



G.L.A.H. News

Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat

SUMMER 2003

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 3 (AUGUST)

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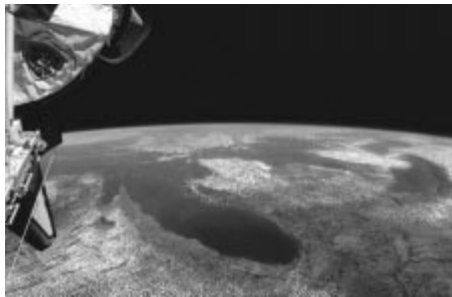
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U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE GREAT LAKES REPORT DRAWS BROAD ATTENTION



A broad view of the Great Lakes Basin.

The United States General Accounting Office (GAO) recently completed a study addressing the progress that has been made in restoring the Great Lakes Basin. The study 1) looked at federal and state environmental programs that operate in the Basin and the amount of funding devoted to these programs, 2) considered the restoration strategies being utilized and their coordination, and 3) assessed the progress made toward restoration in the Basin.

The findings of the study include:

- 148 federal and 51 state programs are funding environmental restoration activities in the Basin.
- 33 federal programs and 17 state programs are specific to the Great Lakes.
- While several Great Lakes environmental strategies were identified at the binational, federal, and state levels, there is not sufficient coordination between the strategies to achieve overall restoration in the Basin.

- Sufficient information does not exist to assess the progress on restoration in the Basin.

Based on these findings, the GAO recommends that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Great Lakes National Program Office “fulfills its coordination responsibilities and develop[s] an overarching Great Lakes strategy.” In addition, the report recommends that the EPA develops Great Lakes Basin environmental indicators and a system for monitoring to measure overall restoration progress.

In a response to the report, Andy Buchsbaum, director of the Great Lakes Office of the National Wildlife Federation said “The GAO report confirms the lack of coordination, funding, prioritization - indeed, vision - of the federal agencies responsible for protecting and restoring the Great Lakes,” adding “it’s like running a company where all the departments get to do what they want: you waste a lot of time and money and the product suffers. We can’t let that happen to the Great Lakes.”

“EPA and the Corps have not delivered for the Great Lakes,” Buchsbaum said. “The Great Lakes need a strategic plan, strategic priorities, and significantly more Congressional funding to recover from decades of dredging, filling, and

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U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE GREAT LAKES REPORT DRAWS BROAD ATTENTION



DIRECTOR'S NOTES



PLANNING

BY JILL RYAN

Planning for the future is one of the most important and inspiring things you can do for the health of your organization. Just as we plan for growth in our communities, make plans for our personal goals, and plan for our financial future, we can see great benefits from planning organizationally.

While I have heard all of the standard objections to planning (takes too much time, is boring, doesn't get utilized, is constraining), I believe that a well-crafted planning process that takes into account the circumstances of your individual organization, its niche, and the people involved, can help reinvigorate the work by bringing people together to clarify and develop goals, strategies and action steps.

Although I certainly understand the pressures of the daily to do list and the emergency nature of some of our work, I hope you will find time to create a good plan for moving your organization forward and for utilizing the plan once it is created. GLAHNF is currently undertaking such a planning process, and I can tell you we are already seeing some real benefits while we are still in the midst of the process. Communications improve, minds come together creatively, and solutions are created.

Good plans shape good decisions. That's why good planning helps to make elusive dreams come true. Lester R. Bittel

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

pollution. This effort needs to be led by state and local stakeholders, not just federal agencies. It's time for Congress and state governments to step in and make sure that Great Lakes recovery planning is done right, and done soon."

U.S. Representatives Rahm Emanuel (IL) and Mark Kirk (IL) recently unveiled the Great Lakes Restoration Fund, bipartisan legislation with 14 cosponsors representing congressional districts in all Great Lakes states. The bill establishes a funding source through block grants for Lakes restoration and revitalization, and outlines a vision for the Great Lakes future in the form of a Comprehensive Lakes Management Plan.

The legislation would give states restoration funding in the form of block grants, authorizing \$4 billion over 5 years. In addition to providing restoration funding, the bill would create a Great Lakes Advisory Board comprised of the governors of the Great Lakes states, representatives of the federal government, local mayors and the business, scientific and advocacy communities. The board would develop a Comprehensive Lakes Management Plan that would build on the existing catalog of Great Lakes research to provide a clear vision of the Lakes' future and recommend to Congress and states which programs should be strengthened, combined, or eliminated altogether.

Cameron Davis, executive director of the Lake Michigan Federation, said the ambitious plan arose from "extreme

frustration that with all the planning and spending, Great Lakes health has stayed stable at best." Davis added, "if the Everglades and Chesapeake Bay can do it, we can do it." More than \$4 billion will be spent on the Florida Everglades, and a \$19 billion restoration project is slated for Chesapeake Bay in Virginia and Maryland.

In a similar move, on July 14, U.S. Senators Mike DeWine (OH) and Carl Levin (MI) introduced the Great Lakes Environmental Restoration Act that would provide \$6 billion over 10 years in Great Lakes ecosystem restoration funding, would coordinate existing federal efforts, and would monitor those efforts. "The Great Lakes are a unique natural resource that we must protect for future generations, and they deserve a concerted national and local effort to save them," said Senator DeWine. "Based on the evidence in the GAO report, it's clear that the federal government is not doing enough to keep pace with the increasing threats to the Great Lakes. Our bill reverses that trend."

The GAO report clearly has identified a need for leadership in the Basin, and is drawing attention to the needs for restoration funding. In the context of these discussions, a large coalition of groups coordinated by Great Lakes United released the Great Lakes Green Book, and action agenda intended to serve as a citizens' blueprint for restoring the health of the largest freshwater ecosystem in the world. To read this citizen agenda, visit www.glu.org.

GLAHNF's SPRING 2003 GRANT RECIPIENTS



Since 1996, GLAHNF has been making small grants to grassroots community initiatives to protect our lakes, streams, wetlands, and shorelines. With each new set of applications we are impressed and inspired by the wide range of citizen initiatives working to protect aquatic habitats across the Great Lakes Basin. The decision-making process was again difficult because there were many more proposals worthy of funding than there were funds available. "With 74 proposals to choose from, finding projects worthy of funding was the easy part," said Jill Ryan, GLAHNF Director. We are pleased to announce the following 14 outstanding projects, which were awarded GLAHNF funds for the Spring 2003 grant cycle. To read summaries of these projects please visit <http://www.glahabitat.org/fundsum.html#spring2003>.

Bi-state Council of Wolf Lake Stewards

Terry Schilling
5059 N Damen Ave. #1E, Chicago, IL 60625
Project Title: Development of Volunteer Stewardship and Restoration at Wolf Lake Natural Area Sites, Grant Award: \$1000

Residents for Environmental Action & Community Health

Diane Dickson
4525 Beaver Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46807
Project Title: Implementing More Effective and Less Toxic Methods of Controlling West Nile Virus, Grant Award: \$797

Saving Wetlands and Trees in Chesterfield Township, Inc

Nancy Orweyler
PO Box 164, New Baltimore, MI 48047
Project Title: Protecting Chesterfield Township's Wetlands Through Action
Grant Award: \$3000

Lone Tree Council

Terry Miller
4649 David Ct., Bay City, MI 48706
Project Title: The Beauty and Benefits of Saginaw Bay's Coastal Marshes:
An Educational Outreach Program
Grant Award: \$2800

Save Lake Superior Association

Glenn Maxham
1902 St. Louis Avenue, Apt 319
Duluth, MN 55802
Project Title: Cessation of Wetland Destruction by MNDNR Resulting from Beaver Dam Removal, Grant Award: \$2500

Earthology

Craig Minowa
RR1 Box 61B, Hinckley, MN 55037
Project Title: Waterfest: A Great Lakes Wetland Education and Recruitment Campaign, Grant Award: \$3000

Canandaigua Lake Watershed Alliance

Stephen Lewandowski
PO Box 323, Canandaigua, NY 14424
Project Title: Tracing Toxins in runoff to Canandaigua Lake, Grant Award: \$2000

Friends of Sheldon Marsh

Patricia Krebs
408 Kiwanis Ave., Huron, OH 44839
Project Title: Legal Intervention Supporting Protection and Restoration of Sheldon Marsh, Grant Award: \$3000

Friends of Red Hill Valley

Don McLean
PO Box 61536, Hamilton, ONT L8T 5A1
Project Title: Red Hill Valley - No Place for a Road, Grant Award: \$3500

Shoreline Stewardship Association of Cloud Bay

Glen Dale
RR7, Thunder Bay, ONT P7C 5V5
Project Title: Cloud Bay Wetland Public Awareness & Long Term Protection Programme, Grant Award: \$3000

Grey Association for Better Planning

Peggy Hutchison
RR 2 - Box B-13, Singhampton, ONT N0C 1M0
Project Title: Conserving Ontario's Water Supplies, Grant Award: \$3000

Oakvillegreen Conservation Association

Iris McGee
1018 Oak Meadow Rd., Oakville, ONT L6M 1J7
Project Title: Saving the Trafalgar Moraine from Encroaching Development
Grant Award: \$3300

Junior PA Lake Erie Watershed Association

Alison Phillips
6270 East Lake Rd., Erie, PA 16511-1522
Project Title: "Making the News" - Project Clean Sweep's public education effort
Grant Award: \$2000

Lake Superior Alliance

Bob Olsgard
P.O. Box 472
Spooner, WI 54801
Project Title: Building an Internet Community for Lake Superior Waterkeeper
Grant Award: \$2750

GLAHNews:

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

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Visit us on the web at:

www.glahabitat.org, and
www.GreatLakesDirectory.org

Disclaimer:

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



EAGLE

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATION FOR GREAT LAKES EDUCATION: WORKING TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT IN MINNESOTA AND THE GREAT LAKES

BY: JENNY TAHTINEN

In each issue of the newsletter, GLAHNF profiles one of its Advisory Panel Members or Hub coordinators. In this issue we are pleased to tell you about Jenny Tahtinen and the Environmental Association for Great Lakes Education. Jenny became our Minnesota Hub coordinator in January 2003.

As Projects Coordinator for the Environmental Association for Great Lakes Education (EAGLE) and the Minnesota Hub for GLAHNF, Jenny Tahtinen has been able to fulfill her goal of working to protect the environment in her own backyard. Growing up in Duluth, Minnesota on the shores of Lake Superior, a love of the outdoors and of the lake was instilled in her early on in life. "Living in northern Minnesota and being able to see Lake Superior every day taught me an immeasurable appreciation for the natural world and has given me a great quality of life. I only hope that people fifty years from now are lucky enough to receive the same gift." Graduating from Macalester College with a degree in environmental studies and a focus in biology, Jenny headed back north, her training as a scientist and her activist ideals in tow.

Working with EAGLE since November of 2002, Jenny has realized just how important it is to have a strong environmental voice in the Great Lakes Basin—on a local, regional, statewide, and international scale. "Protecting the Great Lakes is now more important than ever. It's a do or die situation, and the work we are doing is necessary to ensure the future health of the lakes and the citizens of the region. I am thrilled to be a part of the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund during this crucial time."

Two grassroots women activists founded EAGLE in 1994 in order to provide education and promote activism aimed at protecting and restoring the Great Lakes ecosystem. Since its inception, EAGLE has worked to increase awareness of critical environmental issues in the Great Lakes region. EAGLE promotes leadership training and skills development and provides technical assistance and consulting services to people throughout the Basin.

EAGLE has sponsored workshops aimed at increasing citizen advocacy on issues such as sustainable development, women's health issues, and land use issues. EAGLE formed the Great Lakes Women's Leadership Network (GLWLN), a coalition of thousands of women around the region committed to the environment, and developing women's roles in protecting it. As the education outlet for the Green

Thumb Project, EAGLE held more than 40 community workshops educating businesses, institutions, and local homeowners on environmentally safe lawn care in order to decrease chemical runoff into the Lake Superior watershed.

EAGLE has sought to be a central resource for organizations and citizens in northeastern Minnesota, and to that end, developed the EcoSource project. EcoSource is Minnesota's most comprehensive listing of environmental organizations, and includes information on local groups, events and issues. Each year, EAGLE also coordinates the Living Green Conference, a networking and informational conference that brings in hundreds of citizens as well as environmental professionals.

After the success of the EcoSource project, EAGLE worked with GLAHNF to develop the Great Lakes Directory as a means of strengthening the network of environmental organizations throughout the Great Lakes Basin. The Directory currently includes a collection of over one thousand environmental organizations from each state and province in the Basin. The Great Lakes Directory provides exposure to groups' focus issues as well as funding resources, free environmental software, environmental job listings, events calendars, and a huge collection of articles pertaining to Great Lakes' environmental issues. The Directory has become a vital resource for both the public and environmental professionals throughout the Great Lakes Basin.

Jenny Tahtinen believes that GLAHNF has played a major part in unifying and facilitating the fight to save aquatic habitats by providing funding and networking support. "EAGLE has had the honor of working with GLAHNF as the Minnesota Hub for the past three years. We have benefited tremendously through working with GLAHNF and its Advisory Panel and Hub members, a group of passionate and knowledgeable people striving toward a common goal."

For more information on the Environmental Association for Great Lakes Education (EAGLE), go to www.eagle-ecosource.org.



Jenny Tahtinen on a schooner in the Caribbean while studying oceanography and nautical science.



DAMN THE RIVER OR DITCH THE BOARD

By: SANDRA L. WILMORE

An emotional response was sparked on May 28, 2003 when the Noble-LaGrange County Drainage Board decided to declare a 40-mile-long stretch of Indiana's Elkhart River a regulated drain. The declaration gives Noble and LaGrange counties the power to maintain the river as a legal drainage ditch. To cover the maintenance costs, the county will collect a ditch assessment tax from local landowners estimated at \$128,000 annually.

Historically speaking, drainage ditch maintenance work has proven to negatively impact the environment in Indiana. Unfortunately, these damaging practices still continue today. Although the county was awarded a 25-foot right-of-way on either side of the river (rather than the allowed 75 feet), the county's plans may still involve the deepening, widening, or changing of the river, as well as diversion of the course of the water and removal of any obstructions. Local environmental groups, area towns, and property owners are infuriated by

these plans, knowing that the spraying of herbicides and the clearing of obtrusive trees will destroy wildlife habitats and vegetation along the banks.

The general consensus is that local property owners want to have their residences on a river, not a drainage ditch. To them, there is no benefit that can be foreseen in risking environmental damage to their properties and paying an unfair and unnecessary tax on their land.

So far, the board has been heavily criticized for not examining other options before making the decision to raise taxes and change the status of the river. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) representatives were not even contacted to provide input or assistance on the issue.

The best hope for protecting the Elkhart River lies in a possible reversal of the decision. Area groups, including Acres Inc., Sylvan Lake Improvement Association, and the Izaak Walton League, have already begun the process by circulating a petition to local individuals, organizations, and other legal entities. If 10% of the property owners in the watershed sign the petition, the drainage board would have to conduct another hearing.

BEACH ACT IN INDIANA

PUBLIC INPUT INVITED FOR INDIANA'S LAKE MICHIGAN BEACHES

Save the Dunes Conservation Fund (SDCF), Indiana University Northwest, and the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program, with guidance from the Interagency Task Force on E. Coli, are developing a plan to improve consistency in monitoring and notification of beach closings and advisories for Indiana beach goers. This plan is in response to the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act requirements.

Congress passed the BEACH Act in October 2000 in order to "reduce the risk of disease to users of the nation's recreational waters." The legislation, which amended the federal Clean Water Act, requires states to adopt new or revised water quality standards by April 10, 2004 for pathogens and pathogen indicators for which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published criteria. It also requires EPA to further study the health effects of disease-causing pathogens. The Act authorizes EPA to award grants to states to develop and implement a program for monitoring and assessing coastal recreation waters used by the public, which include the Great Lakes, for pathogens and pathogen indicators (such as Escherichia coli).

Project partners are working with beach owners and operators along Lake Michigan, as well as the general public, to develop this plan, which must meet performance criteria set by

the EPA. These criteria address the following: evaluation and classification; monitoring; public notification and prompt risk communication; and public evaluation.

Surveys have been conducted and their results have been used to evaluate and classify Indiana's Lake Michigan beaches regarding the potential risk of disease to swimmers. These classifications will guide the allocation of resources for implementing new and improved monitoring and notification procedures. Public opinion is necessary in response to these rankings. Any input could reveal additional contamination sources, as well as identify other affected beaches that require attention.

Project partners will also be relying on public input to develop a plan that most effectively notifies beach goers of the health risks at specific beaches based on current monitoring results. This plan will recommend notification procedures for beach closings through the use of beach advisory signs, the mass media, community publications, brochures, telephone hotlines, and/or Internet websites.

Three meetings have been scheduled for receiving public input in each of the three Indiana counties with Lake Michigan beaches (Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties). After consideration of comments and a review of applicable grant conditions, a final plan will be prepared for submission to EPA.

For more information on the scheduled meetings please contact Sandra Wilmore at (219) 879-3564, Email: sand@savedunes.org.



CITIZEN LAKE PROTECTION IN JAPAN AND THE GREAT LAKES

By: JOEL BRAMMEIER

By design, most grassroots environmental groups tend to focus on issues and concerns local to their communities. One of the functions of the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network is to provide local groups around the basin with a means of contacting each other for empowerment and support.

Occasionally, though, we get a chance to expand our network and see just how far-reaching the grassroots movement is around the world. In Illinois, the Lake Michigan Federation has been fortunate to be part of an exchange of groups between Japan and the Great Lakes basin. This past March, two staff members from the Federation joined six other Great Lakes grassroots representatives for an opportunity to examine how communities have organized around large lake resources in Shiga prefecture, Japan.

Shiga is home to Japan's enormous freshwater treasure, Lake Biwa. While not nearly the size of the Great Lakes, many of the problems Lake Biwa faces find close parallels within our own backyards. Over 14 million people rely on the lake for their drinking water. Similar to the southern basin of Lake Michigan, industry has found a home on the shores of Lake Biwa due to the easy availability of fresh cooling water. Natural shorelines have been degraded due to development and surging population growth, and most streams that flow into the lake have been channelized in the name of flood control and agriculture. A visit to a local aquarium provided us with a picture of a "least wanted" list of fish that have invaded Lake Biwa. Among them: Illinois' popular smallmouth bass.

Like the Great Lakes, a wide variety of citizen groups have sprung up around Lake Biwa. Each group has dedicated itself to exploring some facet of ecological degradation within the basin and determining how individual participants can effect positive change within their communities. Some groups, like the Friends of Lake Biwa, have chosen an outspoken advocacy approach to ecological protection due to concerns that the outside world is not seeing an accurate portrayal of Lake Biwa's environmental problems. On the other hand, the Tenjin River Watershed Environment Conservation Association has chosen to focus its efforts on volunteer activities designed to restore specific species to a stretch of river running near their homes. Regardless of the scale of their efforts, each group we encountered represented a clear commonality: citizen participation and influence on local government.

In June 2003, several of the Japanese groups sent representatives to Chicago for the International Association for Great Lakes Research / International Lake Environment Committee conference. The Illinois Hub network was able to return the favor of hospitality shown to them in Japan by arranging meetings for the Japanese representatives with several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that exemplify citizen participation in local government. For example, to illustrate how citizen participants can help recover biodiversity in an urban setting, we toured prime Chicago lakefront bird habitat courtesy of the Bird Conservation Network. For insight into how community residents can effectively deal with industrial pollution in their neighborhoods, we spoke with members of Chicago's Southeast Environmental Task Force.

While the day-to-day activities of Great Lakes grassroots groups and GLAHNF Hubs are directed by local events, it is heartening to experience the show of international support for grassroots efforts exemplified by this exchange process. The expansion of our network beyond the Great Lakes Basin has provided lessons that each participant has brought back to their "home turf" to continue the upswell of support for community-based environmental efforts.

WAUKEGAN RIVER RESTORATION

With a big thank you to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Waukegan Harbor Citizens Advisory group was able to start a new phase in cleanup and protection of the Waukegan River on May 17, 2003. Approximately 20 volunteers from the community came out to pick up garbage, perform streambank stabilization, and remove invasive plants from the river ravines. This first step in citizen participation in river restoration will be followed by community meetings designed to recruit a sustained volunteer corps as stewards of the Waukegan River.

On June 14, the Waukegan Park District officially opened the "new and improved" Roosevelt Park in downtown Waukegan just upstream from the first restoration site. And the playground equipment isn't the only improvement! The District has stabilized the banks of the river using native plantings, and has a long-term vision for returning the river to its former status as an urban reservoir of biodiversity. With local officials expounding on the benefits that natural habitats bring to a community, the river continues to fill its role as a prime natural asset of the city of Waukegan.



TAXPAYERS SUBSIDIZING WETLAND DESTRUCTION

BY: MOLLY FLANAGAN

Sportsmen and conservationists in Ohio were successful in using the state budget process to highlight problems with Ohio's wetland and stream protection regulations. Disgusted that ordinary taxpayers are footing the majority of the bill for a \$1 million state program that enables developers, mining companies, and others to drain, pave, or otherwise destroy Ohio's remaining wetlands and to reroute small streams, they demanded the legislature to force builders and others that profit from destroying natural resources and wildlife to compensate the public for its loss.

In May, the Ohio Environmental Council, along with the Ohio Smallmouth Alliance, and the League of Ohio Sportsmen held a press event that generated statewide media coverage by focusing on the meager 6% that developers' fees currently cover for the wetlands program, leaving taxpayers to pay the remaining 94%.

According to the sportsmen and conservation groups, it costs the state approximately \$7,000 to review and administer each permit. Current industry fees range from \$15 to a maximum of \$200. The fee was last revised in 1982 under Governor Jim Rhodes.

The groups proposed that applicants for permits to fill a wetland or stream protected by the Clean Water Act pay a \$5,000 application fee, an additional \$2,000 per wetland acre, and \$2 per linear foot of stream impacted by the project. They estimate that this fee overhaul could generate \$560,000, about half of the program's projected cost for next year. In contrast, budget projections reveal that taxpayers are slated to pay \$900,000, or 90% of what it will take to keep the program operating over the next state fiscal year, while developers, will pay only \$34,000 in fees, or less than 3% of program costs.

Marshes, swamps, bogs, and other wetlands offer many benefits. Wetlands clean water by straining sediments and pollution; control flooding by absorbing and slowly releasing storm water; provide important fish and wildlife habitat; act as a nursery for rare and threatened species; and support hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.

Ohio is one of only eight states that have lost an estimated 80% of their original wetlands; draining and converting them to farmland, filling them for housing developments and industrial facilities, and even using them as dumps.

State regulators however, continue to approve dozens of wetland destruction projects each year. Conservationists point to Ohio's low wetland-impact fees as one glaring reason. "Industry is enjoying a bonanza at the expense of Ohio's wetlands and wildlife," said Mike Utt, president of the Ohio Smallmouth Alliance.

The important efforts of these sportsmen and conservationists have helped to raise awareness among Ohioans, laying the foundation for the removal of the wetland destruction subsidy in the future.

VICTORY FOR OHIO

Victory for the Friends of Sheldon Marsh



The dike and channel running through Sheldon Marsh.

In April, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) finalized the denial of Barnes Nursery's 401 water quality permit. The Nursery dropped their appeal to OEPA effectively ending the Nursery's application for the Army Corps 404 after-the-fact permit for an illegal dike and channel constructed through the wetlands of Sheldon Marsh.

The dropping of the appeals and finalizing of the permit denial marked a hard-earned and long-awaited victory for the Friends of Sheldon Marsh (FOSM), a grassroots organization which has worked to protect Sheldon Marsh from the dike and channel since July of 2000. With the OEPA's denial of the Water Quality Certification and the effective end of the Nursery's application for the Army 404 after-the-fact permit, the Nursery is not allowed to expand their dike and channel or to continue benefiting from the damage they have caused to Sheldon Marsh.

FOSM are now working to have the wetland restored to its pre-construction condition and for the Army Corps to live up to its earlier demand that the nursery restore the wetland in absence of the 404 permit. If the dike and channel are allowed to remain in the category III wetlands, it could set a dangerous precedent for undermining wetlands laws nationally.



DAM FAILURE CAUSES MAJOR FLOODING

By: SCOTT MCEWEN

On Tuesday, May 13th, high water from the previous weekend's rainstorms knocked out a bridge over Boise Creek in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, due north of the Dead River Basin, near the City of Marquette, and not far from Lake Superior. Two days later, an earthen dike at the dam on Silver Lake Basin also burst, causing massive flooding downstream on the Dead River. About 9 billion gallons of water rushed down the Dead River toward the Hoist Basin, 15 miles away. Nearly 2,000 area residents in the Marquette area were evacuated for safety reasons, including the fear that the Hoist Dam (built in 1916) might fail because the Dead River Basin was now at a critical flood stage. Area roads were flooded and impassable and floodwaters were spreading out toward populated areas.

The environmental damage done to forest areas and fisheries due to dam failure has been extreme. Trees, logs, railroad ties, and other flood debris had made its way into Lake Superior by early the next day. Erosion damage will be one of the main problems for the watershed's recovery. "We have a 25-mile swath of erosion starting at the Silver Lake Basin, so there will be countless erosion sites as the water levels drop", said Carl Lindquist of the Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership. He added that the main concern around the erosion sites would be sedimentation, with the rushing water dragging and pushing rock, dirt, and other debris along with it as it rushes toward Lake Superior. The sedimentation will cover the aquatic habitat for fish, aquatic insects, and other water-dependent wildlife. Over 130,000 Chinook salmon being raised by the DNR have died due to a lack of oxygen from the silt and debris. A silt line was clearly visible 1,000 yards off shore in Marquette Bay within 24 hours of the initial dike failure.

The cleanup work and repairs will be massive. Several bridges are out and many roads flooded. A natural gas line ruptured, and water and sanitary sewer mains needed to be shut off to facilitate repairs. On May 16th, Governor Jennifer Granholm declared a State of Emergency for Marquette County. The Natural Resources Conservation Service has identified nine sites in Marquette County that require immediate stabilization. Initial estimates of flood damage are \$100 million.

So who or what was at fault? Surely dikes should be able to handle a heavy rain occasionally. Was there a structural problem with the dike? Had it been inspected recently? Have

the other, mostly very old, dams downstream been inspected routinely? Has the cumulative effect of a cascade of dam failures been assessed and an action plan put in place by local, state, and federal officials? Has thought been given to whether these dikes and dams really need to be there? There are no immediate answers to these questions, but many organizations will undoubtedly be searching for answers as the cleanup continues. For more information on this flood and/or to keep up-to-date on the restoration and cleanup efforts please visit: www.miningjournal.net.

TO DAM OR NOT TO DAM

The dam failure in the Marquette area brings up, once again, the issue of whether dams ought to be on rivers at all. Although the placement of any dam needs to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, there are many arguments against having dams.

DAMS:

- Reduce river levels, affecting healthy instream ecosystems
- Block rivers, preventing the flow of nutrients, impeding the migration of fish and other wildlife, and blocking recreational use.
- Slow rivers. Many fish species, such as salmon, depend on steady flows to flush them downriver early in their lives and guide them upstream to spawn. Reservoirs disorient fish and significantly increase the length of their migration.
- Alter water temperatures. By slowing water flow, most dams increase water temperatures. Others decrease temperatures by releasing cooled water from the bottoms of reservoirs. Fish and other species are sensitive to these temperature irregularities, which frequently destroy native, and often rare, populations.
- Alter timing of flows, cause reservoir levels to fluctuate, and decrease oxygen levels in the waters (when oxygen-deprived water is released from behind a dam, it can kill fish and vegetation downstream).
- Hold back silt, debris, and nutrients. By slowing flows, dams allow silt to collect on river bottoms and bury spawning habitat. Silt trapped above dams can accumulate heavy metals and other pollutants. Dams also trap gravel, logs, and other debris, eliminating their potential use downstream as sources of valuable food and habitat.

Both the River Alliance of Wisconsin (GLAHNF Advisors), and Wisconsin Wetlands Association (GLAHNF WI Hub) have excellent information on this topic if you want to contact them.



Minnesota Update



PROTECTING THE BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE AREA WILDERNESS

BY: JENNIFER TAHTINEN

Minnesotans are fortunate enough to have an international treasure in their backyard and many citizens are fighting to ensure its protection into the future. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) is the most popular wilderness area in the country, its 1,100 lakes span over a million acres and provide some of the best paddling in the world.

The Boundary Waters was declared a fully protected federal wilderness area in 1978. The BWCAW Wilderness Act of 1978 provides for the “protection, enhancement, and preservation of the natural values of the lakes, waterways, and associated forested areas” of the designated area. As a result, under federal mandate, activities in the area are restricted in order to maintain the BWCAW’s relatively pristine nature. There are restrictions on the number of people allowed into the Boundary Waters, as well as restrictions on logging activities, motorized vehicles, and the types of materials allowed (glass, aluminum and tin are not permitted within the confines of the BWCAW). These restrictions serve to keep the BWCAW a place “untrammelled by man.”

Keeping the Boundary Waters a protected area has been a challenge, as logging, timber, and development interests challenge the protections. Fire suppression and loss of native species are also a major threat to the area’s ecosystem. As a result, the grassroots organization Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness (Friends) formed to fight for the continued protection and enhancement of the BWCAW and Quetico, its adjoining park in Ontario. The Friends are based in Minneapolis and have 3,000 members working to preserve this amazing area.

The Friends have worked for decades to make sure a wilderness-oriented voice is heard in legislation and policy debates. They also raise funds to acquire lands surrounding the Boundary Waters, hoping to protect and expand the wilderness area. They fight the building of roads, recognizing the development threats that arise once more roads are built.

In the last few months the future of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness has come into question. As a result the Friends have raised their collective voice in opposition to proposals, which would weaken protections and would allow the selling off of parcels of land. The Friends are advocating for the expansion of the BWCAW instead.

In May, a bill went through the House containing an amendment that would have auctioned off pieces of BWCAW land to raise funds for the state. The Friends launched a campaign against the proposed “auctioning” of land, calling on the citizens of Minnesota to voice their opinions and support for the protection of the BWCAW. Their efforts resulted in a massive public outcry against selling BWCAW lands. The Friends were successful and the BWCAW language was removed from the bill.

Further, in early June, Governor Tim Pawlenty signed into law legislation that extends state protections to thousands of acres of state-owned land within the Boundary Waters. The 18,000 acres that are now protected from permanent dwellings, motorized vehicles and roads make-up the first area in Minnesota to receive state-issued wilderness protection. The Friends were happy with the legislation and are glad that the state has become a partner in managing an area treasured by so many Minnesotans. Friends’ Executive Director, Melissa Lindsay, said, “In spite of this law’s signing, there clearly are a group of organized and powerful interests that want to undermine the beauty and protection of the Boundary Waters. We will continue to call upon all Minnesotans to protect our wild places.”

True to their words, the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness have proposed the addition of 90,000 acres to the BWCAW. In an 18-month study of 120,000 acres in the Superior National Forest, the group identified the parcels of land that are among the last wild and roadless places in the state of Minnesota. The study was funded by a variety of businesses and foundations and was supported by a coalition of nonprofit organizations across Minnesota.

Officials are currently in the process of revising the 15-year management plan of the Superior National Forest, which is adjacent to the BWCAW, and the Forest Service has made public that their preferred option is not to add more land to the wilderness. However, that outlook could change based on public comments now being received, and the supervisor of the Forest has lauded the report, saying that “it constitutes the kind of substantial information that is just what we’re looking for.” The fight to keep protections in place for the BWCAW will be a never-ending battle for Minnesotans, ensuring that the places we enjoy today are here for future generations.



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES OF NEW YORK TO SERVE AS THE NEW GLAHNF NEW YORK HUB

BY KAREN DE VITO

Beginning this July, Environmental Advocates of New York (EANY) began serving as the New York Hub of the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund. Environmental Advocates of New York is a 501 (c)(3) statewide advocacy organization that serves the people of New York as an effective and aggressive watchdog and advocate on nearly every important state environmental issue. Through advocacy, coalition building, citizen education, and policy development, we work to safeguard public health and preserve our unique natural heritage. For 34 years, EANY has sought to represent the environmental and public health concerns of all of New York State and to advocate for solutions to the most critical statewide ecological concerns.

EANY currently has programs in the following areas:

- Contaminated Land: Cleaning up Superfund and brownfield sites
- Clean Air and Energy: Reforming power plant siting, protecting air quality, and encouraging clean energy
- Global Warming: Working for a cap on carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and launching the 10% Challenge
- Recycling and Waste Management: Expanding the bottle bill, banning burn barrels, and managing e-waste and tires
- Pesticides: Banning aesthetic use of pesticides and addressing urban pesticide use
- Environmental Health: Reducing mercury risk, increasing nuclear safety, creating healthy schools, and advocating for environmental justice
- Water and Wetlands: Working on Great Lakes Water diversion, water issues in the Susquehanna River Basin, PCBs, and protecting New York's wetlands
- Adirondacks, Parks, and Wilderness: Promoting land acquisition, sound parks and forest management practices, and preserving the Environmental Protection Fund
- Regulatory Watch: Keeping our eye on the agencies that develop policy and enforce environmental laws

As part of our initiative to achieve a stronger presence in western New York, EANY recently created a Western New York Advisory Board. Through the Board, we hope to gain a clearer understanding of the most important environmental issues in western New York and provide better representation for these issues in Albany.

Since our creation, we have consistently been involved in water and aquatic habitat issues. As the New York State affiliate to the National Wildlife Federation, we have been actively advocating for support of the Clean Water Authority Restoration Act, which would reaffirm historical jurisdiction of the 1972 Clean Water Act. We are currently active participants in the Great Lakes Annex project and have recently become more involved in wetlands protection as a result of the SWANCC decision and federal threats to the Clean Water Act. Our efforts concerning increased protection of wetlands at the state level are described in greater detail below.

If you would like to receive any additional information about Environmental Advocates of New York and our work as the New York GLAHNF Hub, please contact Karen De Vito at (518) 462-5526 ext. 235, or kdevito@eany.org.

New York State Works Towards Greater Protection of Wetlands

Until recently, wetlands in New York State have been protected by both a federal wetlands program operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a state program operated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Wetlands that are at least 12.4 acres are regulated under the New York State program and the federal program addressed wetlands that fell below the 12.4-acre threshold. Unfortunately, the Bush Administration's interpretation of the January 2003 SWANCC ruling has drastically curtailed the federal wetlands protection program, creating a gap in the protection of New York's wetlands.

In an attempt to fill this gap, and ensure continued protection of New York's valuable wetlands, new legislation was introduced by the chairs of the Environmental Conservation Committees in both the NY Assembly and Senate in April of 2003. If passed, this legislation (A.7905/S.4480) would lower the threshold for jurisdictional wetlands to one acre or larger. It would also provide protection to those wetlands that are adjacent to water bodies, or of significant local importance. The bill goes on to change the basis for jurisdiction from one of presence on the state wetlands maps to a determination of whether or not the lands in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



MAKING A CASE FOR CONSERVATION ISSUES

By: LINDA PIM

With a provincial election postponed until either fall 2003 or even spring 2004, aquatic habitat activists have additional time to build their case for making conservation issues a strong focus in the election campaign, whenever it may be. We report on two key issues here.

Watershed-Based Water Source Protection

As a result of the Walkerton water tragedy of May 2000, in which seven people died and over 2,000 became sick in the town of Walkerton because of municipal water contaminated with a virulent strain of the E. coli bacterium, the Ontario government ordered a public inquiry. The Walkerton Inquiry issued two lengthy and groundbreaking reports in 2002. It stated that the primary line of defence for safe drinking water is to protect water at its source through sound, watershed-based land use planning.

Stemming from the inquiry's report, the Ontario government struck the Advisory Committee on Watershed-Based Source Protection Planning, which included representatives from environmental groups, conservation authorities, municipalities, developers, and the agricultural sector. The final report of the committee was issued in April 2003. You can access it at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/techdocs/4383.htm. The report contains over 50 practical recommendations on how to set up a watershed-based, drinking water protection system for all of Ontario.

Key among the report's recommendations is the importance of grassroots, community involvement in implementing better watershed management and better drinking water source protection. The report recommends that each watershed in Ontario have a Source Protection Planning Committee (SPPC) to help the watershed's conservation authority to develop a water source protection plan. The advisory committee recommends that the SPPC needs grassroots representatives from the local community, including First Nations. To keep in touch with progress on implementation of the committee's recommendations, please visit the website of the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) at www.cela.ca.

Highway Planning Gone Wild

Conservationists across south-central Ontario are up in arms about the number of new highways or highway extensions being planned at a time when the provincial government is talking a good line about "smart growth." All research points to highways fuelling urban sprawl unless accompanied by tight laws and policies for urban planning to contain the footprint of cities and towns. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, supported by grassroots community groups in the affected areas, has called for a moratorium on all planning for new provincial highways until the provincial government completes a comprehensive "smart" transportation strategy that puts a strong emphasis on public transit and fully integrates transportation planning with urban planning.

Among the proposed highways already in the planning process – which would destroy hundreds of wetlands and other important natural heritage features – are the Mid-Peninsula Highway from Fort Erie (near Niagara Falls) to the Greater Toronto Area; the northerly extension of Highway 427

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VICTORY FOR ONTARIO

Grassroots Group Secures Final Victory in Cloud Bay Wetland Case

There is a happy and final resolution to the struggle to protect the Cloud Bay wetland south of Thunder Bay, Ontario (see cover article, GLAHNews, Winter 2002). After the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) ruled in August 2002 that a seasonal trailer park should not be permitted adjacent to this Provincially Significant Wetland, the developer and the Municipality of Neebing jointly filed an application for leave to appeal the OMB decision to the Divisional Court of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. In a six-page July 2003 decision, the court denied the application. The Shoreline Stewardship Association of Cloud Bay is savouring this victory! The group hopes to have at least some of its outstanding bills paid by the fees, which are expected to be levied by the court against Neebing and the developer.

Wisconsin Update

WISCONSIN WETLANDS ASSOCIATION

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REPORT ON DAM REMOVAL CHARTS COURSE FOR FUTURE REMOVAL EFFORTS

BY: CHARLIE LUTHIN

The River Alliance of Wisconsin and Trout Unlimited have published a report, *Restoring the Flow: Improving Selective Small Dam Removal Understanding and Practice in the Great Lakes States*, which summarizes dam removal policy and management recommendations from more than 40 river restoration experts from around the Great Lakes. It is the product of a unique gathering of resource professionals, conservationists, and academics with over 100 years of combined dam removal experience and involvement with more than 100 dam removals across the Great Lakes region. The recommendations in this report are intended to guide policies and initiatives and to improve the understanding and use of small dam removal as a fisheries and river restoration tool in the Great Lakes region.

Nationwide, more than 500 dams have been removed in the last century, over half of these in the Great Lakes region. Selective small dam removal is recognized as one of the most effective and economical river restoration tools today. But dam removal can also be a contentious issue within local

communities, invoking concerns about economic impacts, public safety, and the loss of impoundments created by dams.

While there is a wealth of dam removal experience in the region, there is a need to more effectively collect and share information, communicate, and inform affected communities about the potential benefits and impacts of small dam removal. This report is a first concrete step to meeting these needs.

Wisconsin continues to lead the nation in removal of old, unsafe and uneconomical dams from public waters, and recently made history with the Baraboo River dam removals. Four dams were removed, restoring the entire river - over 115 miles - to free-flowing, making this the largest river restoration through dam removal in US history. More than 100 dams have been removed from Wisconsin waters in the last 50 years.

The report is available online at the websites of both Trout Unlimited (www.tu.org) and River Alliance of Wisconsin (www.wisconsinrivers.org/SmallDams/restoring.pdf).

COASTAL INVASIVE PLANT CAMPAIGN

Last summer Wisconsin Wetlands Association, with the support of the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the help of more than twenty natural resource agencies, conservation and education organizations, and individuals, coordinated a road survey of thirteen Great Lakes coastal counties. More than 140 volunteers logged more than 6,000 miles and found more than 600 sites infested with purple loosestrife. The results of the 2002 survey can be found on the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission's website: www.glifwc-maps.org.

This year, thanks to continued funding from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and American Transmission Company, and with new funding from the Great Lakes Protection Fund, We Energies Foundation, and Dairyland Power Cooperative, the invasive plant program will be expanded. Approximately half of Wisconsin - 30 to 40 counties - will be surveyed for purple loosestrife, and all coastal counties will also be surveyed for the invasive giant reed grass (*Phragmites*). Citizen volunteers are being trained in a series of short workshops in each county. Additional training will be provided to individuals who wish to participate in the purple loosestrife biological control program coordinated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. For more information check WWA's website: www.wiscwetlands.org.

STEWARDSHIP FUND CUTS

Legislature Makes Drastic Cuts to Conservation Lands Budget

The powerful Joint Finance Committee (JFC) of the State Legislature has passed a biennial budget proposal that would significantly cut the state's very popular Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund that has successfully helped protect more than 225,000 acres of sensitive lands in Wisconsin. The Fund, originally authorized at \$60 million/year for ten years, has been slashed by \$245 million by the JFC. The Stewardship Fund is a bond program, and costs the state approximately \$5 million per year to manage—not a significant amount when one considers the state budget deficit to be \$3 billion! In addition, JFC has insisted that the Department of Natural Resources sell off \$40 million in state lands to help with the state's deficit. Furthermore, the Legislature is insisting on having review and oversight over every purchase made under the program...thereby making every conservation purchase political. The sweeping changes proposed for conservation land acquisitions are less a matter of fiscal concern, more a product of public land philosophy and political disparity. Governor Doyle (D) has committed to vetoing all of these proposed changes to the Stewardship Fund by the Republican-dominated State Legislature.



*A waterfall in southern Ontario.
Credit: Marie J. Thomson*

to connect up with Highway 400 near Barrie (in the Lake Huron watershed); and the easterly extension of Highway 407 to connect up with Highways 35 and 115 leading to Peterborough (in the Lake Ontario watershed). Local citizens' groups are active in challenging the need for these new highways and viable non-highway alternatives for moving people and goods. To get in touch with these groups, please contact lindap@ontarionature.org

Grassroots groups fighting these highway proposals were appalled when in May, the provincial government introduced for first reading in the legislature a bill called the Smart Transportation Act (Bill 25). You can read the bill on the Legislature's website at <http://www.ontla.on.ca>.

While Bill 25 proposes legislative changes to facilitate high-occupancy vehicle lanes and carpooling, buried deep within it are provisions that would virtually eliminate requirements for any meaningful environmental assessment process in the planning of these highways, including any discussion of the need for the highways and alternatives to constructing the highway in question. For more information on and analysis of the bill, visit the website of the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development at www.pembina.org. Bill 25 is unlikely to survive in its current form because of the public outcry over its treatment of environmental assessment and the inordinate number of new powers it gives the provincial Minister of Transportation, even usurping some previous roles for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in highway planning matters. Bill 25 may die after a provincial election this autumn or next spring.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



August 23 - September 21, 2003, *2003 Coastweeks*, Ohio's Lake Erie Shore, coordinated by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission.

Environmental organizations, schools, libraries, community groups and individuals

throughout the Lake Erie region are encouraged to plan activities for the 2003 Coastweeks observance.

For more information contact: Jill Woodyard at 419-245-2514, E-mail: jill_woodyard@ameritech.net, or visit <http://web.epa.state.oh.us/oleo/cw/cw.html>.

August 29-30, 2003, *Purple Loosestrife Workshop* Spooner, WI
A free workshop to share information, pool ideas, and forge strategies to control this invasive plant. Participants will be trained in the Wisconsin Wetlands Association's Purple Loosestrife Monitoring Program. For more information contact: Wendy Smith at 219-926-7561 ext. 349, E-mail: Wendy_W_Smith@nps.gov.

September 7-12, 2003, *Temperate Wetland Restoration Training Course* Romulus, MI, Ontario, Canada, held by Trent University
This course offers practical field sessions and classroom instruction on the principles and techniques of wetland

restoration. The course travels to several stops within southern and central Ontario to show a variety of wetland types and methods of restoration. For more information contact: Leslie Collins at 705-755-2269, E-mail: lcollins@trentu.ca, or visit <http://www.trentu.ca/wsc/wetlandstorecourse.shtml>.

September 8-11, 2003, *11th National Nonpoint Source Monitoring Workshop*, Dearborn, Mich.

This workshop will share information on the effectiveness of best management practices in improving water quality, effective monitoring techniques, and statistical analysis of watershed data. For more information contact: Tammy Taylor at 765-494-1814, E-mail: taylor@ctic.purdue.edu, or visit <http://www.ctic.purdue.edu/NPSWorkshop/NPSWorkshop.html>

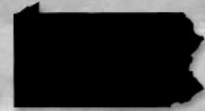
September 13-21, 2003, *Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup*, Canadian Shorelines, presented by Friends of the Environment Foundation

Join thousands of volunteers across Canada to clean up river, stream, lake, and ocean shorelines. For more information contact: Lisa Richardson at 416-848-7603, E-mail: richarl@vanaqua.org, or visit <http://www.vanaqua.org/cleanup/>.



Pennsylvania Update

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INCREASING AWARENESS OF THE EFFECTS OF PERSONAL BEHAVIOR ON WATER QUALITY

BY: SUSAN SMITH

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection issued their Lake Erie Watershed Report in May 2003. The report draws attention to acid mine drainage,

agricultural activities, and the collective effect of individual behaviors as major contributors to water pollution.

As a means of raising public awareness on one of the ways personal behavior contributes to water pollution, High school students involved in the Junior Pennsylvania Lake Erie Watershed Association (JrPLEWA) located in Erie, PA began a campaign to educate citizens on the impact litter, specifically the litter of cigarette butts, has on water quality.

Cigarette butts, which according to the Surfrider Foundation, are statistically the largest component of beach litter in the United States, are not made out of cotton but out of cellulose acetate tow (a form of plastic), which can take decades to degrade. Not only does cigarette litter ruin even the most picturesque setting, but the toxic residue in cigarette filters is damaging to the environment and poses a threat to birds and other forms of wildlife including aquatic species.

JrPLEWA decided to target the Erie bayfront to kick-off their campaign. The Lake Erie Bay area is a destination for anglers, boaters, tourists, area youth and patrons of the bayfront restaurants and the Bicentennial Tower and therefore an ideal location to begin to raise awareness of the connection between litter and water quality.

Wearing heavy plastic gloves, the students and their advisors started at the east and west slips of Dobbins Landing, on Presque Isle Bay, picking up every discarded cigarette butt



One of the JrPLEWA students and advisor Pat Lupu pick up cigarette butts along the Erie bayfront.
Credit: Susan Smith

along the way. They collected nearly 5,300, in an hour and one half. Motivated by the large amount of cigarette butts they collected, the group plans a minimum of two more cigarette butt clean-ups throughout the warmer months.

Following their cleanup of Dobbins Landing, JrPLEWA was invited to participate in the annual Discover Presque Isle July

event held at Presque Isle State Park. Event chairman, Steve McDermott, Executive Director of the Presque Isle Partnership, suggested the students patrol the Lake Erie beaches and hand out pocket ashtrays as well as litter and garbage bags to encourage beach goers to keep the watershed litter-free.

As another means of reaching out to area smokers the group seeks to place stickers in the windows of willing businesses including information encouraging smokers to dispose of cigarette butts properly.

Members of JrPLEWA have also presented their cigarette butt campaign to Erie City Council. The students asked Council members to consider adding permanent signage to already standing parking regulation signs with the message; "no butts here".

For additional information on the effects of cigarette litter please visit cigarettelitter.org.



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New York State Works Towards Greater Protection of Wetlands



question meet widely accepted criteria for wetlands. The mapping process would also be streamlined, allowing DEC to create more accurate maps, while preserving the ability of municipalities and private citizens to have input in the map development process. Other important aspects of the bill include: the elimination of the current classification system; the addition of "subdivision of property" to the list of land uses that DEC has the authority to regulate; and the removal of a provision grandfathering subdivisions and other actions in wetlands that were permitted prior to the passage of the law in 1975.

The bill has received wide support from environmental groups such as EANY, Environmental Defense, Great Lakes United, Natural Resource Defense Council, and Sierra Club. Numerous cosponsors have signed on in support of the Assembly version of the bill and it is EANY's hope that the bill will move out of committee during the 2004 legislative session.

For more information about the wetlands bill contact Karen De Vito at kdevito@eany.org or John Stouffer of the Sierra Club at sierraNY@kick.net.

Indigenous Peoples Update

GREAT LAKES UNITED

GREAT LAKES UNITED BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE-CASSETY HALL

SERVING AS HUB COORDINATOR IS MARIA MAYBEE

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NAWASH FIRST NATION ADDRESSES WATER PIPELINES IN ONTARIO

By DAVID MCLAREN, CHIPPEWAS OF NAWASH



Earlier this year, representatives of the Chippewas of Nawash were invited to speak at the first (and only) public meeting in Walkerton, Ontario for the Environmental Assessment (EA) of Walkerton's Long Term Water Supply. The Walkerton

tragedy of May 2002 shocked all of Canada. Fecal contamination in the drinking water of Walkerton, Ontario sickened 2,300 people and killed seven. Twelve hundred people remain under long-term medical treatment that may last the rest of their lives.

The Walkerton Class EA proposes four possible solutions to Walkerton's water woes: 1) upgrade the existing well field, 2) dig a new well-field, 3) construct a 50 km pipeline from Southampton on Lake Huron, or 4) build a 60 km pipeline from Wiarton on Georgian Bay.

At the public meeting, the people of Walkerton seemed to reject the pipeline options in favor of, as one speaker said, "Taking responsibility for our own water, in our own backyard". And, in a later referendum, over 80% of the residents clearly rejected the pipeline option. Nevertheless the mayors of several municipalities are fiercely lobbying Ontario and Canada for money to build a regional pipeline system that would cost close to a billion dollars (CND).

In arriving at the four options, the Class EA weighted four main "environmental" considerations: economic environment (by 30%), technical environment (by 22%), social environment (by 28%), and the natural environment (by 20%). This weight given to "natural environment" is one of the difficulties the Chippewas of Nawash have with the Class EA. Another major problem we have is that we feel the Class EA did not look at available scientific literature to assess the impact on the natural environment of any of the options offered.

We also have problems with the Class EA process itself. For example, there is neither mention of Native Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK) in the Class EA nor any attempt on the part of the consulting engineers to discover what scientific literature might say about water pipelines.

TEK (or if you prefer, indigenous science) is generally ignored by non-indigenous governments when they make planning decisions. This, despite Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which insists governments and resource managers seek out TEK and incorporate indigenous



knowledge in their environmental planning. There is a great deal of concurrence between TEK and leading-edge western science. For example, both agree that the best way to deal with compromised rivers is to stop the source of harm and let them heal themselves.

To make matters worse, at least one municipality in Nawash's traditional territories is using, without permission, First Nation proprietary maps and information to help them make their case to government for funding a regional pipeline. This kind of misuse of First Nation's information does not bode well for a recently proposed Water Source Protection Framework for Ontario in which First Nations's TEK and environmental ethic will most likely be drowned out by the municipal presence on Source Protection Planning Committees.

By way of summary there are two points that need to be emphasized. First, there is enough unknown about the effects of the proposed pipelines on the environment, and enough scientific evidence from studies of other, similar, projects to ask for a bump-up to a full individual EA, which the Minister of Environment can order under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. Second, our experience demonstrates that First Nations need to be deeply involved in source protection planning, as a well-funded center for scientific research and TEK that would shed more light on proposals affecting watersheds in traditional territories – and not just as stakeholders on a committee.

For additional information please visit: www.bmts.com/~dibauidjimoh/page4.html

David McLaren works for the Chippewas of Nawash on environmental and communications issues. He has also worked for the Canadian Environmental Law Association and is currently on the board of the coalition for the Niagara Escarpment. He can be contacted at d.mclaren@bmts.com.

Great Lakes Directory

THE GREAT LAKES DIRECTORY

The Great Lakes Directory is an extensive online resource of environmental information related to the Great Lakes Basin, including listings for over 1,000 environmental organizations.

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c/o Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
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*Silver water lapping at beach, Lake Michigan Tawas Pt. State Park,
Michigan Sea Grant Extension, Carol Y. Swinehart*