for the project is modest, the Working Group is actively seeking additional funds and hopes to attract greater community involvement in the future. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact their local conservation authority or stewardship council.



Spotted Gar (*Lepisosteus oculatus*), © Joseph Tomelleri

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*The Essex-Erie Recovery Team is co-chaired by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Essex Region Conservation Authority with representation from Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, Long Point Region and Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authorities.

Other partners include the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment Canada, University of Windsor, Elgin Stewardship Committee, Essex County Stewardship Network, Stewardship Kent, Point Pelee National Park, Rondeau Provincial Park and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Lake Erie

Basin Update - U.S. Side



WILL OHIO DRAIN THE GREAT LAKES? THE GREAT LAKES – A VAST, BUT VULNERABLE RESOURCE

By Kristy Meyer, Ohio Environmental Council



The Great Lakes. They hold 95 percent of our nation's and 20 percent of the Earth's fresh surface water. They are a source of drinking water, jobs, plentiful wildlife and lasting memories. Truly, they are one of the natural wonders of the world.

While the Great Lakes are a vast resource, they are not unlimited. Each year rainfall and snowmelt replenish only about one percent of the water in the basin. The other 99 percent is finite and non-renewable.

There is a growing demand for water by domestic users – including utilities, agriculture, manufacturers, and housing. Proposals even exist to export water to other parts of the U.S. and around the world. Current laws, though, simply are not strong enough to protect our Great Lakes from massive withdrawal and diversion schemes. This nearly happened a few years ago, when a foreign company proposed to withdraw 158 million gallons of Lake Superior water annually to export to Asia by ship tankers. Fortunately, that proposal was withdrawn. But without a legally-binding compact to control water use, the lakes remain vulnerable to such threatening schemes.

The Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Basin Water Resources Compact: a balanced and comprehensive protection plan

After six years of negotiations, the Great Lakes Governors have endorsed a carefully balanced and precedent-setting agreement to protect and conserve the Great Lakes: the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact. Once ratified by



“Friends” by Connie Maksemetz, 2006 Ohio Lake Erie Commission “Life on Lake Erie” Award Winner

all eight Great Lakes states and approved by Congress, the Compact will become legally enforceable and protect the Great Lakes from harm by implementing a strong and comprehensive water management plan. This will give the Great Lakes region legal control over Great Lakes water, guaranteeing long-term protection and sound management of the basin's water.

The Great Lakes Compact – threatened by loopholes

Before the ink is even dry, some industry groups already are pushing for concessions in the Compact. They want to carve out more favorable water rights by changing the Compact's environmental decision-making standard. Under their proposal, a water use project could be rejected only if it poses a threat to both the Lake basin as a whole and the Great Lakes basin as a whole. Under industry's loophole, the foreign company that proposed to withdraw 158 million gallons annually to Asia could have been approved, as well as a withdrawal the size of an existing diversion in Chicago, IL of 2.1 billion gallons of water per day, which flows down the Chicago River into the Mississippi River and out into the Gulf of Mexico. State lawmakers are planning to vote on the Compact this month.

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For more information:

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Thank You



We wish to thank the following 2006 donors for supporting local advocates in their river, lake & wetland protection work:

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Ohio Environmental Council
Southeast Environmental Task Force
Tinkers Creek Land Conservancy

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Thank you again to all of you!

Resources

GLNPO Significant Activities Report Available

U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office's Significant Activities Report Available

The latest issue of the U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office's Significant Activities Report is now available for viewing.

Highlights of the June 2006 issue:

- Long-Awaited Ashtabula River Cleanup Begins
- Ashtabula River Baseline Studies
- Wildlife-Friendly Wind Power
- Lake Erie Floating Classroom
- Lake Erie D. O. Tested
- Air Monitoring Results Shared

LAKEWIDE PLANNING:

- Developing a Lake Ontario Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
- Lake Superior Work Group
- Lake Michigan Forum

To view the report in HTML, go to:
<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/active/index.html>

An Adobe Acrobat version of the report is also available at:
<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/active/2006/Jun2006.pdf>

Live Fire Proposal Action

GLAHNF Joins Other Groups throughout the Region Expressing Concern About the Coast Guard Live Fire Proposal on the Great Lakes

Our clean drinking water, ability to fish and freedom to enjoy the Great Lakes – a resource for all of us to use and protect - are at risk from the United States Coast Guard Proposal to establish 34 live fire practice zones on the Great Lakes. GLAHNF has joined other groups in comments to the U.S. Coast Guard on the proposal. The comments address:

- Public access restrictions during live fire exercises and potential alternatives;
- Long-term negative and unknown impacts of lead bullets on water quality; and
- The need for a detailed environmental assessment that considers a full spectrum of impacts.

For more information regarding this action, please contact:

Jamie Cross (formerly Morton)
Manager of Outreach Programs
Alliance for the Great Lakes
700 Fulton Ave., Ste A, Grand Haven, MI 49417
616-850-0745

E-mail: jcross@greatlakes.org (new email address)



Lake Huron - continued

Environment Canada was looking for some pilot watersheds in southern Ontario in which to promote its community-based Adopt-a-watershed program. Fortunately, the existence, make up and goals of the Pine River WIN fit well into the criteria of the Adopt-a-watershed pilot project” outline.

Seed funding, in the amount of \$25,000 per year was made available to the committee to get some of these projects off the ground. The initial projects were chosen in highly visible areas where the community-at-large could see that efforts were underway to make improvements. To help people identify the project sites, and further encourage public thinking towards improving water quality in the watershed, signs were installed facing the local roadways. Additionally, a display booth with maps, committee information and literature was set up at the local fall fair. Information and educational updates have been included in Township mailings.

As part of the Adopt-a-watershed initiative, Environment Canada requested that the committee distribute a survey within the community to both farm and non-farm landowners. The survey was designed to gain a better understanding of the local stewardship practices. The committee hired a person to conduct these face-to-face surveys during the summer of 2006.

Approximately 150 surveys were completed, the results of which should be known by the end of the year. The surveys will help the committee, and Environment Canada, better understand how township residents currently manage their land, and what ‘best stewardship practices’ need to be promoted in Huron-Kinloss.

In the meantime, the committee continues to work on developing further practical and educational projects for 2007. The Pine River Watershed Improvement Network is a good example of a grassroots initiative where a group of committed volunteers can take a vision and make tangible efforts to improve the health of their local watershed. We may not see a decline in beach postings anytime soon, but importantly, local citizens have seen a problem, and realize that waiting for government, or “someone else,” to provide solutions could be a long wait... and may not have the same positive results.

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For information:

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Calendar



FEBRUARY

12th Annual Wetland Science Forum: Riverine Wetlands: Connections, Corridors and Catchments, La Crosse, WI, February 1-2, 2007

The conference program will begin with an overview of riverine wetland ecology followed by a keynote address, several topical oral sessions, a poster session, working groups and field trips, all related to the conference theme.

*For more information please visit:
<http://www.wiscwetlands.org>*

MARCH

Grant Application Deadline, March 31, 2007
Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund Spring Grants Program Application Deadline.

*For more information please visit us on the web at
www.glahabitat.org.*



Action Alert

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ON THE KENNECOTT MINING PROPOSAL IN THE UPPER PENINSULA

By Save the Wild U.P.

It's time to speak out!

"The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is extending the deadline for its proposed decision on the application for a Mining Permit for the proposed Eagle Project mine until January 9, 2007. The extension allows time for public comment on Kennecott's response to DEQ's list of 91 technical deficiencies in the permit application."

Explanation of the DEQ decision:

1. The DEQ is giving the opportunity for the public to comment on Kennecott's responses to the 91 deficiencies.
2. This public comment period lasts from now to December 26, 2006.
3. The DEQ will make their proposed decision on January 9, 2007.
4. On January 9, 2006 they will also give the date for the Public Hearing(s) on the mining application - probably sometime in mid-February.

5. The DEQ will consolidate the public hearings required for the other applications (Groundwater Discharge, Air Quality) into the same hearing time frame - sounds like a multiple day hearing.

What would we like you to do?

1. Write to the DEQ before Dec 26. More details including suggested comments are available on our website, www.savethewildup.org. You should send your comments to: Steven Wilson, Office of Geological Survey P.O. Box 30256, Lansing, MI 48909-7756 • E-mail wilsons@michigan.gov
2. Attend the public meetings; these are yet to be scheduled. The three major permit applications for this project (air groundwater and mining), are most likely going to be combined. Save the Wild U.P. will make every effort to publicize the dates and times of these meetings when the DEQ releases that information. Please check-in to the Save the Wild U.P. website often: www.savethewildup.org

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Thank you for interest in this issue, if you would like more information: Please visit our website at: www.savethewildup.org or e-mail us at info@savthewildup.org.



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