

2010 Status Report and Legislative Agenda

*Prepared by the Statewide Public Advisory Council for
Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern Program*

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Background

The Statewide Public Advisory Council urges Michigan's legislature to take advantage of the unprecedented opportunity to clean up Michigan's 14 Areas of Concern, or "toxic hotspots," designated under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. A five-year Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is underway that will provide over \$2 billion in federal funds to restore the Great Lakes. As the "Great Lakes State," Michigan must not "leave money on the table!" Now is the time to clean up toxic pollution, restore fish and wildlife, safeguard drinking water, enhance recreational opportunities and advance economic development in our state's most heavily impacted waterfront areas. The Statewide Public Advisory Council, representing Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern, urges aggressive action toward this end.

Progress Report: A Record of Success

- ✓ **Cleaning up toxic sediments:** Since 2002 approximately 330,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediments have been cleaned up using funding from the Clean Michigan Initiative bond program and the Great Lakes Legacy Act, a federal program for cleaning up toxic sediments. Four additional sediment cleanups are being developed.
- ✓ **Leveraging federal funds:** Michigan has received more than \$21 million in federal funds to clean up toxic sediments in the Areas of Concern. All state staff in the program are supported with federal funds.
- ✓ **Employing a strategic approach to meet science-based cleanup goals:** Science-based criteria are in place to measure progress and document results in each Area of Concern. A Great Lakes restoration plan is guiding Michigan's overall effort, supplemented by a detailed strategy for implementing actions to clean up the Areas of Concern.
- ✓ **Documenting progress:** DNRE has formally removed five environmental impairments and is preparing to remove several others. Biennial updates are documenting progress and identifying remaining cleanup needs.
- ✓ **Bringing Great Lakes funding to Michigan:** State agencies and local partners are moving aggressively to bring federal funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to Michigan. More than 350 projects have been proposed, seeking over \$200 million. State agencies alone applied for almost \$35 million in federal support.

Legislative Agenda

- 1) **Maximize Michigan's ability to secure federal funding for the Great Lakes:** Don't leave federal dollars on the table that should be coming to Michigan! Ensure that state agencies are equipped to aggressively apply for federal funding under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. With **\$475 million** available in just the first year, Michigan must compete effectively with other states to get its fair share. Maintain DNRE's capacity to process permits and support restoration efforts in collaboration with local partners. Build on the *MI-Great Lakes Plan* to keep Michigan at the front of the line for federal funding.
- 2) **Establish sustainable funding for programs that protect Michigan's air, land & water:** The legislature must provide long-term, sustainable funding for Michigan's environmental protection programs, such as the wetland permitting program. Current funding mechanisms are woefully inadequate. The legislature and DNRE need to work together to develop fair and adequate funding mechanisms for programs that serve Michigan's citizens and businesses, while protecting public health and Michigan's valuable natural resources.
- 3) **Create a mechanism to provide cost share for federal funding:** Nonfederal cost share is required to leverage funding from many federal programs, such as the Great Lakes Legacy Act. With cost share from the Clean Michigan Initiative, Michigan was able to secure over \$20 million in federal funding for large-scale toxic sediment cleanups. These funds are largely exhausted. The legislature and the Administration must establish a mechanism – such as a new bond program or reallocation of existing, but unused, bond authority – to provide the cost share needed so Michigan can continue leveraging federal funds for the Great Lakes.

***The Statewide Public Advisory Council and the citizens in Michigan's 14 Areas of Concern
thank you for helping to keep the Great Lakes great!***

Torch Lake

- Evaluate and control ongoing sources of heavy metal and PCB contamination
- Evaluate success of natural attenuation remedy under the Superfund cleanup process
- Identify plant species that will survive in stampan conditions to maintain the effectiveness of the vegetative cap

Deer Lake

- Monitor fish contaminants in areas not covered under the consent judgment
- Control and monitor mercury sources in Partridge Creek and Carp Creek

Manistique River

- Assess the extent of residual PCB contamination
- Conduct maintenance dredging in the federal navigational channel
- Assess contaminants in fish populations

Menominee River

- Clean up remaining contaminated sediment sites
- Implement fish passage around the lowest two dams for lake sturgeon and other fish species
- Prepare fish and wildlife restoration plan for the lower river

White Lake

- Restore wetlands, soften shorelines and install native plantings at 7 sites
- Determine if targets for healthy fish populations have been achieved
- Complete fish contaminant sampling to confirm the removal of the Fish Consumption impairment
- Address negative public perceptions of the lake's aesthetics and celebrate environmental progress made in White Lake

Muskegon Lake

- Remediate contaminated sediments at the Division St. outfall and Ryerson Creek
- Restore fish and wildlife habitat at public and private shoreline locations
- Implement nonpoint source controls to address impacts from stormwater runoff
- Monitor the status of contaminants in fish
- Address leaking, abandoned oil wells

Kalamazoo River

- Continue contaminated sediment cleanup progress under the Superfund program
- Remove dams and provide fish passage to restore fish and wildlife habitat
- Restore habitat on Portage Creek

River Raisin

- Remove the remaining contaminated sediment
- Install water control structures, create marsh, repair dikes, and control *Phragmites* at Ste...
- Modify low-head dams to facilitate fish pas...



Restoration Opportunities in Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern

Michigan's Areas of Concern are seeking resources from the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to address these key restoration priorities. The Areas of Concern program is guided by a detailed strategy that identifies actions needed to move forward, and science-based criteria for measuring progress and determining when areas can be formally "delisted," or removed from the list of Great Lakes toxic hotspots. In addition to these activities, local watershed groups are monitoring environmental conditions, building partnerships, and educating the public on how to protect and conserve valuable water resources in the future.

St. Marys River

- Restore water flow at the Little Rapids site to create spawning habitat for native fish
- Implement the Sault Area Watershed Management Plan to stabilize water flows, restore fish habitat and improve water quality
- Restore water flow at the Neebish Rock Cut to create wetlands and fish spawning habitat

Saginaw River/Bay

- Stabilize streambanks and implement nonpoint source control projects in high priority tributaries
- Assist landowners in identifying and correcting failing on-site septic systems
- Protect and restore coastal wetlands below the 585 ft. contour on Saginaw Bay

St. Clair River

- Restore shoreline at 4 sites in the St. Clair River
- Restore shallow water fish habitat at 5 sites in the St. Clair River
- Construct lake sturgeon spawning bed in the St. Clair River
- Monitor for total suspended solids and nutrients

Clinton River

- Restore Lake St. Clair coastal marsh in Harrison Township
- Restore fish passage and dam removal on Paint Creek in Oakland Township
- Clean up contaminated sediments in the lower river
- Implement nonpoint sources control to address urban and agricultural runoff
- Establish a restoration coordinator for the Clinton River Area of Concern

Rouge River

- Implement Green Infrastructure/Grow Zone retrofits on public properties and riparian parklands
- Remove dams or provide fish passage at the Wayne Rd., Danvers Pond, and Henry Ford Estate dams
- Implement Illicit Discharge Advanced Investigations in high priority areas

Detroit River

- Restore habitat at Blue Heron Lagoon on Belle Isle
- Construct shoals and restore shoreline at US Steel property in Ecorse
- Restore shoreline near South Fishing Pier on Belle Isle
- Control erosion and restore shoreline habitat on Celeron Island
- Restore dikes on Stony Island to protect wetlands

ments in the river
h and lake plain prairie,
rling State Park
assage



Background on Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern

Michigan is cleaning up 14 Great Lakes “toxic hot spots,” or Areas of Concern, designated under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Nearly half of the U.S. Areas of Concern are in Michigan. They are spread throughout the state, from southeast Michigan, to western Michigan to the Upper Peninsula. The areas include rivers, bays and lakes. Some are in heavily industrialized areas, such as the Rouge and Saginaw rivers. Others are in rural areas, such as those in the Upper Peninsula. In some cases, a single industry or facility is responsible for the major pollution problems. In most cases pollution stems from a number of sources.

The Areas of Concern suffer from severe pollution problems that threaten public health, damage valuable fish and wildlife resources, restrict recreational opportunities, and hamper waterfront redevelopment. The Department of Natural Resources and Environment is implementing cleanup plans for the Areas of Concern in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and community-based advisory councils.



The Statewide Public Advisory Council for Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern Program

The Statewide Public Advisory Council is a coalition of local advisory councils that works with state, federal and local agencies in cleaning up the Areas of Concern.

Background on Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern is available from the Statewide Public Advisory Council's website at <http://www.glc.org/spac/>.

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