

Michigan Water Network

Interesting and important news, data, facts, etc. pertaining to the water-related issues of Michigan and the Great Lakes.

“All things water”

August 2011

Did you know August is Water Quality Month?

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EPA Awards Ohio \$4.5 Million in Grant Money

This week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded organizations, agencies and universities working in Ohio \$4,508,572 in grants under the [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative \(GLRI\)](#). The 11 grants are the first of 70 totaling nearly \$30 million that EPA is awarding under the GLRI in 2011. EPA will announce additional investments across the Great Lakes basin in the weeks ahead. For more information, click here

[\(http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/491FE2D9B0B77CF852578E600640125\)](http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/491FE2D9B0B77CF852578E600640125).

New Asian Carp Evidence Emerges

There is new evidence that Asian carp may have slipped past electric barriers in Chicago-area waterways. The barriers are meant to keep the fish from reaching the Great Lakes.

The Army Corps of Engineers turned up nine positive tests for Asian carp DNA out of hundreds taken from Chicago-area waterways.

Federal officials say that's not proof the invasive species is getting closer to Lake Michigan, or that it poses an imminent threat of infesting the Great Lakes.

The state of Michigan is suing the federal government to get the shipping locks shut down as an emergency precaution. The full article can be found here (<http://www.michiganradio.org/post/asian-carp-evidence-renews-calls-action>).

Ohio Governor Vetoes Lake Erie Bill

Gov. John Kasich recently vetoed a bill that would have allowed Ohio factories to pull more water out of Lake Erie, amid pressure from governors from other Great Lakes states who expressed concern about the measure.

Under the bill, businesses would be able to take an average of 5 million gallons of water a day from Lake Erie over a 90-day period and 2 million gallons from rivers and groundwater feeding into the lake. Companies that surpass that amount would need a permit. The bill would also create a water withdrawal regulatory program.

Environmental groups and former Republican Govs. Bob Taft and George Voinovich of Ohio said the legislation could end up harming Lake Erie, the shallowest of the Great Lakes. Supporters have argued that increased water use for businesses would bring new work to the state's industrial belt and to cities such as Cleveland and Toledo, which have lost thousands of jobs in recent years.

Click here (<http://www.foxtoledo.com/dpp/news/ohio/ohio-govs-decision-expected-on-great-lakes-bill>) for more information on this bill.

MDEQ Announces \$4 Million in Available Grant Monies; Awards Beach Monitoring and Water Quality Grants

On August 1, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality announced nearly \$4 million in available grants to protect, restore and manage watersheds. The grant program is open to state agencies, local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Proposals are requested for watershed management planning projects as well as projects that implement previously approved watershed management plans.

Notices of Intent are due Sept. 7. Full applications from invited applicants are due Oct. 19. Full text of the Request for Proposals, including eligibility criteria and priorities as well as forms and instructions can be found here (<http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3308-260120--00.html>).

DEQ recently awarded 13 Inland Lake Beach Monitoring grants, totaling \$184,521, to assist local governments monitoring Michigan's inland lake beaches. Funding for these grants was made available through the Clean Michigan Initiative-Clean Water Fund. Click here (<http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3308-259731--00.html>) for a list of communities that received grant funding.

DEQ has also awarded 11 water quality grants totaling more than \$3.2 million to support watershed planning efforts and permanently protect and restore rivers and wetlands. The DEQ will work with nonprofit entities and other federal, state, and local partners to implement the water quality grants. The planning grants require the various organizations to work together to identify and solve water quality problems, and the implementation grants protect high-quality waters and help improve degraded waters.

For a list of recipients, click here (<http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3308-259732--00.html>).

Plaster Creek Receives EPA Grant

Plaster Creek Stewards, a group of Calvin College staff, is getting a \$58,500 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant to improve the quality of one of the region's most-polluted streams. The money is being distributed by two organizations, River Network and Groundwork USA, that promote watershed protection and community renewal nationwide.

The grant will fund outreach and education efforts as the local group strives to mobilize agricultural communities upstream and low-income neighborhoods downstream in support of a shared goal: healing Plaster Creek.

Initiated in 2004 at Calvin, which sits partly in the 58-square-mile Plaster Creek watershed, the Stewards have teamed with several churches and environmental groups on a mission to improve the stream, which suffers from a variety of ills.

The grant, one of five awarded nationwide, will fund workshops for urban and rural churches and educators within the watershed, for example. It also will support the group's continued research on the creek, which is done with Calvin students, and ongoing restoration, including construction of rain gardens, removal of invasive plants and projects like last week's tree planting.

An interactive website of restoration efforts and an oral-history project also are planned.

Click here

(http://www.mlive.com/a2z/index.ssf/2011/06/plaster_creek_stewards_to_receive_58500_epa_grant.html) for more information on the recipients of this grant.

High Algae Levels in Bay City Lead to 'Musty' Water Taste

The musty, or dirty, taste is due to a larger than normal bloom of blue-green algae in the Saginaw Bay – the source for most of the county's drinking water. Water officials say the water is still safe to drink.

Extremely high temperatures recently have brought a higher level of blue-green algae to the area than normal. While treating the drinking water removes the algae, it releases a compound, when broken down, that leaves that dirty taste in the water. Plant workers have put an oxidizer into the water treatment and amped up the amount of ozone — an oxidant known to treat the algae compound.

For additional information, click [here](#).

Great Lakes Information Network List Serv

The [GLIN](#) hosts more than 100 e-mail lists on a range of topics. Some are private for people participating on certain groups or project teams; others are public and open to anyone with an e-mail account.

To subscribe to any of these valuable sources of information, click here (<http://www.great-lakes.net/lists/>).

Lake Macatawa Study

A study is now under way to find out why Lake Macatawa turns a murky brown in early July. The \$500,000 study, a partnership of the Macatawa Watershed Project, Hope College and the Outdoor Discovery Center Macatawa Greenway, involves collecting samples to find the sources of sediment and E. coli in the lake and its feeder waterways. Private donors, headed up by the Dick and Betsy DeVos and Jim and Donna Brooks families, are funding the study, which is expected to take a year and a half to complete.

To read more about this study, click here (http://www.mlive.com/a2z/index.ssf/2011/07/macatawa_watershed_project_hope_college_outdoor_discovery_center_macatawa_greenway_team_up_on_lake_m.html).

Learn Proven Green Practices for Clean Water in Michigan

The Alliance of Downriver Watersheds (in southeast Michigan), with funding assistance from the Michigan Nonpoint Source Program by the US EPA, is hosting a one-day conference on **“Using Green Practices to Improve Water Quality and Save Money.”**

Learn from national, state, and local leaders who are using green and blue infrastructure and low impact development practices to address stormwater management, including the City of Milwaukee, one of three Great Lakes & St. Lawrence cities to be recognized for its contribution to stormwater management through green infrastructure.

For more information, including online registration, speaker information and conference program please click here (www.allianceofdownriverwatersheds.com).

Sewage Epidemiology

Last year, researchers at the Norwegian Institute for Water Research monitored the illegal drug habits of half a million

people in Oslo by chemically sifting through the sewers. The work is an example of the emerging field of “sewage epidemiology.”

The idea is that screening for drugs that pass through the body and then get flushed down the toilet may be one of the fastest, most accurate ways to assess a community’s drug use.

For more information on this study and the growing field of sewage epidemiology, click here (<http://blogs.smithsonianmag.com/science/2011/06/sewage-epidemiology-not-just-a-pipe-dream/>).

Northern Snakehead Fish a Threat to the Great Lakes

If you think Asian carp might wreak havoc on the Great Lakes, meet the northern snakehead fish.

Along with Asian carp, the torpedo-shaped fish is considered one of 10 invasive species at high risk of invading the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River Basin. The fish raises fear because it can survive icy winters, ravenously preys on other fish, breathes air and can live out of water for several days if it remains moist.

The fish have now been found in at least nine states as far apart as California and Maryland, and they're breeding and spreading in the Potomac River despite efforts to eradicate them.

But like a national strategy to battle Asian carp that has languished for lack of funding, a plan to control the snakehead also remains on the shelf.

Click here (<http://www.freep.com/article/20110807/NEWS05/108070504/Snakeheads-can-move-land-eat-other-fish-could-another-threat-Great-Lakes?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>) to read more about efforts to eradicate this potentially invasive species.

City of Wyoming Clean Water Plant joins DEQ Clean Corporate Citizen program

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has awarded one of its highest environmental stewardship honors to the City of Wyoming's Clean Water Plant. The Clean Water Plant earned designation as a member of the state's Clean Corporate Citizen Program in February. The C3 Program is a voluntary environmental program that recognizes environmental stewardship at Michigan facilities. Candidates demonstrate facility-specific environmental management systems, have active pollution prevention initiatives at their facilities, and have a consistent record of compliance with state and federal environmental requirements.

The Clean Water Plant has a comprehensive Environmental Management System that is based on a national Biosolids Environmental Management System; it is certified by the Water Environment Federation's National Biosolids Partnership. The Biosolids Environmental Management System manages all critical control points at the plant in order to protect the environment and public health.

The Clean Water Plant provides wastewater treatment for the City of Wyoming, Kentwood, Byron Township, Gaines Township, and Grandville, a population of more than 168,000.

For more information on the C3 program, visit the DEQ Web site here (http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3585_57802_4134---,00.html).

'Fracking' regulations increase environmental protection and public transparency

Michigan DEQ officials recently announced a series of new regulations for the oil and gas industry that will increase public disclosure and better protect public health and the state's natural resources.

Hydraulic fracturing, or 'fracking,' is a process used to extract natural gas by pressurizing underground wells with water and sand and chemicals to break-up formations and maximize well production. The process came under national scrutiny in recent months as other states discovered environmental damage from the ways that certain operators disposed of used 'fracking fluid' and constructed their wells.

For more information click here (<http://mi.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135--256844--,00.html>).

Michigan Fishing

Michigan is home to four of the Great Lakes and *outstanding* walleye, salmon and trout fishing, just to name a few. To find detailed information on Michigan Fishing, Lake Michigan Fishing, Michigan Fishing Resorts, Michigan Fishing Charters, Michigan Salmon Fishing, Michigan Campgrounds, Michigan Fishing Reports and More, click here (<http://www.michiganfishingonline.com/>)

Where to find Michigan Water Festivals

While summer is winding down...

Michigan has 3,200 miles of freshwater coastline, more than any other state. We also have over 11,000 inland lakes, 120 lighthouses, 100 public beaches, 5,000 shipwrecks to explore and dozens of underwater preserves. It is no wonder Michigan is home to over 265 water festivals with many more water related events and activities.

Pure Michigan's web site has done a wonderful job in organizing these water related events along with many other exciting activities in our state. Click here (<http://www.michigan.org/search/?cx=012737484712748150863%3Aqbao86nub0q&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=UTF-8&q=water%20festivals&sa=Search#930>) to find activities that highlight our valued water resources.

World Water Monitoring Day – September 18

World Water Monitoring Day™ (WWMD) is an international education and outreach program that builds public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources around the world by engaging citizens to conduct basic monitoring of their local water bodies.

An easy-to-use [test kit](#) enables everyone from children to adults to sample local water bodies for a core set of water quality parameters including temperature, acidity (pH), clarity (turbidity) and dissolved oxygen (DO). Results are shared with participating communities around the globe through the WWMD Web site.

World Water Monitoring Day is officially celebrated on **September 18**; however, the monitoring window was extended for the first time in 2009 from March 22 ([World Water Day](#)) until December 31. Participants are encouraged to celebrate with WEF and IWA in September or to observe their own WWMD anytime during the extended window. The deadline for submitting data to the WWMD database is December 31.

The coordinators of WWMD, the [Water Environment Federation](#) (WEF) and the [International Water Association](#) (IWA) plan to expand participation to one million people in 100 countries by 2012.

Click here (http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org/About/About_Main.html) for more information.

Asian Carp Threat to the Great Lakes – updates available

The Great Lakes contain 20% of Earth's fresh surface water. The cause for alarm regarding Asian Carp invading the Great Lakes is real and an issue about which all persons concerned about the preservation of this wonderful natural resource should stay well informed.

Search online for 'Asian Carp in the Great Lakes' for many informative sites. You can also click here (<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/invasive/asiancarp/>) to visit the EPA webpage concerning the Asian Carp problem.

Stockholm Water Prize Winner – Great Lakes connection

First presented in 1991, and now celebrating its 20th anniversary, The Stockholm Water Prize is the world's most prestigious prize for outstanding achievement in water-related activities. Over the years Stockholm Water Prize Laureates have represented regions from around the world and a broad range of water-related activities, professions and scientific disciplines.

The 2011 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate is Stephen R. Carpenter, Professor of Zoology and Limnology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA.

Professor Carpenter's groundbreaking research has shown how lake ecosystems are affected by the surrounding landscape and by human activities. His findings have formed

the basis for concrete solutions on how to manage lakes.
[Learn more about his work.](#)

For more information about this world renowned program,
click here (<http://www.siwi.org/stockholmwaterprize>).

**MI H₂Objective Conference: Research Shaping
Michigan's Water Future**

Dates: September 29-30, 2011

Location: McGregor Memorial Conference Center and
Community Arts Auditorium at Wayne State University

This two day conference, sponsored by the University
Research Corridor aims to connect scientists, researchers,
and community leaders working in academia, industry, and
government from across the state of Michigan to explore
water research at the interface of Water and the Landscape,
Water and Health, and Water and Energy.

The future of Michigan's water resources will be discussed
through cross-cutting themes of technology, climate change,
and sustainability. Participate in 1) plenary sessions that
highlight models for partnering through research and
development, 2) break out discussions for building
collaborations, 3) student poster sessions, 4) technology
displays, and 5) community tours to observe science in
action.

For more information and to register for this conference, click
here (http://cws.msu.edu/water_info/Conferences.htm).

*The Michigan Water Network (MWN) is hosted and operated
by the Michigan Water Environment Association (MWEA), a
member association of the Water Environment Federation
(WEF)*

www.mi-wea.org

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