



NEWS

Volume XII, Fall 1997

CHAIR'S REPORT

LOOKING BACK ON OUR BEST YEAR YET

By Nancy Douglas
*Chair, Statewide Public Advisory
Council*

As 1997 comes to a close, I've taken the opportunity to reflect on both the SPAC's activities and the collective accomplishments of Michigan's RAP community over the past year. My conclusion is simple: it's been our best year yet!



Successes at both the local and statewide levels have been numerous and significant.

Dredging projects in the Manistique River and River Raisin AOCs are only the most notable of a wide variety of
see Chair, p. 6...

RICK HOBRLA APPOINTED MANAGER OF AOC PROGRAM

The SPAC is pleased to welcome Rick Hobrla, the new manager of Michigan's AOC Program. Hobrla (pronounced *Ho-bur-la*) was appointed chief of the Storm Water and Remedial Action Unit within MDEQ's Surface Water Quality Division in October 1997. The unit has responsi-
see Hobrla, p. 6...

MICHIGAN ADOPTS GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY GUIDANCE

By Brenda Sayles
*Surface Water Quality Division
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality*

Michigan is the third state in the region to adopt the new Great Lakes Water Quality Guidance into binding regulations. Originally known as the Great Lakes Water Quality Initiative, or GLI, this effort dates back to the mid-1980s and concerns over inconsistent regulation of toxic substances among the eight Great Lakes states under the Clean Water Act's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and water quality standards.

The 1990 Great Lakes Critical Programs Act codified the effort into law and gave U.S. EPA Region 5 the lead role. The Act required U.S. EPA to formally propose guidance, take public comment, and then publish final guidance, after which the eight Great Lakes states were allowed two years to adopt binding regulations consistent with the guidance. The Act requires the guidance to conform with the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the Clean Water Act; specify numeric criteria to protect humans, wildlife and aquatic life; and provide guidance to the states on antidegradation policies and implementation procedures for the Great Lakes system.

Following an extensive public comment process and with input from a 22-member stakeholders advisory committee, rules to address the requirements of the guidance were adopted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) in June 1997 and became effective the following month.

One area of particular focus in the new rules is the regulation of certain highly persistent, bioaccumulative chemicals identified as bioaccumulative chemicals
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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR GREAT LAKES

By Jo Lynn Traub, Director
Water Division, U.S. EPA Region 5

For the past eight years or so, funding has been made available to states, tribes and locally based organizations under the Coastal Environmental Management (CEM) program to support environmental activities within the Great Lakes Basin. Funded projects have supported the development of Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs) as well as work on Remedial Action Plan (RAP) implementation activities. I want to ensure that both states and concerned citizens continue to participate in the coordinated restoration of the Great Lakes and the Areas of Concern around them in the most cost-effective ways possible.



As many of you know, U.S. EPA Region 5 has Great Lakes Regional Team Managers dedicated to each of our lakes. These include Margaret Guerrero, manager of the Lake Superior Team (312-886-0399); Judy Beck, manager of the Lake Michigan Team (312-353-3849); and Francine Norling, manager of the Lake Erie Team (312-886-0271). They are charged with managing the needs and priorities for each of these lake ecosystems.

I have asked them, along with my staff, to develop a 3-4 year plan for regional funding of the LaMPs and RAPs. This plan will identify the activities needed to complete each LaMP as well as the remedial actions within the AOCs that most effectively address the goals of the LaMPs. In subsequent years, we will award CEM funds to those proposals that best address the needs spelled out in the plan. The plan will also inform decisions in other grant programs, such as the process overseen by the Great Lakes National Program Office.

Congress appropriated CEM funds to "...continue implementing Lakewide Management Plans for Lakes Erie, Michigan, Ontario, and Superior...continue supporting and encouraging broad public participation throughout the LaMP programs" and to support "...remediation actions in targeted Areas of Concern." The plan we're developing will adhere to this commitment. We will be seeking your input in the development of this plan, as well as keeping you apprised of its progress.

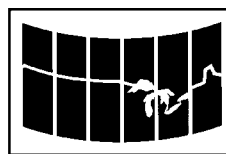
In addition to directing funds to the highest priority activities in the Great Lakes, I believe this plan will also reduce the uncertainties that accompanied the previous practice of developing a funding plan each year while allowing you some assurance of continued funding for priority projects in your communities. If you have any questions about this process, please contact me or Marcia Damato, the Michigan State Program Manager on my staff at (312) 886-0266. I wish you continued success as stewards of our precious Great Lakes ecosystem. ♦

NEWS FROM THE IJC

INFORMATION EXCHANGE A PRIORITY FOR RAPs

By Bruce Kirschner
RAP Coordinator, International Joint Commission

In October 1997 the International Joint Commission (IJC) completed its first Status Assessment of progress in an AOC. The Status Assessment for the Detroit River AOC included 16 consultations with individuals, agencies and organizations and resulted in a better understanding of the challenges faced in implementing remedial actions in a complex AOC.



Lessons from the Detroit River assessment and input received to date as part of the St. Marys River assessment confirm the problems and challenges confronting PACs and BPACs. It is becoming very apparent that considerable opportunities exist for organizations such as the SPAC to enhance the effectiveness of PACs. Since most organizations appear to be facing an increased workload with fewer dollars, methods for rapidly and effectively sharing new information must be a priority.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has developed a notable example of this type of effort through the information it has made available online for PACs and other nonprofit organizations. Located at www.epa.gov/epahome/nonprof.htm, the U.S. EPA website provides access to critical data, such as the Toxics Release Inventory, and a wealth of valuable information related to funding, laws and regulations, educational resources, U.S. EPA programs and staff contacts, and opportunities for pursuing community-based environmental protection.

In addition, information on the U.S. AOCs was recently updated and placed online via the Great Lakes Information Network (GLIN). Background is provided on each AOC's use impairments, RAP status and schedule, progress and achievements, upcoming activities, research, publications, community involvement, partners and contacts. This significant volume of material is available at www.great-lakes.net/places/aoc/aoc.html.

Both online forums, such as GLIN, and hard copy sources, such as this newsletter, provide the means for improving the exchange of information and technology. The question is: do you need more effective delivery of this type of information? And is delivery via the Internet now a viable option for most people? I am currently looking for input on this topic and would appreciate hearing your opinion. I can be reached at the IJC at P.O. Box 32869, Detroit, MI 48232, phone 313-226-2170, ext. 6710, fax 519-257-6740, or email kirschnerb@ijc.wincom.net. Get in touch and let me know what you think. ♦

SPAC WORKSHOPS ADDRESS RAP PRIORITIES AT LOCAL LEVEL

Helping PAC members and other RAP participants grapple with major RAP issues was the goal of SPAC training workshops held over the past year. Sponsored jointly with local PACs and held in the AOC communities, the events attracted strong participation from residents and local leaders while focusing on issues of special concern to the community.

Integrating watershed management and land-use planning in Muskegon



In May the SPAC traveled to Muskegon to join members of the Muskegon Lake and White Lake PACs and a diverse audience of planning officials, developers and residents in a workshop titled *Improving Watershed Management Through Creative Land-Use Planning*. The workshop highlighted innovative techniques to help communities accommodate growth, protect local water resources and maintain a high quality of life.

Keith Charters, executive director of New Designs for Growth and chair of the state Natural Resources Commission, used his organization's highly acclaimed Guidebook to illustrate examples of joint venturing, open space development, water quality buffers and other design options for environmentally sensitive development.

Maintaining open space and preserving natural features is the goal of

Barry Lonik, executive director of the Potawatomi Land Trust in Washtenaw County. Lonik reviewed innovative land-use planning approaches, including creative zoning ordinances, conservation easements, land trusts and purchase of development rights.

Grand Traverse County drain commissioner Maureen Templeton has been widely recognized for her comprehensive, watershed-based approach to stormwater runoff and soil erosion. Templeton discussed initiatives for managing stormwater to minimize water quality impacts and create and enhance natural habitat.

Rep. Howard Wetters, chair of the Special Committee on Land Use in the Michigan House of Representatives provided a legislative perspective on land-use reform in Michigan. Rep. Wetters expressed concern over the ability of special interest groups to block substantive land-use reform and the general lack of understanding of the issue among most state legislators. With term limits beginning to take effect, he underscored the need to continually educate legislators on land-use planning issues.

A panel discussion involving local officials, PAC members, business representatives and community members concluded the workshop and identified priorities for integrating land-use planning and watershed management in the Muskegon County area. The Muskegon Conservation District will help maintain a focus on

these priorities as part of its support for the two local PACs.

see Workshops, p. 7...

SPAC PRESENTS MICHIGAN RAP PRIORITIES TO IJC

Priorities for Michigan's RAPs were presented to the International Joint Commission (IJC) at its Nov. 2 public forum in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Speaking on behalf of the SPAC, vice chair Kathy Evans presented the IJC commissioners with a series of priorities for the statewide AOC Program. Evans encouraged the IJC, in cooperation with its federal, state and local partners, to

- ✓ make RAPs a priority for relevant state and federal agencies;
- ✓ ensure adequate technical, financial and regulatory support for addressing critical environmental and human health problems in the AOCs;
- ✓ incorporate RAP goals into land-use planning and policy initiatives;
- ✓ promote consistent environmental standards throughout the Great Lakes Basin; and
- ✓ utilize RAPs as a mechanism for promoting community-based leadership for environmental protection in AOC watersheds.

For a copy of the SPAC's full statement, contact Matt Doss, SPAC support staff, Great Lakes Commission, 734-665-9135, mdoss@glc.org. ♦

SPAC VICE CHAIR CHOSEN AS CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

SPAC vice chair and Muskegon Lake AOC representative Kathy Evans was chosen as 1997 Conservation District Employee of the Year by the Michigan Association of Conservation District Employees. Evans was recognized for the volume and quality of her accomplishments with the Muskegon Conservation District. In her support for Evan's nomination, SPAC chair Nancy Douglas noted that "Kathy's work supporting the RAP process in the Muskegon Lake and White Lake AOCs has been a model for other members of the SPAC." Evans has supported the two local PACs and coordinated a wide variety of RAP-related projects, including habitat assessments, Lakewatch programs and sediment and water quality testing initiatives. The SPAC expresses its hearty congratulations to Kathy. Keep up the good work! ♦

REGIONAL NEWS

THE FUTURE OF LAKE MICHIGAN: ANSWERING POLLUTION QUESTIONS AND MAKING BETTER DECISIONS

By Tanya Cabala
Lake Michigan Federation

What do we know about pollution in Lake Michigan? What are the largest sources of pollution in the lake, and how bad is the problem? What decisions can we make that will reduce pollution in the lake?

We're on our way to answers to these and other key questions thanks to the Lake Michigan Mass Balance Study, a massive research effort being conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) in partnership with other federal and state agencies and university researchers.

The mass balance study is based upon the concept of the conservation of mass—that the amount of pollution entering Lake Michigan is equal to the sum of the pollution that leaves and what remains in the lake. The remaining pollution may end up in sediments, water, fish or wildlife.

Throughout 1994 and 1995, hundreds of samples were taken and analyzed of the open waters of Lake Michigan and its tributaries, bottom sediments, air, aquatic organisms and fish. Using this information, the study will

- ✓ identify the total amount of four pollutants (polychlorinated biphenyls—PCBs, transnonachlor, atrazine and mercury) entering the lake from rivers, the air and sediments;
- ✓ improve our understanding of how pollutants move through the lake and how they are made available to fish and plants; and
- ✓ help local, state and federal governments understand how decisions and actions can affect the lake.

The information will be used in developing the Lake Michigan Lakewide Management Plan and will be entered into a computer model for use in making decisions for the next 10 to 25 years. Specifically, the information will help us understand where pollution is coming from (air, sediments or tributaries) and how pollutant levels may change if inputs from various sources are halted or reduced. For example, the U.S. EPA may be able to predict how quickly levels of contamination in fish and wildlife will decrease if pollution from the lake's tributaries is eliminated. Not only will the Lake Michigan Mass Balance Study help answer pollution questions and help us make better decisions about Lake Michigan, we can use the model to study other large lakes in the United States and around the world.



The Lake Michigan Federation, a regional nonprofit environmental organization that works to protect Lake Michigan, is coordinating public information on the study in cooperation with U.S. EPA. For more information contact:

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www.epa.gov/glnpo/lmmb ♦

...*Guidance*, continued from p. 1

of concern, such as mercury or PCBs. Twenty-two such chemicals are identified in the rules. In an effort to further reduce the discharge of these chemicals from point sources, certain permitting provisions apply to the chemicals above and beyond other toxic chemicals.

MDEQ staff are using the new rules to develop water quality-based permit limitations for toxic substances for draft NPDES permits issued after July 28, 1997. The department does not intend to revoke and reissue permits specifically for the purpose of developing permit limitations for toxic substances using the new rules.

The new rules are available on the Internet at the Surface Water Quality Division homepage at <http://www.deq.state.mi.us/swq>. Questions regarding the rules can be directed to Brenda Sayles, MDEQ Surface Water Quality Division, 517-335-4198, saylesb@state.mi.us. ♦

GREAT LAKES TRENDS REPORT AVAILABLE

The Office of the Great Lakes has released a report describing trends in Great Lakes ecosystem quality. In 1993 and 1995, the office prepared trend analyses for our State of the Great Lakes Annual Reports. These trend analyses have been updated, expanded and broken down into three basic categories: chemical, physical and biological. The report reviews trends such as PCB levels in coho salmon and herring gull eggs, annual phosphorus loading from the Detroit River, lead and mercury in Lake Michigan sediments, atmospheric mercury deposition, toxaphene accumulation rates in sediments, land-use changes, introduction of exotic species and other trends.

A limited number of the reports are available free of charge. To request a copy, contact the Office of the Great Lakes, P.O. Box 30473, Lansing, MI 48909-7973; phone 517-335-4232; email bredinj@state.mi.us. ♦

UNITED STATES, CANADA AGREE TO ELIMINATE TOXICS IN GREAT LAKES

From the May 1997 Activity Report, Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality, Office of the Great Lakes

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol M. Browner and Canadian Minister of the Environment Sergio Marchi have agreed to a milestone plan to protect public health by virtually eliminating persistent toxic substances from the Great Lakes by the year 2006, as promised by President Clinton and Prime Minister Chretien in February 1995. The agreement between the two environmental leaders was signed on April 7 at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., and is the first time specific reduction targets for toxic pollutants have been jointly set by both countries.

Browner and Marchi signed two additional agreements to expand efforts to control transboundary air emissions and to cooperate in a number of research and development activities. Despite their great depth and size, the Great Lakes are particularly vulnerable to toxic contaminants because the contaminants remain in the system for many years. Many of these pollutants are a serious threat, even in small amounts, because they are long-lasting and bioaccumulate, becoming more concentrated as they move through the food chain from plants to fish to wildlife and people.

The plan to virtually eliminate identified persistent toxic substances in the Great Lakes, especially those which accumulate and persist in the environment for decades, is based primarily on voluntary pollution prevention activities, but also builds on existing Canadian and U.S. regulatory programs.

In the United States, goals for mercury, PCBs and dioxin are national in scope because these toxics are primarily airborne; even sources far outside the basin can reach the Great Lakes through atmospheric long-range transport.

The strategy sets milestones to be achieved from 1997 to 2006. Among the U.S. milestones, the strategy calls for a 50 percent reduction of mercury uses nationally, a 90 percent reduction

nationally of high-level PCBs used in electrical equipment; a 75 percent reduction in total releases of dioxins and furans from human activity sources, such as incinerators, to apply to aggregate releases to the air nationwide and of releases to the waters of the Great Lakes; and confirmation that there are no releases of five bioaccumulative pesticides: chlordane, aldrin/dieldrin, DDT, mirex and toxaphene.

Since the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, the U.S. and Canada have formally cooperated to address water quality problems within the Great Lakes basin. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, first signed in 1972 and last amended in 1987, has served as a management framework for achieving environmental results and for protecting and restoring the ecosystem.

For a copy of the agreement, contact the Office of the Great Lakes at 517-335-4056. ♦

NEW VOLUNTARY GENERAL PERMIT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Local communities may set their own goals for restoring or protecting valuable rivers, lakes and streams under MDEQ's new voluntary general permit program. Under this program, communities of less than 100,000 design their own solutions to stormwater overflows and prevent pollutant discharges during heavy rain storms.

Federal law requires large communities to have stormwater permits. Smaller communities will have to meet the standards by the year 2001. Participants in Michigan's general permit program would band together to implement public education plans; control improper dischargers; and develop watershed management plans and site-specific stormwater pollution prevention programs.

Participation and withdrawal in the program are completely voluntary. For more information, contact Fred Cowles, 517-335-4127, or Pete Ostlund, 517-335-4116 in MDEQ's Surface Water Quality Division. ♦

...Chair, continued from p. 1

RAP-related activities in progress across the state's 14 AOCs. 1997 also witnessed another major milestone with the formation of public advisory councils in the Torch Lake and Deer Lake AOCs, the last Michigan AOCs without local PACs. This is great news for these communities, and the SPAC looks forward to supporting the new groups in any way possible.

For its part, the SPAC continues to be a forceful advocate on behalf of the statewide AOC Program. Last February's briefing for members of the state legislature raised the profile of the program and communicated a compelling message about the importance of continuing progress in developing and implementing the RAPs. We also have worked with our state and federal partners to generate increased funding for cleanup efforts and for the staff to help coordinate the work. This newsletter and our meeting discussions provide forums for exchanging information and sharing ideas on successful RAP initiatives.

Perhaps our most enjoyable activities this year were the workshops we sponsored in Muskegon and Houghton. By convening both regional experts and local leaders, the SPAC highlighted innovative approaches for improving watershed management through creative land-use planning and for cleaning up contaminated sediments. We also got to know many local PAC members, officials and residents—a real treat for us all. If there was any doubt, these events illustrated how positive and committed RAP participants remain, despite the sometimes tenuous support from our state and federal governments.

As always, we have benefited tremendously from the technical expertise, dedication and hard work of our friends at the Department of Environmental Quality, particularly RAP contacts Roger Eberhardt, Bob Sweet and Sharon Baker. We also are pleased to welcome Rick Hobrla, who now manages Michigan's AOC Program in his new position as chief of MDEQ's Storm Water and Remedial Action Unit.

Unfortunately, our good friend and longtime advocate Diana Klemans has moved on to a new job within the department. Diana managed the AOC Program since its inception in the mid 1980s and was instrumental in forming the SPAC in 1991. With infinite patience, Diana helped representatives from 14 AOCs with differing personalities and problems work cooperatively toward common goals. She promoted our issues within her agency and was tireless and creative in seeking funding for local RAP activities. We miss you, Diana, and wish you well in your new job.

The SPAC looks forward to an even more successful year in 1998. We will begin with our second legislative briefing in Lansing in early February, followed by workshops and meetings onsite in AOCs in the spring and fall. We hope to meet more RAP participants, learn about local issues and devise strategies for addressing common needs.

Local leadership and initiative are fundamental to the AOC Program, and the SPAC is eager to assist PACs and other RAP partners in any way possible. If you have ideas or suggestions, let us know. If you're able, come to our meetings; they're open to everyone, and we always make time for comments from guests.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our work this year, and best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year. I look forward to working with you in the coming year. ♦

...Hobrla, continued from p. 1



Rick Hobrla, new AOC program manager

bility for RAPs, Lakewide Management Plans, storm water facilities regulated under the general storm water permit (which exclude municipalities) and the Permit Compliance System. The unit has a staff of 10, including three professionals dedicated to the state's 14 RAPs.

Hobrla joined the Department of Natural Resource's Environmental Services Division in 1977 and has spent all but one year of his 20-year career in the water quality field. He is a licensed civil engineer with work experience in the Trenton Channel, Rouge River and St. Clair River, among other areas. Hobrla replaces Diana Klemans, who has been appointed manager of MDEQ's Inland Lakes Management Unit.

The SPAC welcomes Rick and looks forward to working with him. Hobrla can be reached at MDEQ, Surface Water Quality Division, P.O. Box 30273, Lansing, MI 48909; ph. 517-335-4173; email hobrlar@state.mi.us. ♦

MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE FORMED

A number of environmental and property owner associations have joined forces to form the Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA), a 501 (c)(6) non-profit organization dedicated to protecting, preserving and promoting the wise use of inland waters in the state of Michigan. The MWA seeks to improve relationships between its member organizations and state agencies and local units of government with regard to topics such as riparian rights, marine safety, and environmental protection and maintenance.

For further information on the alliance or how you can become involved, contact one of the following: Bob Frye, Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (POA), 517-821-6661; Don Winne, Michigan Lake and Stream Association, 616-273-8200; Dick Brown, Lake Fenton POA, 810-629-5964; or Pearl Bonnell, Long Lake POA, 517-257-3583. ♦

...Workshops, continued from p. 3

Cleaning up contaminated sediments in Houghton



In August, the SPAC traveled to Houghton in Michigan's Upper Peninsula to learn about contaminated sediments and hear how some communities are approaching the problem. The workshop, titled *Options for Addressing Contaminated Sediments in Upper Peninsula Waters*, included presentations on the environmental impacts and human health risks associated with contaminated sediments.

The workshop also featured case studies of how four Great Lakes communities are successfully addressing contaminated sediments in local waters. Cooperation between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the parties responsible for sediment contamination in the Manistique River AOC, combined with close consultation with the local community, resulted in a timely and cost effective cleanup effort. Walter Nied, U.S. EPA manager for the project, discussed the innovative containment, dredging and treatment technologies developed and applied at the site.

Stakeholders involved in the Ashtabula River RAP formed the Ashtabula River Partnership in 1994 to develop a comprehensive solution to the contaminated sediments in the AOC. The Partnership engaged the efforts of local industrialists, businesses, state and federal agencies and private citizens. John Mahan, the Partnership coordinator, explained how the Partnership looked beyond traditional approaches to identify alternatives for remediating contaminated sediments in the Ashtabula River and harbor.

Relying on careful controls on new sources of pollution and a rigorous, long-term monitoring program, the Ontario Ministry of Environment (OME) chose natural recovery to remediate contaminated sediments in the Spanish Harbour and Nipigon Bay

AOCs. Dr. Gail Krantzberg, a contaminated sediments specialist with OME, reviewed how natural recovery operates and the process through which the alternative was chosen. She also presented a draft policy statement currently under development which defines a process and criteria for deciding when natural recovery is an appropriate approach.

Building on the experiences of the workshop speakers and the needs and interests of the audience members, the workshop concluded by identifying the key aspects of successful sediment remediation efforts, obstacles to ongoing progress, and priorities for decision makers.

While in Houghton, the SPAC held a special session for the members of the new Torch Lake PAC. SPAC members discussed how their PACs operate and reviewed the type of activities they engage in to support the RAP process in their AOC. Through spirited discussion, the participants compared notes, shared ideas and gained insights into how PACs from across the state are working to restore environmental quality in their communities. Members of the Torch Lake PAC are using these lessons in planning their own efforts.

The SPAC's "onsite" workshops and meetings have been a tremendous success and will be continued in 1998. PACs that wish to host a workshop in their community, or just recommend a topic for discussion, should consult with their SPAC representative. Special thanks go to the Muskegon Lake, White Lake and Torch Lake PACs for hosting the SPAC events. The SPAC members look forward to meeting more RAP participants and taking on challenging new issues at next year's training workshops.

For copies of materials distributed at the workshops or information about upcoming SPAC events, contact Matt Doss, SPAC support staff, Great Lakes Commission, 734-665-9135, mdoss@glc.org. ♦

WHITE LAKE HABITAT PROJECT COMPLETED

The Lake Michigan Federation and the White Lake Public Advisory Council have completed a study of habitat and wetlands around White Lake. The study was undertaken in response to the 1995 White Lake RAP update, which noted loss of fish and wildlife populations and recommended that habitat assessment be conducted.

The study was designed to establish a baseline of information to assist in making future decisions regarding development around the lake. Conducted by a wildlife biologist, the study noted that 60 percent of the quarter-mile study area was already developed. It also found four high-quality marsh areas worth preserving and nearly continuous forest cover along most of the shoreline that provides valuable habitat for birds and other animal species.

A video and poster summarizing the study results have been produced and made available to the local community. The materials highlight White Lake's valuable natural habitats and suggest actions that area residents can take to protect them. For more information, contact Tanya Cabala or Liz England, Lake Michigan Federation, at 616-722-5116, e-mail: lkmf@novagate.com. ♦

WATER RESOURCES CARE PACKAGES

The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council has prepared publications and videos on a variety of water resource topics. The reference materials are produced as part of the Watershed Council's educational outreach program. They are helpful to visitors, resorters, businesses and residents. Landowners will find them particularly useful as many are geared toward issues such as shoreline erosion control and wetlands restoration. For more information, contact the Watershed Council at 616-347-1181. ♦

AOC UPDATES

The following updates and opinions are provided by members of the Statewide Public Advisory Council.

CLINTON RIVER

By Bill Smith

The Macomb County Blue Ribbon Commission on Lake St. Clair submitted its report on August 28. The report cites failure of U.S. and Canadian federal, state and local governments to enforce existing laws and makes 81 recommendations for addressing environmental problems in Lake St. Clair, including actions involving the Clinton River AOC. Recommended actions include:

- ◆ Creating a County Water Quality Board to oversee and coordinate recommended actions and remedial efforts.
- ◆ Establishing a continuous water monitoring network in the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair and at intakes at drinking water plants and outlets from wastewater and industrial plants using toxic chemicals.
- ◆ Creating septic management districts.
- ◆ Providing resources for sewer line tests to identify and prosecute illegal connections.
- ◆ Licensing and regulating lawn fertilizing companies.

The report is a wake-up call for federal, state and local agencies and municipalities: Lake St. Clair has serious problems and that existing efforts have not been effective. It is a first step to approaching the lake as an ecosystem.

The Macomb County Board of Commissioners has authorized a pollution investigating unit within the health department and an additional attorney for the prosecutor's office. They will work together to investigate and prosecute illegal discharge of pollutants in Macomb County waterways.

The Clinton River Watershed Council has received a \$60,000 MDEQ grant to identify and correct sources of bacteria and other pollutants in Bear Creek, a seven-mile-long tributary of Red Run Drain in Macomb and Oakland Counties that drains 18.8 square miles and which

has high levels of bacteria (400-100,000 colonies/100 mL) in both wet and dry weather. The project will develop a multijurisdictional watershed management plan to address urban point and non-point pollution sources.

The Clinton River 1997 RAP Update Report will revise the 1995 report to incorporate new information, including recreation and education actions. The PAC will review the new document at its January 8, 1998 meeting.

DEER LAKE

By Phil Doepke

Meetings held monthly in Ishpeming since July have resulted in the formation of a Public Advisory Council for the Deer Lake AOC. The 20-member PAC has positions for 5 agency representatives and 15 citizens representing a cross section of interests in the Carp River watershed.

Agency positions have been established for the Marquette County Board of Commissioners, Health Department, Road Commission, Drain Commission, and Soil and Water Conservation District. Local representation is afforded to lakeshore residents (4), fishing organizations (2), watershed resident at-large, environmental organizations, recreation, business, industry, education, Township of Ishpeming, City of Ishpeming, wastewater/water authority, and Native Americans. Representatives for most of the PAC positions have been chosen.

Bylaws for the PAC have been drafted and PAC officers have been elected. Issues relating to the AOC and goals for the PAC have been discussed. A primary goal will be to restore beneficial uses of the Carp River watershed (in which Deer Lake is located) that have been impacted by the causes that led to the lake's designation as an AOC. Writing a RAP will be necessary. A goal of the PAC will be to assist in developing best management plan actions throughout the watershed.

KALAMAZOO RIVER

By Mary Powers

The Kalamazoo River PAC held a meeting on Oct. 17 to focus attention on the Allied Paper/Portage Creek/

Kalamazoo River Superfund site and, specifically, Bryant Millpond, a 50-acre site located in the city of Kalamazoo. With PCB concentrations of over 1,000 ppm, the site continues to discharge PCBs to the Kalamazoo River and Lake Michigan via Portage Creek.

The result was an announcement by Allied Paper that it will commit up to \$5.5 million to remove PCBs from Portage Creek and contain them on site. Work is scheduled to begin in spring 1998. This agreement is truly a product of the way citizen participation is supposed to work.

This successful outcome resulted from the PAC's recognition that citizen participation in the Superfund process was vital but largely lacking in the Kalamazoo River AOC. To restore the AOC's impaired uses, PCBs in the river had to be addressed. While MDEQ was the lead agency, U.S. EPA had final authority, so the PAC appealed directly to U.S. EPA in Washington and requested Emergency Action on the Bryant Millpond.

Our work is far from finished, but we do have the *RESPECT* of the agencies and are developing a fruitful relationship with U.S. EPA Region 5. The PAC thanks the agency for its efforts on behalf of the Kalamazoo River. For a copy of the Kalamazoo River PAC position paper or more information on how to carry out an effective lobbying effort, contact Mary Powers at 616-345-9295.

MENOMINEE RIVER

By Nancy Douglas

Two meetings of the Menominee River Citizens Advisory Committee were held earlier this summer to review plans and discuss the proposed river dredging project within the Menominee River. The city of Menominee has requested permits from the states of Michigan and Wisconsin and the Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a navigational dredging project to allow for ocean-going vessels to access the lower part of the Menominee River. Draft permits have been received from

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AOC UPDATES

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both agencies, and minor differences in permit language are being worked out.

Consultants for the project met with the AOC to discuss the dredging project. While the project addresses navigational issues, the process has allowed us to learn additional things about sediment contamination in the river. The areas to be dredged do not include those with arsenic contamination which led to the river being designated an AOC. The dredging project will, however, restore navigation, one of the impaired beneficial uses listed for the AOC. Final permits are expected shortly, and the project should begin in the spring of 1998.

MUSKEGON LAKE

By Kathy Evans

The Muskegon Lake PAC and MDEQ completed a Needs Assessment of Ryerson Creek this summer. At the request of the PAC and with funding from MDEQ, the creek's water and sediment quality were characterized as part of a study of Muskegon Lake and nearshore tributaries conducted by Grand Valley State University in 1995. The study indicated that sediments at the creek mouth and at nearshore areas in Muskegon Lake were degraded with heavy metals, oil and grease. However, water quality in the upper watershed was found to be unimpaired by these pollutants, low in nutrients and capable of supporting a healthy and diverse ecosystem.

The PAC has been working with the City of Muskegon, Muskegon Township, the Drain Commissioner, schools, businesses and others to ensure that cooperative pollution prevention activities will maintain and improve water quality and habitat in the AOC. As one example, a new McDonald's franchise has agreed to use all native plants in landscaping for their new restaurant in the watershed. The Muskegon Conservation District has convened a group of watershed representatives to address common needs and concerns. In September, the PAC hosted an educational program on MDEQ's Voluntary Stormwater Permit Program. MDEQ

watershed management specialist Fred Cowles spoke about how the community can work cooperatively on a watershed basis to protect water quality.

A greenbelt project funded by U.S. EPA and coordinated by the Muskegon Conservation District has utilized hundreds of volunteers over the past year to enhance local efforts to protect Ryerson Creek and Muskegon Lake. Last May, five tons of garbage were removed from Ryerson Creek and hundreds of Michigan native shrubs and flowering plants were used to establish greenbelts at various parks and private properties along the creek. A spotted knapweed removal and habitat enhancement effort has been undertaken at a county park along the creek. The revitalized area will allow public access for a nursing home, low/middle income housing complex, senior citizen apartment and a nearby neighborhood. Volunteers from the PAC's Habitat Work Group and the Muskegon County Youth Volunteer Corp. worked on the project. A special thanks goes to MDEQ RAP contact Sharon Baker for her on-site assistance with the project.

The PAC continues to address other RAP-related concerns, including the impaired Ruddiman Creek AOC tributary and contaminated sediments and sites in and along the lake. The PAC also began collecting benthic organisms in partnership with the NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab's Lake Michigan Field Station. The organisms are collected, sorted and stored from seven different sampling locations in the lake. The PAC is urging the U.S. EPA to fund sediment testing in the summer of 1998.

RIVER RAISIN

By Vivian Brighton

On Sept. 26, 1997, Ford Motor Co. completed an environmental dredging project in the River Raisin. The project utilized a double silt containment curtain to hold contaminated sediments during the removal project to prevent their spreading downstream.

Ford removed approximately 25,000 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment from a "hot spot" in the River Raisin where PCB concentrations were as high as 40,000 parts per million. River sediment was dredged down to the native clay to ensure that the contamination was fully removed.

The contaminated sediment was then transported to an on-site stabilization facility and mixed with approximately 14 percent Portland cement. After quality assurance checks were conducted the material was transported by truck to an approved, on-site landfill. The landfill was designed utilizing a double-walled containment system and was capped in November. Leachate from the landfill will be collected and transported off site for treatment.

With the PCB sediment removal project completed, the Raisin PAC can now focus attention on the other use impairments within the AOC.

ROUGE RIVER

By Orin Gelderloos

The Rouge RAP Advisory Council has several committees which have accomplished a number of projects over the past year. The Contaminated Sites Committee has completed a library packet titled *Citizen's Guide to Sites of Contamination*. Composed of informational materials from various agencies and nonprofit groups, the packet was created to aid citizens in investigating contaminated sites in their neighborhood. The packet was distributed to 35 libraries in the Rouge River Watershed.

The Public Education Committee has published an attractive placemat to inform residents of recreational activities available in the Rouge watershed. The placemat shows that a significant portion of the Rouge flood plain is in public parkland and that recreational opportunities are available throughout the watershed. The goal is to encourage residents to appreciate the river by recreating near it. The placemat has been highly popular, with more than 10,000 distributed to local restaurants. A more detailed map showing the location of recreational opportunities is being developed.

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The Nonpoint Source Committee is preparing an educational brochure encouraging watershed residents to disconnect downspouts from the stormsewer. The brochure will educate residents on the impact of stormwater on the Rouge River and how they can eliminate discharges from their homes.

The Habitat Committee will issue the first in a series of annual Habitat Awards to industries, local governments and other organizations which have created or protected valuable wildlife habitats within the Rouge River Watershed.

Wayne County's Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project has focused on many important watershed issues. Monitoring by project consultants has shown a significant level of septic system failures throughout the watershed. Efforts are being made to address this problem and to encourage communities to construct sewers in the areas where the leaking systems occur.

Wayne County has initiated development of a general stormwater permit for communities in the Rouge River Watershed. The permits will be voluntary and can be applied for by any community in the state. While most communities in the watershed are not currently required to obtain a permit for stormwater discharges, future changes in federal regulations will require them to do so. These unique, voluntary permits were developed by MDEQ with significant input from local governments in the watershed. They will require, at the time of application, that the communities have an illicit connection program in place and a public education program to inform citizens of the impact of stormwater runoff.

Construction of combined sewer overflow (CSO) control facilities is nearing completion in the Rouge River Watershed. Several retention treatment basins and sewer separation projects are already in operation and have completely eliminated or are treating CSO discharges.

The *Rouge Repair Kit: A Citizen's Guide to Restore and Protect the*

Rouge River has been published and will be distributed to residents of designated Rouge Friendly Neighborhoods and at fall events aimed at key target audiences. A second printing will be done in spring 1998. Newburgh Lake restoration activities are well underway and contaminated sediments are being removed from the lake bottom for proper disposal. The *1997 Rouge River RAP Update*, a biennial progress report on implementation of the Rouge River RAP, will be published in late 1997.

SAGINAW RIVER/BAY

By Dennis Zimmerman

At its September meeting, the Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed (PSBW) kicked off its new *Trees 2000 Challenge* by planting the first tree at the Saginaw Bay Visitor's Center, located in the Bay City State Park Recreation Area. The program's goal is to plant four million trees in the Saginaw Bay Watershed by the year 2000. The PSBW believes the *Trees 2000 Challenge* is the simplest and most effective method to achieve a broad range of environmental benefits throughout the watershed. The partnership's School River Monitoring, Adopt-A-Stream and Water Watcher's programs are leading the project with participation from soil conservation districts, state and local governments, school districts, businesses, developers and private landowners.

In September PSBW leaders and area resource planners met with the executive director of the Little Traverse Conservancy to obtain ideas and recommendations for proposed land trust organizations in the Saginaw Bay Watershed.

PSBW has received a MDEQ grant to continue community-based, land-use education programs within the watershed. Through the project the partnership will enhance watershed awareness among local leaders; showcase effective communities and their leaders; identify effective government techniques for protecting river corridors; and foster an understanding of the philosophy of sustainable development. A detailed plan is being prepared, and local government workshops will be scheduled for 1998.

More than 150 local governmental officials participated in the land-use education program in 1997, its third year. Sue Fortune, the executive director of the East Central Michigan Planning and Development Region, which administered the program in 1997, was recently presented with an Innovation Award by the National Association of Development Organizations.

The Discovering and Exploring our Watershed program is using a variety of interactive, multi-sensory teaching methods to increase awareness among young people about what the watershed is and how their lives depend on it. Now in its third year, the program uses a 40-foot-long mini-classroom, housed in a trailer, to bring hands-on watershed displays to schools in the watershed. Staff from the Saginaw Bay Visitor Center make the outreach program both fun and educational, including watershed and groundwater models and the Wetland Wonders Puppet Theater for younger students.

ST. CLAIR RIVER

By Joe Gallagher

Work by groups, individuals, municipalities and industry to restore the St. Clair River is having the desired impact—restoration of the river. Despite marked improvement, much work still remains. Health Canada has completed a multi-year study on fish and wildlife consumption. The study investigated the risks and benefits associated with consumption of fish and aquatic wildlife. The report is being reviewed by RAP and BPAC members and is expected to be released in March 1998. The report covers three seasons of interviews with hunters and anglers in the Metro Toronto, Hamilton Harbor and Niagra River AOCs, as well as along the Detroit and St. Clair rivers. The results are promising and indicate that tainting of fish and wildlife is not a problem in the AOC.

Several workshops were held during the spring and summer. The contaminated sediment workshop reviewed sediment characterization studies being conducted by the Ontario Ministry of Environment and the Lambton Indus-

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AOC UPDATES

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trial Society. Progress has been made in developing a GIS program and accompanying model development for sediment monitoring. Other workshops were held on habitat restoration.

The natural heritage workshop presented a draft report titled *RAP Portfolio: Quantifying the Extent of Beneficial Uses Restored in The St. Clair River*. The report can be summarized best by the quote "Overall, owing to improved sediment and habitat quality and abatement initiative with industry and municipalities, implementation is 70% complete and restoration of beneficial uses in the St. Clair River is 60%." While the results are encouraging, a great deal of work remains to be done.

Near Sarnia, McDonald Park has been officially dedicated. This unique habitat restoration project is spectacular. This grassy field includes pond and upland plant plugs that create a prairie and wetland that are truly remarkable.

ST. MARYS RIVER

By John Campbell

In 1996 the International Joint Commission (IJC) initiated Status Assessments to examine progress being made in individual AOCs. A Status Assessment was recently completed in the Detroit River AOC. The IJC is conducting a similar assessment of the St. Marys River AOC. Two visits have occurred to date.

The St. Marys River BPAC has been floundering for the last two years and is now dangerously close to going out of existence. There is absolutely no support of any kind from the Ontario Ministry of Environment (OME), the lead agency, or the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, which initially participated as a co-coordinator of the RAP.

For the last eighteen months or more, OME's Thunder Bay office has been sitting on information compiled by four working committees for incorporation into the Stage II RAP. In the minimal communication we have had with Thunder Bay, we have been told—

unofficially—that ours is the lowest priority of all the RAPs they administer.

At this point the St. Marys River BPAC continues to exist for the sole purpose of helping the IJC in the completion of the status assessment. Once the assessment is completed, it is very doubtful the BPAC will continue to exist.

TORCH LAKE

By Jim Spence

The past year has been a very busy period in the Torch Lake AOC. In April the best attended AOC meeting ever resulted in election of the first Torch Lake Area Public Action Council (TLAPAC). Twenty-two individuals were elected to represent seven designated stakeholder groups. Although not all stakeholder groups had a full slate, the level of participation was excellent. The PAC has continued to fill vacancies, including three that remain in the Native American group. Interested individuals should contact Membership Committee chairman Dan Lorenzetti at 906-482-2731.

The TLAPAC has met monthly, moving rapidly to form an operating structure. In addition to balancing their stakeholder group representation, they have elected officers, set up standing and special function committees, begun drafting bylaws and initiated the process of filing for incorporation as a tax-exempt, non-profit Michigan corporation. The PAC has been notified that it is eligible to receive funds from U.S. EPA and will be awarded a two-year private foundation grant. Meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month at Lake Linden-Hubbell High School.

Other AOC activities include the PAC's cosponsorship, with the SPAC, of the August workshop *Options for Addressing Contaminated Sediments in Upper Peninsula Waters*. The workshop was very well attended and was followed by a special meeting at which the SPAC members presented local PAC members with ideas and suggestions for operating a successful PAC (a summary is available from the Great Lakes Commission, 734-665-9135).

Grants were awarded to two townships in the AOC to plan the development of Superfund sites by building on U.S. EPA's remediation plans. Calumet Township will develop Calumet Lake into a recreational facility and historical interpretive site to complement the adjacent Keweenaw National Historical Park. Osceola Township will increase public accessibility along its shoreline in Dollar Bay.

Finally, U.S. EPA's remediation designs for all 14 Superfund sites have been completed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS was also awarded a grant to design the remediation of a stamp sand impoundment which has breached its retaining dam and released thousands of tons of stamp sands into Scales Creek, a tributary of the Traprock River, the major tributary to Torch Lake. The grant also will fund a project manager to conduct a more detailed examination of the Traprock River watershed, identify watershed problems, seek grant funding to address the problems, and provide assistance to the TLAPAC. For more information contact, Steve Albee, project manager, at 906-482-0360.

WHITE LAKE

By Tanya Cabala

Summer was busy and fun in the White Lake AOC! The White Lake PAC sponsored an exhibit and boat tour during the *Celebrate White Lake Festival*, an annual event coordinated by the White Lake Historical Society to foster appreciation of the lake's natural history and other noteworthy attributes. A record crowd visited the 1997 festival. Boat tours of the lake on Grand Valley State University's research vessel *W.G. Jackson* were funded by MDEQ and Whitehall Leather Company, a member of the PAC.

Together with the White Lake Association, the PAC is seeking funds and equipment to continue the second phase of the Lakewatch Program, in which benthic organisms will be collected to evaluate the health of the lake-bottom habitat. To help with this program, contact Kathy Evans, Muskegon Conservation District, 616-773-0008. ♦

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