

GREAT LAKES UNITED

An international coalition to conserve and protect the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Ecosystem

Reproductive health conference draws 350 attendees

by Scott Sederstrom
GLU Field Coordinator

In one of the most well-attended grassroots events in years, over 350 people showed up for "The Environmental Connection: Rising Rates of Breast Cancer, Reproductive Problems and Children's Disease," a conference held December 2 in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The conference, co-sponsored by Great Lakes United and the Ecology Center, and the previous evening's public hearing, co-sponsored by Women's Environment and Development Organization (WE DO), were designed to provide attendees with information on the link between environmental contamination and disease while also offering clean production solutions.

Attendees included representatives from as far away as Duluth, Minnesota, and Washington, D.C., and ran the social and ethnic gamut from breast cancer survivors to academics, from representatives of the First Nations to Latinos, from labor to environmental justice activists. Participant reaction as measured both in the sessions and by conference evaluation forms was overwhelmingly positive.

Highlights of the conference included
continued on page 18

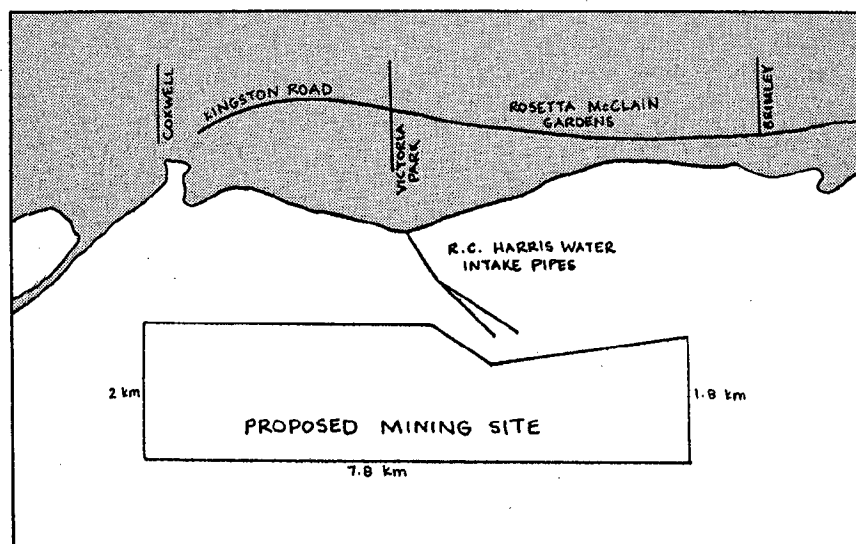
Organizing stops Lake Ontario nearshore sandmining proposal

by Burkhard Mausberg
GLU Executive Director

Great Lakes United and a local Anti-Mining Coalition have successfully defeated a proposal to mine sand from Lake Ontario that would have threatened Toronto water quality and shore

sources Chris Hodgson turned the proposal down.

GLU and the Anti-Mining Coalition spent two weeks in November rallying citizens to pressure the government on the issue. At risk was the drinking water quality for 2.5 million residents of



integrity.

Bedrock Resources Inc. of Windsor, Ontario, had asked the provincial government for permission to dredge 54 million tonnes of aggregate sand from the floor of Lake Ontario. On November 22, Ontario Minister of Natural Re-

metropolitan Toronto.

"Reasons for opposing this proposal are obvious and many. Foremost is the threat to the area's drinking water supply. The proposal also posed a significant threat to fish habitats, shorelines,

continued page 14

Focus groups: What the Basin public thinks

by Scott Sederstrom
GLU Field Coordinator

- ◆ Great Lakes Basin residents consider the lakes' water quality moderately important, but they are not particularly knowledgeable about it.
- ◆ Basin residents know that the Great Lakes have problems, such as contamination of fish, but think the problems are getting better and that the only necessary precautionary measure is to avoid eating Great Lakes fish.
- ◆ Basin residents support government regulation of industry, which they see as the source of many Great Lakes problems.
- ◆ Basin residents see environmental groups as part of the solution to Great Lakes environmental problems, but see their role as largely educational.
- ◆ The only environmental group with significant name recognition in the Basin is Greenpeace.

These are some of the conclusions drawn from a series of focus groups convened throughout the Great Lakes region by the National Wildlife Federation.

"Focus groups" are small groups of people carefully selected to determine public attitudes toward issues or products. Moderators guide a discussion among the participants, which is usually filmed through a one-way mirror.

Focus groups are frequently used by political campaigns and commercial product marketers. Lately some national environmental groups have also been using focus groups as a way to guide the crafting of environmental messages.

The NWF/Pollution Probe focus groups were held to determine the general public's beliefs and attitudes regarding Great Lakes issues. In December the organizations held a meeting to share their analysis of the focus group results with Great Lakes environmental and grassroots groups.

Generally speaking the organizations

concluded that, to be effective in gaining support for environmental initiatives, toxic and bacterial pollution issues must be linked with human illness and presented along with available solutions.

The organizations suggested four tactics to increase awareness of Great Lakes problems and support for fixing them:

- ◆ Engender public "environmental literacy"—educate the public about the basics of environmental problems
- ◆ Repeat the message—explain environmental problems and their solutions in as many media as possible
- ◆ Use schools to get the message out
- ◆ Raise the visibility of environmental groups—identify polluters and point the finger at them

We will miss John Manty

We are deeply shocked and saddened by the sudden death of John Manty on January 27 from a heart attack at his home in Dollar Bay, Michigan.

John was a dedicated grassroots activist who devoted almost all his time—most

of it on a volunteer basis—to working to protect Lake Superior. John was a very active member of the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition and the Lake Superior Alliance. John was a board member of Great Lakes United.

John, and Eugene and Janet Avery, were the objects of a vicious libel suit brought on by their determined opposition to a mining proposal in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula. Great Lakes Minerals, Inc., pursued this financially devastating suit for over three years, but John and the Averages were twice vindicated in Michigan courts.



To successfully raise the profile of Great Lakes water quality issues, the organizations suggested a general strategy of targeting audiences of Great Lakes recreational users, women of child-bearing years, and people dependent on Great Lakes waters, such as commercial fishers and First Nations citizens.

Environmental groups are seen as part of the solution to problems in the Great Lakes, but the focus group study clearly indicates that raising the media profile of Great Lakes environmental groups and—and doing so in the right way—is essential for maintaining and increasing public support for effective Great Lakes environmental initiatives.

An inspired writer and excellent editor, John wrote for and edited *Superior Vision*, the Lake Superior Alliance newsletter.

John was a member of the Lake Superior Forum, the binational multistakeholder advisory committee to the governments on the Zero Discharge Demonstration Program for Lake Superior. At the forum, in the midst of often difficult opposition, John always spoke out strongly for the well-being of Lake Superior and adamantly pushed for the principles in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

John was a generous, gentle and warm spirit. His smile always warmly embraced those he met. A highly principled person, John always made sure that his actions were contributing to the well-being of others.

We miss John as a fellow activist and as a special friend.

—John Jackson

BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT PROTECTION TASK FORCE

GLU holds commercial fisheries conference

by David Mahony
GLU Field Coordinator

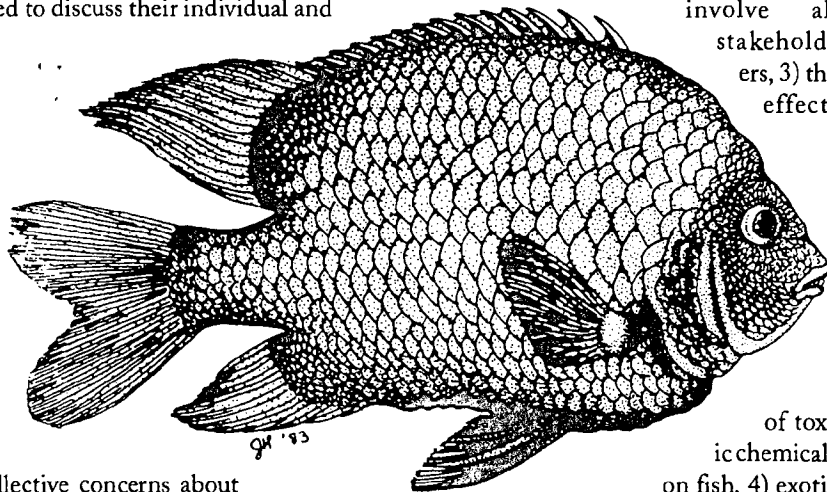
Over 130 people showed up at Great Lakes United's recent outreach on fish issues, "Fishing for Solutions," a conference on the Great Lakes commercial fishery. But it was the diversity of attendees, not their numbers, that was the real achievement of the meeting.

A tremendous collection of the Lakes' many different user groups plus fisheries managers and environmentalists gathered to discuss their individual and

No major issues were resolved by the attendees—convening the meeting was just the first step in facilitating the inter-interest contacts that could lead to deep constructive dialogue, compromise, and eventually collective efforts.

By the end of the weekend, breakout groups had identified problem areas and suggested solutions in five important areas of fisheries problems: 1) the effects of stocking on the Great Lakes, 2) how management can effectively

involve all stakeholders, 3) the effects



collective concerns about the Basin's aquatic resources. Interests represented included commercial and Tribal fishers, sports groups, state and provincial officials, academics, clean water activists, naturalists, and United Autoworkers members.

One item most participants could agree on was the need to stop the invasion of exotic species that disrupt the ecosystem in ways that cost large sums to overcome, if they can be overcome at all. Many exotic species are invading upstream areas as well as the Lakes proper. Participants thought it would be possible to mount a coordinated effort among all Lakes interests to gain more stringent Basinwide regulations on the release of ballast water and other sources of transmission of exotic species.

management can effectively involve all stakeholders, 3) the effects of toxic chemicals on fish, 4) exotic species as a threat to Lakes resources, and 5) long-term sustainability—how to pass on the legacy of the Great Lakes fishery to future generations.

The first part of the conference dealt with the fish-related natural and human forces at work in the Great Lakes ecosystem. Randy Eshenroder of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission presented a paper explaining the sustainable nature of the Great Lakes ecosystem before European contact and its present state of unsustainability.

Russell Brown of the National Marine Fisheries Service presented the history of commercial fishing in the Great Lakes, providing trend data with current figures. Steve Nepszy of the Ontario

Ministry of Natural Resources described and analyzed the past and present gear used by the commercial fishing industry.

Discordant voices were the missing element in the weekend. The congenial presentations and post-presentation question-and-answer sessions made for good will and solid pledges of future dialogue, but were also frustrating in that they lacked the realism of the sharply different views and sometimes heated emotions that characterize real-world struggle over fisheries policy. It might have been more useful if the impediments to truly achieving a consensus on action to create a sustainable Great Lakes fish community had been a little more apparent.

Great Lakes United's ongoing concern with the effect of toxic pollution on some fish species and the decline in certain fish stocks drew our attention to the need for our members to become more involved in the work being done to stabilize an imperiled resource.

In the process we became more aware of a number of other, intertwined issues, such as fish allocation schemes, disease in hatcheries, and tension among user groups and between user groups and fish managers.

GLU convened the conference with the aim of cutting through the Gordian knot of these many interrelated issues and beginning the formation of Basin-wide consensus on at least some fish issues. We hoped to educate antagonistic interests as well as ourselves and to construct a forum that would allow discussion concerning the future of the fishery in the Great Lakes. We feel it was a good first step and that now the real work begins.

Great Lakes United is planning to publish the conference proceedings in early spring. If you would like to receive a copy, please call the Buffalo office.

BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT PROTECTION TASK FORCE

An attendee's view of GLU's fish conference

by Shawn Perich

Adapted from Outdoor News magazine
Improving Great Lakes fishing was the goal of a recent Detroit fisheries conference. Great Lakes United organized the conference to address difficult fisheries issues, such as maintaining populations of commercially important fish, resource allocation among Tribal and non-Tribal fishermen, the spread of exotic species, and fish contaminants.

The conference brought together a diverse collection of fishing interests, including commercial fishermen, tribal fishermen, sport anglers, fish managers and environmentalist. Despite varied views, everyone got along—something that may not have occurred in other places where commercial fishing issues are controversial.

"You couldn't hold a conference like this in Florida or Washington," observed Charles Gauvin, president of Trout Unlimited.

Although conference attendees fished for solutions, whether or not they caught any remains to be seen. Although most everyone agrees that the goal of Great Lakes fish management is to restore a healthy aquatic ecosystem that supports both sport and commercial fishing, some divisive issues are difficult to resolve. In some places, commercially important species such as yellow perch have greatly declined, but Tribal fishermen want to

continue using gill nets with minimal restrictions. Some sport anglers refuse to believe that fish contaminants can threaten their health.

Nevertheless, the Great Lakes are productive fisheries. Russell Brown of the National Marine Fisheries Service said that although the composition of fish species has changed in the lakes, the overall catch (by weight) has been relatively constant since the 1920s. However, employment in the commercial fishing industry has greatly declined since the 1960s, due to lower values for fish and the use of more sophisticated fishing gear. More commercial fishing currently occurs on the Canadian side of the lakes, especially on Lake Erie.

Another change is who does the fishing. Court decisions in the United States and Canada established Great Lakes Indian tribes' rights to harvest fish for subsistence. Eric Johnston, president of the Saugeen Ojibway Fishermen's Association in Ontario, said that after much discussion, his band has defined subsistence as the ability to catch and sell fish to achieve an average standard of living in modern society.

However, the Saugeen Ojibway have been hotly opposed by commercial and sport fishermen. "The natives have come into a fishery that's already been divided up," Johnston said.

Another problem is that the intended

harvest by Tribal or non-Tribal fishermen may conflict with the management goals of fish managers.

Dick Gurnoe, of the Red Cliff Band of Ojibway in northern Wisconsin, blamed the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for interfering with his band's right to net fish. "I'm very anti-DNR, but I think you'll find any commercial fisherman will say that," he said. Gurnoe went on to say that all Wisconsin conservation officers are "blond, blue-eyed and six foot two."

Later in the conference, Jim Johnson, a fish biologist with the Michigan DNR, voiced frustration at trying to do his job amid constant political change, such as treaty rights and funding cuts.

"Biologists need political stability in order to work," he said.

However, another Michigan DNR representative, John Robertson, said Great Lakes fisheries continue moving toward ecological recovery. He predicted that Lake Superior will support self-sustaining fish populations within twenty-five years, and that Superior will be the first of the Great Lakes to have a lakewide fish management plan.

The conference showed that although conflict still surrounds the Great Lakes fishery, building a healthy fishery is important to everyone. However, those who are fishing for solutions to fisheries issues will have to keep casting for now.

Come to Great Lakes United's 1996 Annual Meeting!

June 7, 8, and 9 in Ann Arbor, Michigan

Theme: "Where Do We Want To Be in the Year 2020?"

Keynote speaker: Lois Gibbs

BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT PROTECTION TASK FORCE

Marsh monitors get first year's data on birds & frogs

by Amy Chabot

Long Point Bird Observatory

The Marsh Monitoring Program was a huge success in 1995! Established to monitor the health of Great Lakes marshes by surveying their bird and amphibian populations, the project has been enthusiastically received by volunteers, Remedial Action Plan coordinators, and Public Advisory Committees alike.

Five hundred volunteers registered to complete bird and amphibian surveys for the program in 1995, of whom 235 ended up helping collect data on a total of 216 bird and amphibian monitoring routes.

The project has established 40 monitored routes in 31 U.S. Areas of Concern (AOCs) and 25 routes in non-AOC areas of the United States, for a total of 65 U.S. routes. In Ontario 51 routes have been established in the province's 12 AOCs and 100 routes in areas outside of the AOCs for a total of 151 Ontario routes.

Marsh birds

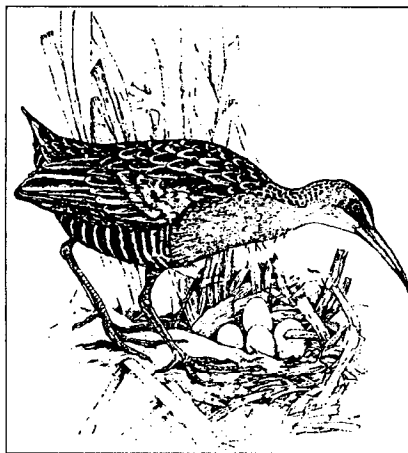
A total of 18,950 birds were counted on 173 routes in 1995! Many of the marsh birds seen or heard were both widely distributed (counted on many of the routes) and abundant (counted many times on individual routes). Red-winged blackbird and swamp sparrow were the two most frequently encountered and abundant marsh nesting species in 1995.

Some abundant species, such as common yellowthroat, yellow warbler and song sparrow, were counted many times but at fewer stations than less abundant species, such as marsh wren and common grackle, which counted fewer times but seen at more stations.

One species of duck, the mallard, made the top ten list; it was both the ninth most abundant and most frequently encountered species.

Black tern, a species that has been identified as being at risk in many regions around the Great Lakes, was the tenth most frequently encountered and fifth most abundant marsh nester!

Marsh birds are a significant component of the biodiversity of the Great Lakes wetlands but, as a group, they are



perhaps the least known birds. Many species of marsh birds have experienced major population declines due to habitat loss and degradation, but it is unknown whether these declines are still occurring and to what extent. There is also growing international concern about declines of amphibian populations, and a similar lack of information on the trend.

The Marsh Monitoring Program will provide baseline information on marsh bird and amphibian populations and habitat requirements. This will help determine what actions are necessary and likely to succeed in improving wildlife habitat in the Great Lakes.

Marsh amphibian

Amphibian surveys were conducted on 125 routes throughout the Great Lakes Basin. Twelve of the thirteen species of frogs and toads found throughout the Basin were heard. The only species not

heard was Blanchard's cricket frog. Four species were detected only occasionally: Fowler's toad, Cope's gray treefrog, mink frog, and pickerel frog.

The spring peeper was the most abundant species encountered. Green frogs, which breed later in the season, were heard at 63 percent of the sites surveyed. Although more a terrestrial than a marsh species, American toads were also heard at 63 percent of the stations.

Leopard frogs, found mainly in wet meadows in the summer, return to marshes to breed and were detected at 40 percent of the survey sites. Gray treefrogs, unlike the much less common Cope's gray treefrog, were heard at 39 percent of survey sites. Bullfrogs, thought to be declining in many regions, were detected at 34 percent of stations surveyed.

The tiny, yet aptly named chorus frog was heard at twenty-six percent of the sites surveyed. Surprisingly, wood frogs, which are most commonly heard in wooded wetlands during a short period early in the spring, were heard at 16 percent of the stations!

Calling all volunteers!

Despite the enthusiastic response from volunteers in the program's first year, there are many more marshes we would like to see routes established in. Additional volunteers are being sought to establish routes in 1996, especially in the Great Lakes states and in the marshes in Areas of Concern that are currently not monitored. New Marsh Monitoring Program training kits that describe species and how they sound are being prepared and will be distributed to all 1995 and new 1996 volunteers.

Anyone who would like to conduct surveys should contact Amy Chabot, Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, ON, N0E 1M0, (519) 586-3531.

BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT PROTECTION TASK FORCE

Habitat task force update

by David Mahony
GLU Field Coordinator

The major task force activity in late 1995 was preparation for "Fishing for Solutions," the conference on the commercial fishery we held in Detroit in early December. (See accompanying article.) Conference proceedings will be available in the spring.

We were pleased with the composition and number of attendees. It was a good start for what we hope will be an active fish program at Great Lakes United. Plans for that program are being formulated in a process headed by GLU board member Ed Michael of Trout Unlimited and former board member Camilla Smith.

The main task force activity for the coming year will again be the campaign to counter the destructive policies advocated by self-described "wise use" and "share" advocates in the Great Lakes Basin.

"Wise use" and "share" groups are largely funded by natural resource industry associations or corporations to provide a grassroots face for efforts to support the extraction and exploitation of publicly held natural resources. They tend to target our forests, wetlands, wilderness, and parks.

This year we will be working to inform public officials about these groups and plan to show that there is still overwhelming public support for conservation laws, wilderness preservation, and responsible resource use.

One of our focuses will be on the "property rights" initiatives that seek to compensate landowners for compliance with environmental protections. "Takings" legislation attempts to elevate the

protections of the Fifth Amendment for compensation for government "taking" of property ahead of the rights of the government to legislate for public health and safety and protection of our natural areas.

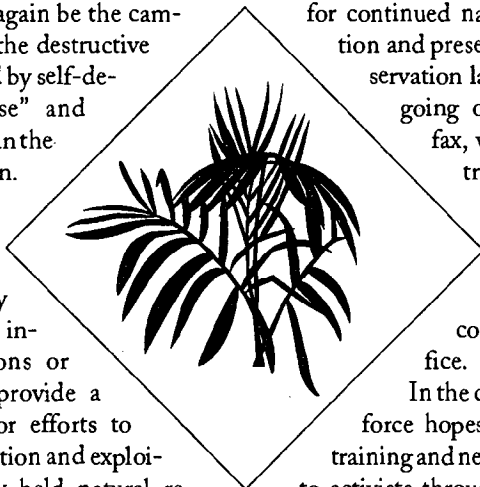
This concept has taken off in the national and state legislatures. GLU will be working to bring to light the many dangerous elements of this type of initiative. Please see accompanying article for the status of "property rights" legislation in the Great Lakes Basin.

Electronic updates

To further our goals, this January the Task Force began distributing a weekly one-page update on "wise use" and "share" activities in the Basin and local efforts for continued natural areas protection and preservation of our conservation laws. The update is going out via e-mail and fax, which saves a lot of trouble and money over traditional mail. If you would like to receive these, please contact the Buffalo office.

In the coming year the task force hopes to provide media training and networking assistance to activists throughout the Basin to counter "wise use" elements. We will also continue to work with the Long Point Bird Observatory on its important Marsh Monitoring Program.

The program needs volunteers to survey the birds and amphibians in the Basin's marshes to give us critical information about the health of the most productive habitat in the Great Lakes, our marshes and wetlands. Areas particularly in need of volunteer surveyors are Basin's Areas of Concern.



Omnibus Bill threatens Conservation Authorities

by David Mahony

Ontario's Conservative government has passed legislation that may put thousands of acres of prime southern Ontario conservation lands on the auction block.

The region contains thirty-eight Conservation Authorities (CAs) with holdings totaling 300,000 acres. The legislation puts 180,000 acres at risk.

The authorities were created in 1946 for flood control purposes. Over the years they have provided effective service through floodplain management, land acquisition, and reforestation.

Private donations have made significant contributions to authority holdings: the Nature Conservancy of Canada has purchased more than 40,000 acres, ceding them to various CAs; the Richard Ivey Foundation has given CAs more than \$1.5 million for land purchases; and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists has contributed thousands of dollars for purchases on the Niagara Escarpment. CAs are funded by provincial allocations and municipal levies.

The provincial government's Bill 26, the Omnibus Bill, could lead to dissolution of CAs on the whims of municipalities, which may now opt out of an authority by withholding levies. If a CA is dissolved, its land can become a municipal asset available for sale, even if conservation of the land provides benefits to other municipalities.

Forty percent of Conservation Authority holdings are considered provincially significant; the rest, are now open to development. The province needs to play a strong role in this area and set some provincial standards. Flood control service cannot rely on municipal decisionmaking since watersheds often extend far beyond municipal borders.

For more information contact the Wildlands League at (416) 971-9453.

BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT PROTECTION TASK FORCE

U.S. "salvage" rider just another logging ruse

by David Mahony
GLU Field Coordinator

Timber interests in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service are allowing a federal environmental loophole, relatively unregulated sales of "salvage" lumber, to undermine laws limiting logging in national forests.

Forest fires, disease, and insect damage are all natural occurrences in a forest ecosystem. In extreme cases, the U.S. Forest Service has traditionally allowed the logging industry to "salvage" trees that are highly damaged but still commercially valuable. In the last few years, the logging industry has worked to greatly expand this exemption and now claim there is a "forest health crisis" of epidemic proportions in the national forests that requires wholesale clearcuts to save the valuable timber.

This mostly false claim led to attachment of a timber salvage rider to a summer 1995 budget bill that greatly expands the conditions of timber salvage sales. The rider allows virtually any timber sale to be considered "salvage."

An indication of the value of this sleight of hand is an internal Forest Service memo dated December 1992, just before the change in federal administrations, that instructed staff to include "salvage" in the name of virtually every timber sale. The idea was to facilitate the speed of timber sales since most environmental laws are suspended with respect to "salvage" logging.

Besides greatly expanding logging in the national forests, the salvage rider will be a burden on U.S. taxpayers. Through road building and maintenance and other assistance, the government provides enormous financial subsidies to corporate logging operations. But the timber salvage rider specifically states that salvage sales are not to be precluded simply because "the costs . . . are likely to exceed the revenues derived."

Salvage sales are also nearly unregulated. The U.S. Forest Service has long tended to act a bit like the fox guarding the chicken coop when it comes to logging. But it has been limited in its excesses by having to adhere to publicly



debated forest management plans. Failure to do so had led to court action.

But the public interest in salvage sales has no such protections. Even in cases of extreme abuse of the intent of the law, there is no administrative or judicial recourse for citizens to challenge the legality of the sales.

Basin impact

When the rider was debated, many in Congress felt that this would only affect a small number of areas in the West and was a favor tacked on for a few timber congressmen. Many did not comprehend that the salvage rider would affect national forests throughout America, including in the Great Lakes Basin.

The U.S. Forest Service plans to offer for sale the following amounts of timber from Basin national forests under the Timber Salvage Rider (in millions of board feet): Hiawatha—34.6 mbf; Huron-Manistee—14.4; Ottawa—25.6; Chippewa—21.8; Superior—48; Chequamegon—24.6; Nicolet—5.

The Ottawa National Forest seems

to have taken the lead in the Basin in the rush to liquidate timber under the "salvage" provisions. Twelve timber sales have been turned into "salvage" sales since the rider was passed.

The first may be the Ten Mile Creek Vegetation Management Project, a large sale that encompasses forty-seven cutting units of which thirty-five are clearcuts or modified clearcuts. Clearcutting is planned for over 75 percent of the harvested acres. The project as planned will further fragment an area already devastated by industrial clearcutting on designated trout streams that are tributaries of the West Branch of the Ontonagon River, a National and Scenic River.

The area is home to many sensitive species but the Forest Service refuses to do adequate surveys. The Forest Service biologist estimated that habitat for pine marten will be eliminated for a minimum of fifteen years by the planned logging. Despite this adverse impact to a rare species, the district ranger selected the logging alternative with the highest forest fragmentation. Forest Service documents also point out that the designated trout streams in the project area run brown with sediment during high flows. Nonetheless, the agency still proposes to log over 1,200 acres in the watershed. The area is home to many threatened and sensitive species including goshawk, grey wolf, and bald eagle.

The Norwich Aspen Vegetation Management Project, also planned in the Ontonagon River watershed, will enter one of the last roadless areas in the forest. This sale may have even more adverse impacts to wildlife than the Ten Mile sale due to the area's remote character and the Forest Service's plans to exceed the forty-acre size limit for clearcuts.

The Betchler Marsh project, in the Hiawatha National Forest in the eastern

continued page 30

A summary of Basin "takings" activity

by David Mahony
GLU Field Coordinator

All over the Great Lakes Basin the "wise use" and "share" movements are having an impact on state and provincial governments.

These forces may have different names in the United States and Canada, but their agenda is always the same: to develop legal mechanisms to prevent any restrictions on the right to cut down, fill in, or pave over natural areas.

Assessment bills require government agencies to prepare elaborate reviews of proposed laws and regulations, ostensibly to avoid potential "takings" claims. These bills would create a new, unnecessary level of bureaucracy that would force agencies to spend large amounts of tax dollars and many years studying the potential effect of each and every regulation, regardless of the need for the regulation and how many other property owners would be protected. Many states have rejected "takings" assessment bills based on their expected costs.

A subset of assessment bills are *attorney general review bills*. These bills require the state attorney general to prepare reports on "takings" decisions to make sure that agencies are somewhat more conscious of the potential constitutional "takings" implications of their actions.

Compensation bills require the government to pay property owners when government regulation reduces a property's market value, or even a segment of that property, by a given percentage, usually between 20 and 50 percent. What constitutes "market value" is problematic, as is determining whether a "takings" threshold has been reached, making compensation bills, like assessment bills, sure to be the groundwork for an explosion of costly and time-consuming bureaucratic makework and follow-on litigation by all affected parties.

The following is an alphabetical list-

ing by state and province of the legal gains made the "wise use" and "share" forces in recent times.

United States

In March 1995 the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 925, the "Private Property Protection Act of 1995." The bill will pay landowners that have had a portion of their property values reduced by at least 20 percent due to federal action under endangered species, wetlands, swampbuster, or western water rights regulations. H.R. 925 would require the federal agency charged with implementing a regulation to use their own budgets to pay landowners for successful claims of a "taking."

The Senate Judiciary Committee recently approved S. 605, "The Omnibus Property Rights Act." Unlike H.R. 925, S. 605 would apply to virtually all federal regulations. The bill would require taxpayer payments for any federal regulation that diminishes the value of the "affected portion" of property by at least 33 percent. Debate and a Senate floor vote on the bill are expected this spring.

For more information contact American Resources Information Network at (800) 846-2746.

Illinois

Four "takings" bills have recently been introduced. H.B. 2748, introduced by Phil Novak (D-Kankakee), is an assessment bill that would require an agency to review rules and regulations for potential "takings" implications. It does not dictate lengthy review procedures like the most extreme assessment bills, but it would still give credence to the claims of property rights activists that a problem exists. Research by board member of the Illinois Environmental Council found that there have been only three regulatory "takings" cases in Illinois in the past twenty years, none successful. For more

information contact the Illinois Environmental Council at (217) 544-5954.

Indiana

In 1993 Indiana passed attorney general review legislation requiring that all legislation and accompanying rules and regulations be shown to the attorney general for his or her judgment on the possibility of it resulting in "takings." The legislation has provisions that guarantee attorney-client privilege between the governor and the attorney-general on these matters. This provision prevents public disclosure of whether the attorney general's review has stopped any regulations from being proposed or passed. For more information contact the Hoosier Environmental Council at (317) 685-8800.

Michigan

The House and Senate have passed the "Property Rights Preservation Act," which requires the attorney general to review current state and national law on "takings" and report on it to the Departments of Environmental Quality, Natural Resources, and Transportation. This bill does not have the problematic provisions regarding attorney-client privilege that are present in the Indiana law.

Another bill, H.B. 5483, introduced by Rep. Gaza (R-Oakland-Troy) and passed in the House in February, will require all employees of the Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality "who have decision making authority on permits, licences, order or other actions that may limit the use of private property to receive training related to the constitutional limitations on the regulation of private property. This training shall include an overview of the law related to constitutional takings." The bill is now before the Senate.

An ad hoc committee chaired by Rep. Ken Sikkema (R-Grandville) to consider property rights continues to sit.

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Additional bills with property rights implications are likely to be assigned to the subcommittee for review by summer.

For more information contact Sierra Club Mackinac Chapter at (517) 484-2372.

Minnesota

A bill before the Senate Environment Committee would mandate that the "wetland heritage advisory committee" meet with the attorney general and "representatives of property rights groups" to study the issue of compensation for "costs, including reduced property values resulting from regulation under state law of draining and filling of wetlands." The bill would require that the study be completed with recommendations for legislative changes by November 1996.

The "wetland heritage advisory committee" was the creation of the Minnesota Wetlands Conservation Act, a law providing for no further losses of wetlands that passed in 1991. The committee is a representative body made up of sportsmen, agriculture interests, local government, and state agency officials. They meet annually to get a report from the state on actions taken under the act and then can make recommendations to the governor for amendments to the act.

But most of the energy for reform is now coming from property rights groups who are working hard to abolish the Wetlands Conservation Act. Property rights advocates originally gathered under the banner of the Minnesota Land Owner's Rights Association, but there have now been some splinters within that group. Suffice it to say that any planned wetlands reform law proposals will include a "takings" component.

For more information please contact Cordelia Peirson, Minnesota Audubon Council, (612) 225-1830.

New York

New York has no "takings" legislation. There are some committed "property

rights" legislators who introduce "compensation" and "attorney-general review" bills but they have all died in committee. Most do not even make it that far. It seems unlikely that New York will pass any "takings" legislation soon. For more information call John Stouffer, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, (518) 426-9144.

Ohio

Proposed "takings" assessment laws, H.B. 533 and S.B. 221, broadly defines government action as the enactment or amendment of any statute, regulation, rule, ordinance, or resolution, and any conditional licenses, variances or authorization. The hearings are coming to a close and likely to go to a vote soon.

The National Audubon Society's Great Lakes Regional Office is coordinating a broad-based Community Protection Alliance to speak out against this legislation. For more information please contact the society at (614) 224-3303.

Ontario

The Canadian constitution does not have any clauses protecting property in the manner of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, but property rights rhetoric has had an impact on some members of the Ontario government.

A private members bill introduced by Toby Barrett (PC-Norfolk) would provide Canada's first statutory protection for property rights. The bill has passed second reading. Barrett says he wants to provide a means of compensating Ontario landowners for zoning bylaws and conservation efforts that "result in a diminution of property value." The bill is now languishing in a Justice subcommittee and is likely moribund but there is some support for investigating the issue. For more information contact the Canadian Environmental Law Association at (416) 960-2284.

Pennsylvania

There are three live "takings" bills in the

Pennsylvania legislature, but there have been encouraging signs that the administration is not supportive of changes to "takings" law. With both houses of the legislature and the governor all Republican, any consensus on the bills would result in quick passage and signing.

Department of Environmental Protection Secretary James Feif has said that the administration wants the courts to continue to decide "takings" law on a case by case basis.

H.B. 1215 is an all-encompassing compensation bill that would pay for any reduction in fair market value from land-use planning, environmental protection, and zoning laws. Widely considered too extreme, the bill is likely dead.

H.B. 200 is a wetlands compensation bill that has "takings" component much like the destructive federal Hayes-Ridge H.R. 1330 of a few years ago. This is the bill concerning which the administration has said it could not support changes in "takings" laws. The bill will probably not make it out of the Environment Committee without changes.

A Senate proposal, S.B. 805, is a compensation and assessment bill. The bill would impact all environmental and all local government action, including land use planning. The chair of the Environmental and Energy committee has expressed opposition to the bill and there has been no action on it for some time, but there is concern that it may be amended to become an assessment bill.

For more information please contact Jeff Schmidt of the Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter at (717) 232-0101.

Québec

Québec has no pending "property rights" or "takings" legislation. For more information contact the Québec Environmental Law Center at (514) 931-9190.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin has no "takings" legislation.

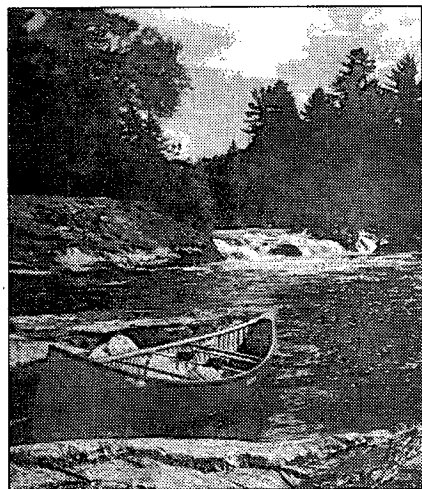
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BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT PROTECTION TASK FORCE

Local citizens oppose changes to Canoe Wilderness

by David Mahony
GLU Field Coordinator

As we reported last issue, U.S. Rep. Jim Oberstar (D-Minnesota), whose district includes the Voyageurs National Park (VNP) and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), is plan-



Michael Furmen

ning to introduce legislation that would dramatically change the management of these natural areas.

Oberstar claims his proposed changes are needed to meet the needs of the people of his district. But a poll commis-

sioned by four state environmental groups indicates that Oberstar may be appealing only a small minority.

Oberstar has written legislation that will forbid wilderness status for any part of VNP, suspends the Endangered Species Act within the park, mandates that two hundred houseboats be put into the park, dramatically increases snowmobile traffic in the park, and establishes a locally weighted "management council" to direct park policy, increasing both the costs to and complexity of the job of the U.S. Forest Service.

Oberstar is drafting a similar bill for the BWCAW that reportedly still re-establishes vehicle use within the wilderness on select portages for hauling boats overland, increases motor use dramatically on Basswood and Saganaga lakes (and perhaps Lac La Croix), and forms yet another "management council" to micromanage the wilderness.

Polls

A recently released poll conducted by St. Cloud State University, reveals overwhelming support for wilderness and national parks among residents of Minnesota. The poll's 514 respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of nine

reasons or values for having wilderness areas or national parks in this state. Over three-fourths of the respondents (78 percent) believe they are very important to protect wildlife habitat. Seventy-seven percent think it is important to preserve natural resources and wildlands and 75 percent think it important to preserve natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Over 80 percent of Minnesota adults either want to keep the present balance of use (for example, motorized vs. nonmotorized) in state parks, or favor more emphasis on wilderness protection. Only a few Minnesotans (13 percent) would like to see more emphasis on recreation or economic use of the VNP and BWCAW. Similar numbers were found in a poll jointly commissioned by a Minneapolis-St. Paul television station and newspaper.

The responses in Oberstar's district are particularly revealing—73 percent favored the same or increased protection in the VNP and the BWCAW.

The most disturbing element of this story is the disproportional power "wise use" groups seem to wield in northeastern Minnesota. Oberstar has a 90 percent pro-environment voting record, according to the League of Conservation Voters; he certainly understands that the policies he is advocating are irresponsible. And polling results show the plan to be unpopular in his own district. Nonetheless, Oberstar presses on.

Whatever the congressman's reasons, the fact remains that two of the crown jewels of the national park system are under threat by people who are not satisfied with having only fourteen thousand of the fifteen thousand lakes in Minnesota open to the whining sound of internal combustion engines.

For more information, contact the Izaak Walton League at (218) 728-1991.

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A strong coalition that includes the League of Women Voters, disability, church, and labor groups as well as environmentalists developed to oppose a broad compensation "takings" bills in the current session of the legislature.

The Assembly and Senate were considering legislation that would allow an owner of private property to bring suit against the state or a local government if a governmental action reduces the fair market value of the property by 20 percent or more.

At public hearings held in the summer, opponents to the measures outnumbered proponents by more than two to one. There has been no action on the bill since late August, but it is thought that the bill's proponents are rewriting and planning to reintroduce it.

The Wisconsin organization Environmental Decade is serving as a clearinghouse for information on "takings" in Wisconsin. For more contact please contact Larry Classen of Wisconsin's Environmental Decade at (608) 251-7020.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE

Governments abandoning hotspot cleanup plans

by Y-Lang Nguyen
GLU Field Coordinator

In the latest of many serious blows to Basin Remedial Action Plan efforts, the state of Michigan announced in December that it will phase out its entire RAP program over the next three years. Staffing levels will be immediately cut 50 percent, from 9 to 4.5, with remaining staff working primarily on Lakewide Management Plans.

The state's Department of Environmental Quality calls the move a "transfer of leadership responsibilities" to local Public Advisory Committees (PACs). Given the pressures on local and regional finances in recent years, the state's withdrawal might spell the end to all but volunteer RAP efforts in Michigan.

The Michigan announcement follows a troubling trend of federal, state, and provincial reductions in RAP activities. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funding of RAPs is under a cloud of budget uncertainty and congressional hostility. Budget woes at Environment Canada have caused significant cuts in RAP funding, with more to follow. Wisconsin is eliminating support for three of its five RAPs; Minnesota is abandoning its single Area of Concern entirely.

With the equivalent of less than two people, working full-time on all of Michigan's RAPs, the arduous work of crafting RAP assessments and recommendations will fall almost entirely to

the local Public Advisory Committees. Two Areas of Concern, Deer and Torch Lakes, have yet to even establish the committees.

The official mandate of local PACs is to provide advice to state and federal agencies on RAPs, but this function will be essentially lost in Michigan, first because the few employees on the RAPs will be hopelessly overworked, and soon because there will be no agency to give advice to—after three years the state

Canada and Ontario

Environment Canada has announced a staffing reduction of 1,400, from 5,700 people to 4,300. Over the next two years, its budget will shrink by 30 percent. The timeline by which commitments under the Canada-Ontario Agreement are to be fulfilled will be stretched. Among these are commitments to clean up the Areas of Concern.

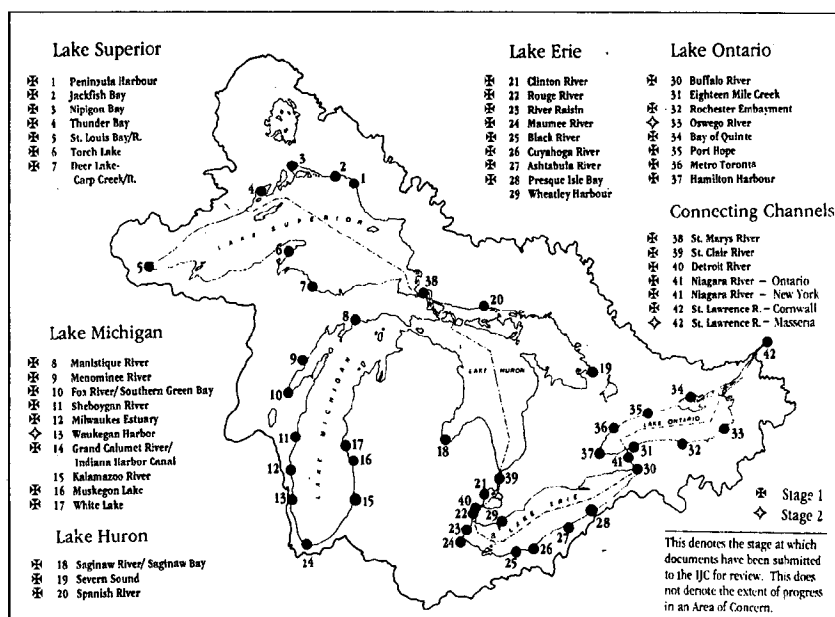
Environment Canada recently slashed funding to local Conservation Authorities by 70 percent. This is certain to have an impact on those RAPs that look to the Conservation Authorities for assistance.

More importantly, the government has also announced a reduction of civil servant rolls by at least 13,000 people. The consequences of the cuts on the Ministry of Environment and Energy will not be fully known until April.

The MOEE has stated in a letter that it will no longer financially support RAP public education activities. Ironically, one thing at which a PAC can be highly effective is building community awareness and support.

Minnesota and Wisconsin

Similarly, Minnesota is shifting responsibility for its only RAP, the St. Louis River, away from the state Pollution Control Agency to the local Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The AOC straddles the Minnesota-Wisconsin border, but Wisconsin cut its funding to the RAP last year. By 1997, Minnesota will



plans to have no RAP presence at all.

Until then, Michigan will offer small grants of about \$5,000 to each PAC. The Statewide Public Advisory Committee will have to reinvent itself entirely, since it will no longer function as a state advisory body.

United States

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has already ceased funding of RAPs in some states, including Michigan. It plans to reduce funding by 70 percent by the next fiscal year.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE

stop funding the St. Louis River RAP completely. In the meantime, the state is providing the CAC with seed money to help it establish itself as a nonprofit organization.

Wisconsin has declared that it will focus its RAP efforts on the Green Bay and Milwaukee Areas of Concern only. The other three AOCs within its borders, Sheboygan River, Lower Menominee River, and St. Louis River have sites within them that are subject to federal enforcement programs.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources says it has no power to influence those cleanups, therefore justifying its withdrawal of funding to the RAPs that encompass them.

The intent of RAP committees is to create an areawide understanding of impaired uses and an integrated, areawide plan for what would otherwise be disparate cleanup efforts.

Wisconsin's justification for ending funding of the three RAPs has little relation to these fundamental purposes of RAPs.

The state is failing to recognize that, regardless of the number of sites under federal jurisdiction located within an AOC, PACs still have a critical role to play in influencing decisionmaking by building partnerships, aiding public awareness efforts, and addressing problems not covered by federal regulations.

New York and Pennsylvania

Although New York state intends to continue supporting RAPs, the process is dominated by the state's Department of Environmental Conservation. The DEC's Bob Townsend, who serves as a RAP liaison between New York and the U.S. EPA, says that for now the state will continue to work on RAP programs as it has. This may change in April, when the budget is finalized. However, Townsend wonders if New York's involvement in the RAP process has been of any benefit to the state's six AOCs.

Development of Pennsylvania's only RAP, Presque Isle Bay, is scheduled to proceed as planned. For now, funding will remain constant. Kelly Burch of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection says that the Presque Isle PAC will continue functioning until it has reached agreement on the question, "Have we really done enough?"

Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio

Indiana and Illinois, with one RAP apiece, and Ohio, with four RAPs, all plan to support their RAPs as before. Indiana's commitment to the RAP process has never been stronger, according to Joe Thomas, coordinator for the Grand Calumet River/Indiana Harbor Canal RAP. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has said that it will con-

tinue to support the Waukegan Harbor RAP and Citizens Advisory Group.

Julie Letterhos, of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, commented that, "Assessments, education, and public awareness projects never would have been funded" without the RAPs, and that "we believe it to be a very successful program." In fact, the state considers the program so successful that similar operations, in which the local community has a strong say in the decisionmaking process, are being established in other parts of the state. Although the flow of federal dollars to the program has stopped, Letterhos declares that the Ohio EPA is highly committed to the process and may allocate more state money to the RAP program.

The RAP process was never intended to be quick and easy. It was meant to be thorough and representative: with participation from all sectors of the community; with the support of government agencies; and with the aim of producing a plan reflecting the needs of all.

Most of the people who sit on the Public Advisory Committees are volunteers with limited time and resources who need government financial and technical support if their participation is to be effective. It is bitterly disappointing for many PAC members to see governments withdrawing support after all the work they have put into the process. Some are simply calling it quits, a terrible loss to community cleanup efforts.

The need for Public Advisory Committees is greater today than it was ten years ago, when governments had greater resources to support RAP projects. In the end, it is citizen participation and support that will overcome the barriers standing in the way of RAPs and the cleanups they spearhead. Thus, citizens must not be discouraged by the anti-environment climate in which they may have to work. Rather, they must become more ardent in their demands for environmental cleanup.

Set aside some time to attend

Remedial Action Plan Workshops Now Being Planned

Workshops will be held in April and May for the:

Toronto Metro and Region PAC
Southeast Michigan PACs (including Saginaw Bay)
Western Michigan PACs
Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Lake Superior

For more information call Y-Lang Nguyen at (716) 886-0142

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE

— CUYAHOGA AOC —

by Y-Lang Nguyen
GLU Field Coordinator

Notorious as one of the most polluted tributaries in the Great Lakes Basin, the Cuyahoga River runs through northeastern Ohio and the city of Cleveland, draining into Lake Erie. The river's watershed supports 1.6 million people, and has been designated as one of the Great Lakes' forty-two Areas of Concern.

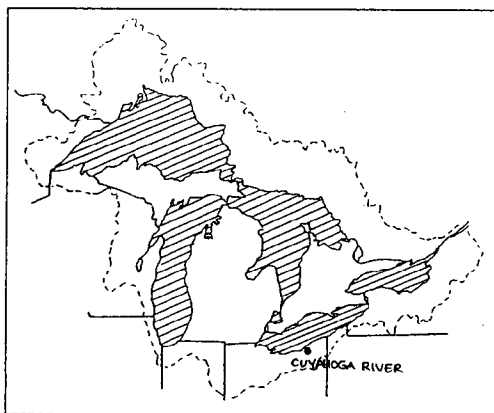
Severely abused by its users, the Cuyahoga actually caught on fire in the 1960s. This was one of the highly publicized environmental disasters of the late 1960s that led to the organizing of the first Earth Day in 1970.

The river has undergone a number of substantial cleanups since those days, but continues to have many serious problems. Eleven of fourteen possible beneficial uses as outlined by the International Joint Commission have been impaired. Degraded fish populations, loss of wildlife habitat, beach closings, excessive bacteria levels, among others, all plague the ninety-six-mile-long river.

The Ohio EPA maintains a list that tracks and prioritizes the state's unregulated waste sites. Three sites in the Cuyahoga watershed are ranked as high priority on the list. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad/Northway Environmental Services site in Cleveland is within half a mile of the Cuyahoga and just east of a large public housing project.

PCB-contaminated metal tar sludges sit in barrels left by Northway. Some remediation work has been undertaken, including the removal of twenty-seven underground storage tanks containing a wide range of hazardous wastes. A number of above-ground tanks remain on the site.

Jet Rubber, another high-priority site,



is located in a mixed residential and commercial area. Although the size of the contaminated area is unknown, a host of hazardous substances is present and poses a substantial threat to public health. A pit on the property was used as a disposal site for sludge laced with trichloroethylene. Between 1968 and 1980, 2,000 to 3,000 gallons of the toxin, plus toluene, were dumped into the pit. No remediation has been undertaken.

Overall, the number of hazardous waste sites in the Cuyahoga watershed has declined since 1990. Increased pollution to the river continues to be fought through pollution prevention programs targeted at industries and other public education programs.

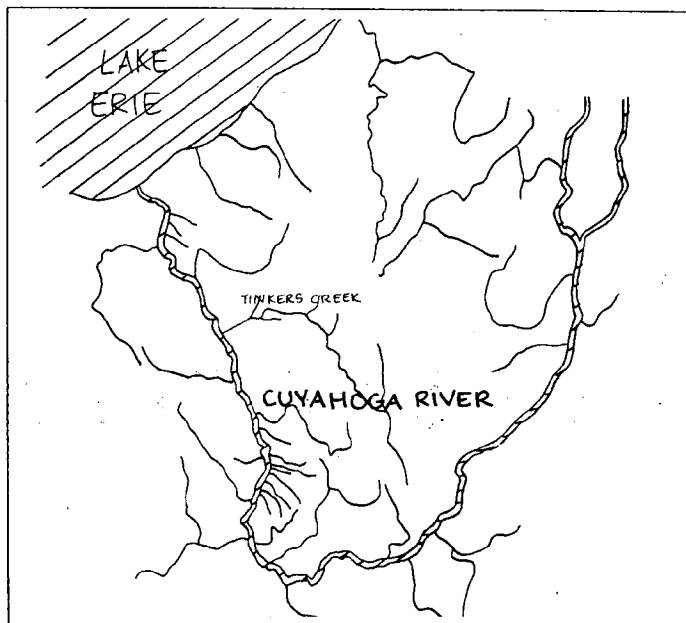
Another source of pollution to the

river is bacteria contamination. Levels of fecal coliform that exceed health standards in the river and Cleveland lakefront have been documented for up to three days after large storms.

The excess bacteria is the result of large storms causing storm and sewage pipes to overflow into each other ("combined sewer overflows"), causing sewage and rainwater to mix and the combination to be discharged via the storm drains directly to water bodies.

Local health districts and municipalities are monitoring existing collection systems, sewer outfalls, and storm sewers to determine ways to reduce inputs of untreated waste into the waterways. The first phase of a master plan for combined sewer overflow reduction was recently released, but the document provides few specifics on actual abatement. Upstream from the AOC, the city of Akron has spent \$25 million to eliminate twenty-seven of its sanitary sewer overflows.

continued page 16



Y-Lang Nguyen

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE

... Sandmining

continued from cover page

and personal enjoyment of the area," said GLU Field Coordinator Y-Lang Nguyen.

The proposed mining site sat 1.5 kilometers from the shoreline of the Scarborough region of Toronto, a mere 400 meters from an intake of the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant.

The suction dredgers used to collect sand would have kicked up sediments and their toxic materials into a 160,000-square-meter underwater plume that would frequently be sucked in by the intake. The dredgers would also have been a visual and auditory nuisance from April to November for up to a hundred years.

Environment Canada had expressed concern over the levels of ammonia and iron in the water column that the operation would generate, affecting area aquatic organisms. The operation might violate the federal Fisheries Act as well, by stirring up toxic substances lying in the lake sediment and thereby contaminating fish that would swim outside the project area and contaminate other organisms in the food chain.

Toronto Acting Medical Officer of Health David McKeown declared that the stirring up of sediments would force the filtration plant to increase its use of

alum and chlorine as water treatments. Alum, a form of aluminum, has been linked to Alzheimer's disease. Chlorine combines with turbidity to create a class of compounds that can severely affect human reproduction and has been linked to cancer. Increased use of these substances is contrary to the recommendations of the Greater Toronto Area Medical Officer of Health.

The operation also posed the risk of severe erosion of the Scarborough shoreline. An estimated two meters of material over a fourteen-square-kilometer site was proposed for removal, causing a water depth change of 20 percent. The likely result would be that the shorelines of Scarborough Bluffs and Eastern Beaches would eventually erode to fill in the hole left by the dredgers.

The City of Scarborough has already invested millions of dollars in shoreline protection; private investments amount to billions. The proposal undermined all shoreline and erosion management plans implemented by government agencies and private landowners over the years.

"It's astounding that the proposal went as far as it did. I am very impressed at how thin a line exists between government and absurdity", said Michael Leibson, spokesperson and founder of the local Anti-Mining Coalition.

Bedrock Resources Inc. first introduced the proposal to the Ministry of

Natural Resources in 1990. Because the mining site is situated on crown property, no environmental assessment was required. Local health departments were never consulted on the proposal. It quietly passed through various government agency hands until last March, when a local newspaper broke the story.

The City of Toronto originally approved the plan in 1993, but rescinded its decision last summer amid the controversy. The Toronto and Scarborough mayors, the Toronto Metro chair, the Board of Health, and a number of members of the provincial Parliament called for the proposal's immediate and permanent withdrawal. The Board of Health even asked that the city solicitor find ways to block the province should the Ministry of Natural Resources decide to approve the proposal without subjecting it to a full environmental assessment.

"Clearly the proposal was simply absurd. The only benefit to the province was a meagre royalty of 50 cents per tonne with a maximum of \$500,000 annually, an amount hardly worth jeopardizing public health for," Nguyen said.

The Anti-Mining Coalition has now formally submitted a proposal to the Metro, Toronto, and Scarborough governments to ban dredging, mining, or other activity that might disturb the lake bed within a ten-kilometer radius of any Metro Toronto water intake.

Task Force update

by Y-Lang Nguyen

GLU Field Coordinator

Production of Great Lakes United's Remedial Action Plan factsheets is underway. The series will highlight successful activities undertaken in the Great Lakes Basin's 42 Areas of Concern.

If you would like to be placed on the mailing list or know of examples of successful RAP-related activities you could share, please call the Buffalo office.

Our first workshop to strengthen public involvement in RAPs was held February 3 for the Bay of Quinte Implementation Advisory Committee in Belleville, Ontario. Our workshops come at a critical time in light of the massive cuts suffered by RAP programs across the Basin (see separate article).

Four more workshops are being planned, one each for the Toronto Metro and Region PAC, the southeast Michigan PACs (including Saginaw Bay), the western Michigan PACs, and the PACs

of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and around Lake Superior. We are coordinating the last three workshops with the Great Lakes Commission, a U.S.-Canada organization created to "manage sea lampreys and improve fishery resources."

The Basin's Remedial Action Plans made a great deal of progress in 1995. Here is a list of the substantive documents released in the last year (call the phone numbers for a copy of the respec-

continued page 16

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE

— ST. CLAIR AOC —

by Y-Lang Nguyen
GLU Field Coordinator

The St. Clair River is the connecting channel between Lakes Huron and St. Clair and serves as a boundary between Michigan and Ontario. This sixty-four-kilometer-long international waterway is heavily used as a shipping channel and a source of water for power generation, municipal water supply, industrial cooling and processing, and recreation. Approximately 170,000 people reside along the river, including natives of the Chippewa of Sarnia Band Reserve and the Walpole Island First Nations Indian Reserve.

The upper portion of the river is severely degraded due to heavy industrialization. This area, colloquially known as Chemical Valley, stretches for nine kilometers along the Ontario shoreline beginning just south of Lake Huron and is home to a number of petrochemical companies and petroleum refineries, including Dow Chemical Canada, DuPont Canada, Shell Canada, and Esso Petroleum Canada. Ontario municipal and industrial point sources contribute the largest amount of contaminants to the St. Clair River Area of concern.

Overall, there are fifty-six known point sources of pollutant discharge into the river and its tributaries. Industrial and municipal landfills and waste sites sit on both sides of the river.

New problem

In late November, during routine sediment sampling, the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy discovered an area of contaminated sediments roughly the size of a tennis court and with a depth varying from a few centimeters to half a meter situated thirty meters offshore.

A sample analysis revealed the pres-

ence of chlorinated benzene, octachlorostyrene, other organic contaminants. Because a layer of sediment covered the site, the contaminants may have been deposited as long as twenty years ago. The ministry believes the site is of no threat to drinking water quality nor will it cause additional impacts on the surrounding environment.

Dow Chemical Canada has assumed cleanup responsibility and the company has acknowledged that the pollutants found at the location suggest that Dow operations were responsible. Working in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Energy and Lambton Industrial Society, an environmental cooperative among industries in the area, Dow has developed a plan to remove the material and to store it at its Scott Road landfill. The company had planned to begin work by the end of January, but ice conditions have delayed the project.

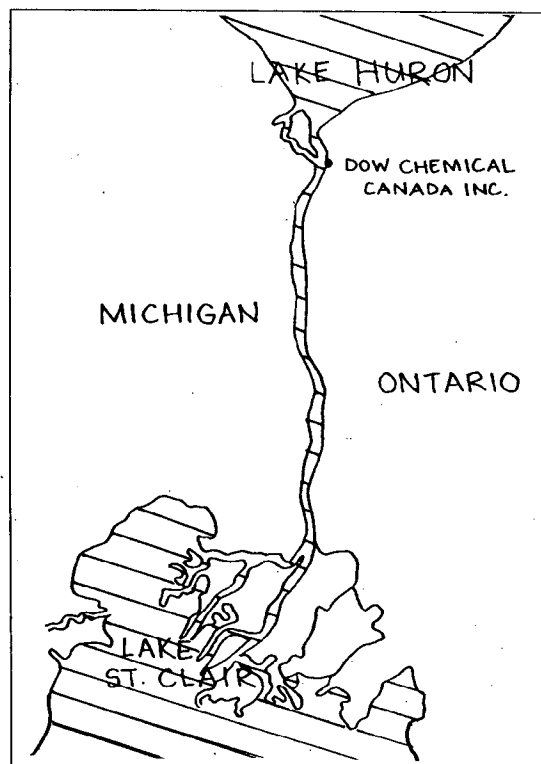
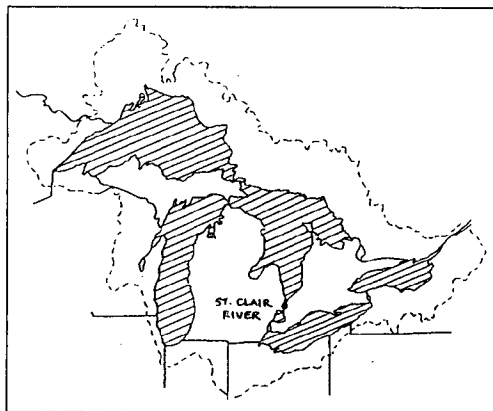
In addition, Dow is currently implementing a mul-

timillion-dollar river separation project which will ultimately eliminate direct contact between the plant and the St. Clair River. Other industries in the area are also initiating remedial measures, although none are as ambitious, such as internal water recycling and spill reduction initiatives.

Green Thumb

The St. Clair area is one of many demonstration sites for the Green Thumb Project, coordinated by the Wisconsin Environmental Decade and the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District. The ultimate goal of the project is to eliminate pesticide use throughout the basin. Last year the project held a workshop for lawn care professionals; another one for homeowners is being planned for late winter or early spring.

continued page 16



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE

... Cuyahoga AOC

continued from page 13

Faulty septic systems also contribute to high bacteria levels. To combat this problem the Cuyahoga County Board of Health passed legislation allowing collection of a fee from homeowners with septic systems. In the first year, the Board of Health collected nearly 100 percent of the permit applications and fees required of septic tank owners. This has funded aggressive inspection of the county's 16,500 septic systems.

A main objective of local authorities is to rebuild and enhance the watershed's recreational opportunities. The National Park Service has completed a twenty-mile trail along the Ohio and Erie Canal, which parallels the Cuyahoga, between Akron and Independence.

Opened in October 1993, the trail accommodated 1.7 million people its first summer of full operation. Cleveland Metroparks has received funds to extend the trail roughly seven miles north to the head of the navigation channel, and the city of Akron is continuing the trail south to downtown Akron and east to the Ohio Edison Dam.

Moreover, the National Park Service, the Ohio Canal Corridor, and the Ohio and Erie Canal Corridor Coalition have spearheaded a federal bill that would designate as a national heritage corridor the area along the Ohio and Erie Canal between Zoar and Cleveland. The bill may come to a full committee vote in February.

Another development is a proposal that would channelize Tinker's Creek, the Cuyahoga's largest tributary. A local development company, Whitlatch and Co., wants to relocate more than a thousand feet of the creek and to fill 2.2 acres of adjacent wetlands to make room for a commercial retail development consuming 27 acres. The company would build a replacement wetland elsewhere.

Although the city of Twinsburg, in

which the proposed site is located, has established riparian zoning regulations, the no-commercial development boundary stops at the spot where the proposed site would begin.

Interestingly, the owner of the development company was a city planner when zoning regulations were devised some years ago; conflict of interest questions have been raised but largely ignored.

Many citizens are outraged at the wetland and river destruction—they had thought the city administration environmentally progressive.

A public meeting was held in December; the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency hopes to make a decision on the creek relocation before the end of winter.

... St. Clair AOC

continued from previous page

A number of organizations, including Lambton College and the St. Clair Parkway Commission, have set aside portions of their property to demonstrate the benefits of zero pesticide use. St. Clair County Community College has designated its entire grounds for this purpose. Individual home assessments are also being offered this year. According to the local coordinator, community interest in the project is high.

RAP news

The lead agency in the development of the St. Clair international Remedial Action Plan is the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Energy (MOEE). The St. Clair River Stage II recommended plan was formally presented to provincial, federal, and state representatives in March 1995. This AOC, like most, is suffering from budget cutbacks. Its Michigan coordinator was recently reassigned to other duties and impacts from the MOEE's budget have yet to be felt (see related RAP story).

... Task Force update

continued from page 14

tive document):

Cuyahoga River, Ohio. "Stage 1 Update Report: Impairments of Beneficial Uses and Sources of Pollution, Public Review Draft," November 1995, 216 pages, and "Progress in Restoring the Environmental Quality of the Cuyahoga River, Early Implementation Report," 37 pages. (216) 241-2414 ext. 250.

Lower Menominee River, Wisconsin and Michigan. "1995 Update, Public Review Draft," 167 pages. (608) 267-2375.

Niagara River, Ontario. "Stage 2 Report: The Cleanup Connection," 130 pages. (905) 521-7704.

Nipigon Bay, Ontario. "Stage 2: Remedial Strategies for Ecosystem Restoration," 91 pages. (807) 768-2106.

St. Clair River, Ontario and Michigan. "Stage 2 Recommendation Plan: Water Use Goals, Remedial Measures, and Implementation Strategy," 121 pages. (519) 383-3794.

St. Lawrence River, Massena, New York. "Progress Report," April 1995, 145 pages. (518) 457-7470.

St. Louis River, Minnesota/Wisconsin. "Progress Report," April 1995, 220 pages. (218) 723-4663.

Waukegan Harbor, Illinois. "Final Stage 1 and 2 Report," 500 pages. (217) 782-5562.

White Lake, Michigan. "Remedial Action Plan: 1995 Update," 83 pages. (517) 335-1119.

Ontario AOCs. "Remedial Action Plan Update. Progress on the RAP Program: Rehabilitating and Protecting the Great Lakes Ecosystem," Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy, September 1995, 200 pages. (416) 314-4157.

Those with Internet access can read more about RAPs at <http://www.great-lakes.net:2200/envt/water/watqual/manag/rp/rp.html> (be sure to include the hyphen in "great-lakes").

Drycleaners join the wet cleaning bandwagon

by Scott Sederstrom
GLU Field Coordinator

Representatives of labor, environmental groups, and dry cleaning trade groups have agreed to jointly develop and promote professional wet cleaning of clothes that are now commonly dry cleaned.

Although maintaining a number of disagreements on the environmental and workplace hazards of traditional drycleaning, the groups all agreed that joint action was necessary to ensure the survival and future prosperity of the owners and workers of the clothes care industry, which is under increasing regulatory pressure.

Announced at a November press conference in Washington, D.C., the Professional Wet Cleaning Partnership represents a major advance for the wet cleaning Little Zeros campaign, and a significant step towards achieving zero discharge of the toxic substance perchloroethylene, which is highly persistent in groundwater.

Environmental and labor signers of the agreement include Greenpeace, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), the major U.S. clothing and textile industry labor union, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, and the Massachusetts Toxic Use Reduction Institute.

Drycleaning industry signers include the International Fabricare Institute, the largest trade association of dry cleaners in the United States; the Federation of Korean Drycleaners Associations, which represents thirty regional Korean dry cleaning associations in the United States;

the Neighborhood Cleaners Association; and the Fabricare Legislative And Regulatory Education, a lobby group that includes dry cleaning as well as machine, chemicals, and other industrial interests.

Most professional cleaners now depend on the use of perchloroethylene—usually called simply “perc” as their main nonwater cleaning agent. Perc is a chlo-



rinated chemical whose use contributes to the buildup of persistent toxics in the Great Lakes Basin, specifically in groundwater. The International Agency for Research on Cancer has classified perc as a “probable human carcinogen.” Canada has legally declared perc as toxic.

Perc exposure occurs in the workplace or through groundwater contamination, indoor air pollution or food contamination. A recent Consumer Union study shows unhealthy perc levels in New York City apartment buildings upstairs from dry cleaning shops with modern equipment. Perc exposure has been associated with nervous system dis-

orders, liver and kidney impairments, and reproductive disorders.

The green alternative to drycleaning with perc, “wet cleaning,” is a collection of new water-based clothes cleaning systems that employ various combinations of specific techniques and soaps for different cleaning problems.

Pilot studies by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and others have shown wet cleaning to be as economically feasible as traditional dry cleaning. It is a little more labor intensive than perc-based dry cleaning, but requires far less expensive machinery and supplies.

The agreement declares that the participants will:

- ♦ Encourage the development and demonstration of professional wet cleaning methods
- ♦ Promote increased professional wet cleaning of clothes that would previously have been dry cleaned
- ♦ Assist those presently in the clothes care industry to survive and prosper in the face of heightened regulatory pressures.

Members of the partnership acknowledged in writing that they maintain widely different views on the public health and environmental impacts of perc, on whether perc production and use must be banned, and on the economic and technical feasibility of wet cleaning as a complete alternative to dry cleaning.

The agreement builds on small recent progress in the wet cleaning field. The Center for Neighborhood Technology has launched a wet-cleaning-only demonstration shop in Chicago called the Greener Cleaner, and there is one wet-cleaning-only facility in Toronto. Wet cleaning consumers report that clothes come back clean, but without the chemical stench associated with traditional dry cleaning.

CLEAN PRODUCTION TASK FORCE

... health conference

continued from cover page

the keynote speech by Dr. Devra Lee Davis, an epidemiologist with the World Resources Institute, who delivered a powerful speech documenting the rise in breast cancer rates from one in twenty in 1960 to one in eight today, and the failure of the multibillion-dollar "War on Cancer" to buck the trends. Davis also presented evidence linking chemical and radiologic contamination with increasing cancer rates. She advocated adoption of the precautionary principle—good evidence of the safety of chemicals and industrial practices before they are employed—and determining if a chemical acts as a "hormone disrupter" in living things before it is manufactured, used, and released into the environment.

Lois Marie Gibbs, executive director of the Washington-D.C.-based Citizens Clearinghouse on Hazardous Waste, delivered a spirited speech to close the conference. Using the public health crisis posed by dioxin to illustrate what's wrong with democracy, Gibbs wedded outrage, sardonic humor, and passion to bring the crowd to its feet, ready to work in coalition together to fight the dioxin industry.

Sandwiched between the two keynotes were a series of workshops, ranging from discussions of the politics of breast cancer to clean production alternatives. Panelists in these discussions ranged from U.S. Rep. Lynn Rivers (D-Ann Arbor) to Dr. Fred vom Saal of the University of Missouri. The panels were evenly balanced between identifying problems and offering solutions, leaving conference participants feeling energized instead of overwhelmed by the problem.

"The Politics of Breast Cancer" was the best-attended of the workshops, drawing over ninety people, a number of them breast cancer survivors. Several participants pledged to explore the formation of breast cancer activist groups

for the Ann Arbor and Detroit areas.

The public hearing, held on Friday evening and moderated by former U.S. Rep. Bella Abzug, founder and president of WE DO, allowed a panel of local politicians to hear about environmental health issues. Panelists included Rep. Rivers, five members of the Michigan legislature, the mayor of Ann Arbor, and officials from the Michigan Department of Health and the Washtenaw County government. An estimated 250 people attended the public hearing, which was held in the memory of Jill Weber, an Ann Arbor resident who died from breast cancer while in her thirties.



The politicians heard from both conference speakers and Ann Arbor-area academics, physicians, and activists. Particularly moving was the presentation by Mary Ann Stroup, representing the Great Lakes Health Banner Coalition. Stroup explained that her involvement in environmental health issues was motivated by the 1988 death of her daughter from a rare form of leukemia. The banner project, which gathers cloth panels on environmental and health concerns into a single huge banner, arose from Stroup's frustration in dealing with cancer organizations, public health officials, and doctors who said that her daughter's death was "statistically insignificant." Stitched together, the health banner now represents more than ninety communities and stretches more than a hundred

yards—longer than a football field.

Conference followup activities will include development of a coalition of groups with environmental health concerns and an environmental health newsletter. The Ecology Center is taking the lead in pressuring the Michigan Department of Health to establish a committee of scientists and citizens to advise the department on issues raised at the events.

Credit for the success of the conference should be given to Tracey Easthope and Mary Beth Doyle of the Ecology Center, who did an excellent job organizing the events and developing an inclusive conference planning process, which resulted in many individuals being given some ownership over the conference itself. These individuals, many of whom attended a large number of very productive planning meetings, deserve congratulations as well.

Sandy Eiler, chair of The Breast Cancer Fund and executive vice president of Eiler Communication, and Margo Schneidman did an outstanding job of gaining media attention for the conference. At least seven radio stations, seven newspapers, and countless newsletters publicized and reported the events.

The conference was organized by the Ecology Center of Ann Arbor and co-sponsored by Great Lakes United, The Breast Cancer Fund, Michigan Environmental Council, the Willow Run/Ypsilanti branch of the NAACP, Families for Environmental Health Awareness, Fern Ridge Environmental Coalition, the Bauman Foundation, the Beldon Fund, Recycle Ann Arbor, People's Food Co-op, French American Charitable Trust, Women's Environment and Development Organization, United Auto Workers Local 599, UAW Local Region 1A, Greenpeace, and the National Wildlife Federation.

Inexpensive videotapes of conference sessions will be available soon from the Ecology Center. To order call the center at (313) 761-3186.

CLEAN PRODUCTION TASK FORCE

by Scott Sederstrom
GLU Field Coordinator

The corporate attempt to deny dioxin's dangers

is proving nearly as persistent as the ultra-toxin itself. The latest venue for this effort was congressional hearings on the Environmental Protection Agency's recent reassessment of dioxin dangers.

The U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment, chaired by Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-California), wanted to investigate "whether sound science was being distorted for preconceived policy ends, and the potential economic impact of future mandates based on this reassessment."

In an apparent effort to discredit the study, Rohrabacher attempted to exclude nongovernmental witnesses not funded by industry. Calling the hearing a "witch hunt," activists from around the country contacted committee members, urging them to include witnesses whose views more closely reflected the consensus on dioxin. The groups noted that dioxin-generating industries had donated over \$150,000 to subcommittee members during the 1993-94 fundraising cycle.

Under pressure, Rohrabacher finally agreed to include as a witness retired U.S. Navy Admiral Elmo E.R. Zumwalt, Jr., chair of the Agent Orange Coordinating Council. As commander of U.S. naval forces in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970, Zumwalt ordered the use of Agent Orange, which contains dioxin.

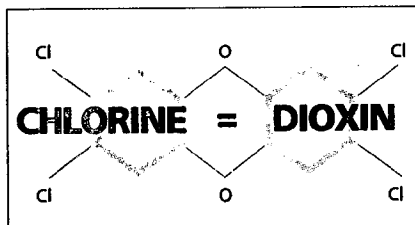
The rest of the witness list included industry consultants Kay Jones and Michael Gough, EPA scientists and key reassessment authors William Farland and Linda Birnbaum, and George Lucier of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Scientists suggested by activists, including some who had participated in the SAB review, were not invited to testify.

Since at least the late 1970s EPA and industry have known a great deal about

the toxicity of dioxin, a byproduct of industry processes that use chlorine, such as metal smelting, manufacture of PVC plastic, pesticides, and bleached paper, and incineration of substances that contain chlorine.

At the urging of paper and chemical industry trade groups, in 1991 the Bush administration directed EPA to conduct a comprehensive reassessment of the dangers posed by dioxin. Industry and EPA Administrator William Reilly hoped to be able to relax standards set after the original assessment, conducted in 1985.

It didn't work out that way. The reassessment confirmed that dioxin is one of the most toxic substances known,



that dioxin exists primarily as the result of human activity, and that incinerators and certain industries now pollute the food chain with enough dioxin to threaten the health of the general population.

A review of the reassessment by EPA's Science Advisory Board, released in October 1995, was industry's last chance to reduce the impact of the study findings. After some scientists recused themselves from the board due to their links with environmental groups, industry-funded scientists were able to dominate some aspects of the panel's deliberations, particularly the review of the conclusions that EPA had drawn from its reassessment.

In a letter to EPA Administrator Carol Browner, the board claimed that

the reassessment was "not balanced vis-a-vis the possible risks posed by exposure to dioxin,

with a tendency to overstate the possibility for danger." However, the report recorded a dissent on the matter within the panel: "Several Members of the Committee do not agree with this statement and regard the EPA presentation as appropriately conservative within the context of public health perspective."

Two panel reviewers, William Greenlee of the University of Massachusetts, Worcester, and John Graham of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis, were reported to be responsible for the contention that the EPA had overstated dioxin's dangers. Not surprisingly, both have links to dioxin generators.

Apparently Greenlee has received millions in research money from the American Forest and Paper Association, General Electric, the Chemical Manufacturers Association, and Dow Chemical. Graham's Harvard Center for Risk Analysis has organized conferences for the Chemical Manufacturers Association and its Chlorine Chemistry Council, and has apparently received money from Ciba-Geigy, DuPont, General Electric, Georgia-Pacific, Hoechst-Celanese, ICI, Kodak, Monsanto, Olin, and Dow.

Activists involved in the struggle over dioxin now await the revised dioxin reassessment, currently scheduled for release in September 1996. Also coming is the federal Office of Management and Budget's sixty-day review of the economic impact of EPA's proposed new dioxin limits for hazardous waste burners, including incinerators and cement kilns that burn hazardous waste. The OMB review was scheduled for release in early February, but are likely delayed due to the budget controversy. Publication of the proposed new limits in the *Federal Register* should come soon after, followed by a public comment period.

Strategic Options Process halfway complete

by Stéphane Gingras
GLU Field Coordinator

Canada's Strategic Options Process has reached the halfway mark, with four of nine "issue tables"—metal degreasing, dry cleaning, ceramic fibres, and benzidine/dichlorobenzidine—scheduled to release reports in February.

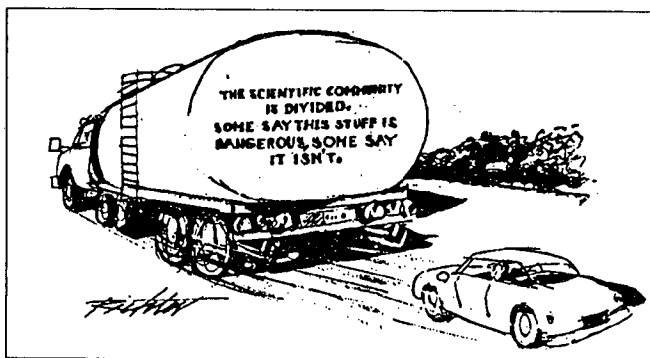
The Strategic Options Process (SOP) is the federal government's process for recommending regulation of the most toxic substances used in Canada. Those that share characteristics have been organized into groups that are being studied by multistakeholder committees called "issue tables." Great Lakes United, representing the Toxics Caucus of the Canadian Environmental Network, is advocating positions on behalf of environmentalists in the issue tables.

The *metal degreasing* issue table will propose a quota on the import of perchloroethylene and trichloroethylene destined for degreasing in Canada. The quota will be "tradable"—available for sale or other transfer from one polluter to another. Since control of imports is a clear federal responsibility, and since perchloroethylene is not produced domestically, an import quota will pose no possibility of constitutional challenge, as some other control methods might.

The quota, to be phased in over three years, would reduce consumption of the affected solvents 65 percent. Environmentalists had suggested a quota that would reduce consumption to 85 percent of currently used quantities. The issue table agreed that further reduction is needed but could not agree on a target.

The *dry cleaning* issue table will propose a ban on first- and second-generation perchloroethylene machines. The

idea is that third- and fourth-generation machines, when well operated, consume much less perc. As in the metal degreasing table, the ban aims to achieve a 65 percent reduction in perc use. However, the amount of the reduction is purely an



estimate based on proper operation of remaining machines. In fact, because in practice machinery is rarely always operated properly, dry-cleaning-related perc reduction will probably be far less than 65 percent.

Environmentalists had been advocating a 100 percent reduction—a ban on *all* use of perc in the dry cleaning industry. Demonstration projects in both the United States and Canada have shown that specially designed water-and-soap cleaning techniques can perform all traditional dry cleaning tasks at similar levels of quality and price.

In addition to their usual assertion that perc is essential to the feasibility of dry cleaning, solvent manufacturing representatives claimed that a total ban would be a violation of the recently ratified rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Their theory is that, since perc is not produced domestically, a ban would be a form of discrimination against foreign producers. However, such a claim would probably not succeed since protectionist intent is an important factor in judging GATT violations, and

perc is well known as both a groundwater contaminant and a human health hazard.

The dry cleaning table has also agreed that perc waste from the dry cleaning sector will be collected by solvent distributors who sell it. However, no disposal options, such as recycling, have been discussed by the issue table. Drycleaners will need a training certificate to operate.

The issue table dealing with *benzidine* and *dichlorobenzidine*, compounds used in manufacturing dyes and pigments mainly for the printing industry, came to a conclusion quickly.

Benzidine has not been used in Canada since the 1970s and dichlorobenzidine (DCB) salt is used by only one Canadian producer. According to the company, the chemical reaction involving DCB salt causes no emissions. However, environmentalists are concerned about the ultimate fate of the pigments made with the salts. Both recycling and incineration involve residues that eventually enter the environment. For this reason we asked for a life cycle assessment of the DCB pigments. We want to see where the DCB ultimately ends up.

The result is an issue table recommendation that bans benzidine use in Canada and imposes life cycle controls on the use of DCB and DCB salt. These controls would be translated into a memorandum of understanding between Environment Canada and the only Canadian user of DCB salt.

The issue table on *ceramic fibre*, a compound used in the manufacture of refractory material such as bricks and oven wall, also came to a quick conclusion. There is only one manufacturer of the fibre in Canada, and it releases no

EAGLE factsheets: Great Lakes environmental basics

by Scott Sederstrom
GLU Field Coordinator

The EAGLE Project and Great Lakes United have produced a series of seventeen factsheets on environmental contamination of the Great Lakes and its effect on the Aboriginal population.

The factsheets are short and accessible to a lay audience but quite comprehensive. Seventeen more factsheets will be produced later this year. Currently available are factsheets on:

- ◆ PCBs
- ◆ DDT and its metabolites
- ◆ Toxaphene
- ◆ Dioxins and furans
- ◆ Mercury
- ◆ Cadmium
- ◆ Bacteria, chemicals, and viruses
- ◆ Radiation
- ◆ Definitions of environmental terms
- ◆ Environmental units of measure
- ◆ The Great Lakes
- ◆ The EAGLE Project
- ◆ Great Lakes environmental contamination
- ◆ General health effects of Great Lakes contaminants
- ◆ Scientific methods for studying the

health effects of environmental contaminants

- ◆ Social and cultural effects of Great Lakes Basin environmental changes
- ◆ The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the International Joint Commission

The EAGLE Project—its full name is Effects on Aboriginals from the Great Lakes Environment—is a partnership of the Assembly of First Nations, the Canadian federal government, and First Nations communities in the Great Lakes Basin. The factsheets are an important part of the EAGLE Project's larger effort—to identify the effects of environmental change on First Nation communities around the Basin.

The project examines direct and indirect impacts on communities by looking at how contamination disrupts not only health but also traditional ways of life. The approach is unique in being holistic, and could usefully be applied to many other government and nongovernment environmental efforts.

Researchers traditionally look at the effect of contamination on disease rates. For example, an epidemiologist will sur-

vey a community to see if contamination has caused an increase in its cancer rates.

Such single-focus approaches miss more subtle impacts on communities, particularly among populations that live close to the land. For example, concern about contaminants in fish and wildlife can cause substantial changes in the diet of those who fish and hunt.

In Native communities such changes can disrupt entire ways of life, such as the hunting and fishing that is a significant source of economic wellbeing for some families. Such changes can undermine cultural values, particularly the feeling of harmony with the environment.

By emphasizing a holistic approach to assessing the impacts of environmental contamination and change, the EAGLE Project hopes to restore community control and contribute to a better understanding of the extent and importance of the social and cultural effects of environmental changes on First Nations communities.

Copies of the factsheets are available from the Assembly of First Nations at (613) 241-6789 or Great Lakes United at (716) 886-0142.

fibre emission due to the installation of a filter system. The issue table decided that no further action was required to control the release of ceramic fibre.

End of the first round

These then are the results of the first round of multistakeholder consultation in the Strategic Options Process. Needless to say, the point of view of environmental nongovernmental organizations is not necessarily reflected in the final recommendations. We are particularly upset at the weak dry cleaning proposal, which by any reasonable public policy standard should have been stronger.

However, in all cases our main concerns will be forwarded directly to the minister of the environment and will also be noted in the final report.

The remaining issue tables have more complicated tasks and as a result are taking much longer to complete: 1) the steel manufacturing issue table is looking at thirteen toxic substances; 2) the metal finishing issue table is dealing with six substances; 3) the electric power generation issue table (coal and gas burning) is dealing with eleven substances; 4) the chlorinated paraffins issue table is dealing with a number of substances in three categories; and 5) the

wood preservative issue table is dealing with eight substances.

A new issue table, base metal smelting (copper, lead, and nickel operations), will soon begin deliberations.

For a copy of the report on the four issue tables completed so far, call Raouf Morcos at Environment Canada, (819) 953-1137, and ask for "Strategic Options Recommendations."

You can also receive a six-month summary of the progress to date of all the issue tables by calling Stéphane Gingras at the Great Lakes United Montréal office at (514) 933-0262.

CLEAN PRODUCTION TASK FORCE

Task Force update

by Scott Sederstrom

GLU Field Coordinator

Great Lakes United's Clean Production Task Force has been working on several fronts in the last few months.

Toronto PVC ordinance

The City of Toronto's Public Health Committee has proposed a municipal bylaw phasing out the use of PVC in its water and sewer systems. The move prompted the Vinyl Council of Canada to conduct a high-pressure lobbying campaign stressing PVC's "environmental benefits." Environmental groups, including Great Lakes United, the Toronto Environmental Alliance, and Greenpeace Canada, are encouraging the council to adopt the bylaw.

At issue is PVC plastic, a chlorinated

plastic that is likely the largest source of dioxin in the environment. High levels of dioxin have been documented in the air, water, and other waste emissions of the numerous facilities that produce PVC feedstock chemicals. Incineration of PVC plastic and its wastes also produces large dioxin and other persistent toxic emissions. PVC plastic is the primary chlorine donor to medical and municipal waste incinerators, which have been found by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to be the two principal sources of dioxin in the environment.

In November the City Council's City Service Committee held a hearing on the proposed bylaw. Witnesses provided by the Vinyl Council were countered by Lois Corbett, a Great Lakes United board member and Toronto Environmental Alliance staffer, Morag Simpson of Greenpeace, Joyce McLean, a long-time

Great Lakes activist, and Colleen Cooney of the Don't Burn Ontario Coalition. The committee voted five to two against the bylaw. The full City Council voted to send the bylaw to a hearing before the combined Public Health and City Services Committees. That hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 28 at Toronto's City Hall. GLU strongly encourages all of our members to call and urge the adoption of the proposed bylaw. For more information contact Lois Corbett at (416) 596-0660, or Morag Simpson at (416) 597-8408.

Wet Cleaning campaign

Great Lakes United and the Center for Neighborhood Technology are distributing a survey to dry cleaners in the Great Lakes Basin to determine the level of awareness of wet cleaning technology among in the industry.

by Scott Sederstrom

GLU Field Coordinator

Many of us in the grassroots environmental movement owe a great debt of gratitude to Lois Marie Gibbs and the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste. Most of us have benefited from their advice, support, and expertise while fighting to protect our neighborhoods.

Well, Gibbs and CCHW have outdone themselves this time: together they have created *Dying From Dioxin*. Subtitled "A Citizen's Guide to Reclaiming Our Health and Rebuilding Democracy," the book is the perfect gift for the overwhelmed activist in your life, or for anyone with an interest in the environment and democracy.

Dying From Dioxin clearly, concisely, and comprehensively details the politics and science of dioxin and maps out an organizing strategy for every community to stop the public health crisis caused by dioxin. The book's introduction lays out the sordid politics that brought us to this crisis point, detailing the legacy of industry and government collusion to deny dioxin's danger.

The first part of the book explains, thoroughly and simply, the science behind dioxin's toxicity. Credit CCHW with making sci-

PUBLICATIONS

tific information comprehensible to nonscientists without oversimplifying it. The second part of the book details what you can do in your community to fight back against dioxin poisoning, showing you everything from organizing basics to typical industry arguments and how to refute them. Tales of



what other communities have done to protect themselves from corporate polluters are sprinkled throughout. The stories of these heroines and heroes provide beacons of hope illuminating our movement.

Published by South End Press, *Dying From Dioxin* is the collaborative product of a veritable who's who of the grassroots environmental community. The book was shaped by a "Dioxin Roundtable" meeting orga-

nized by CCHW in spring 1995, and serves as the first step in CCHW's Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign.

Buy this book, give it to your loved ones, and join in the fight to protect our health. Look for it in your local bookstore; if it is not available there, call (800) 533-8478 to order it directly from South End Press.

Equally recommended reading material is Jim Schwab's *Deeper Shades of Green: The Rise of Blue-Collar and Minority Environmentalism in America*. This excellent account of the birth and development of the environmental democracy and justice movement profiles local battles in a number of different communities around the United States and First Nations.

Two Basin struggles highlighted in the book are the battle against the GSX incinerator in Cleveland and the fight to clean up the Calumet area, on the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan.

Deeper Shades of Green closes with a provocative discussion of where the author feels the grassroots environmental movement must go in the future. Currently available only in hardback, it is published by Sierra Club books; it should be available at your local bookstore.

PROFILES OF GRASSROOTS GROUPS

Citizens Against Chemical Contamination

Citizens Against Chemical Contamination has been fighting for the environment since 1978. Initially founded to fight a proposal by the state of Michigan to engage in broad-scale pesticide spraying for gypsy moths, CACC took the state to court for failing to exempt organic farms from the proposed spraying. The organization won the



case and has been working to promote alternatives to toxics ever since.

Current CACC priorities include stopping oil and gas development and their wastes, eliminating the use of persistent toxic substances, promoting sustainable agriculture, and improving land use by working with waterfront homeowners.

CACC has four Michigan chapter organizations, located in Alpena, Madison Heights, the tri-city of Saginaw, Midland, and Bay City, and the counties of Wexford and Kalkaska, where the focus is stopping the use of herbicides in inland lakes.

CACC has hosted the annual Backyard Eco-Conference since 1983. This year's conference will be held May 17-19 at the Mystic Lake YMCA Camp in Clare County, Michigan. For more information call CACC's office at (517) 544-3318.

Front Commun

The Front Commun Québécois pour une Gestion Écologique des Déchets is a provincial coalition working on waste issues in Québec. The group has two permanent staff and about forty member groups scattered around the province.

The member groups work on a local fights against big waste management companies. All FCQGED member groups agree on a directing principle:

"Garbage incineration and mixed garbage landfilling should be prohibited in Québec. The population should always be part of the decision making process in regards to waste management projects."

The FCQGED provides services and information to any citizen who wants to be an activist or develop a "reduce, reuse, recycle"-type project.

In 1995, the coalition organized a conference in Montréal with guest speakers from the United States, Canada, and Germany to talk about waste issues, the three Rs, and clean production.

To contact the Front Commun, contact Executive Director François Tremblay, 2444 Notre Dame O., Montréal, Québec, H3J 1N5, (514) 938-4947.



State of the Union: Clinton strong on the environment

In his January State of the Union address U.S. President Bill Clinton devoted a surprisingly large amount of time to environmental issues. Following are the relevant portions of his prepared text:

Our fifth challenge is to leave our environment safe and clean for the next generation. Because of a generation of bipartisan effort, we have cleaner air and water.

Lead levels in children's blood have been cut 70 percent, and toxic emissions from factories cut in half. Lake Erie was dead. Now it is a thriving resource.

But ten million children under twelve still live within four miles of a toxic waste dump. A third of us breath air which

endangers our health. And in too many communities, water is not safe to drink. We still have much to do.

Yet Congress has voted to cut environmental enforcement by 25 percent. That means more toxic chemicals in our water, more smog choking our air, more pesticides in our food.

Lobbyists for the polluters have been allowed to write their own loopholes into bills to weaken laws that protect the health and safety of our children.

But some in this Congress want to make taxpayers pick up the tab for toxic waste and let polluters off the hook.

I challenge Congress to reverse those priorities. I say the polluters should pay. We can expand the economy without

hurting the environment. In fact, we can create more jobs over the long run by cleaning it up.

We must challenge business and communities to take more initiative and make it easier for them to do so. To business, we are saying: If you can find a cheaper, more efficient way than government regulations to meet tough pollution standards, then do it as long as you do it right.

We are strengthening community right-to-know laws requiring polluters to disclose their emissions, and challenge community groups to use the information to work with business to cut pollution. People have a right to know that their air and water are safe.

GREAT LAKES BRIEFS

Citizens have formed Friends of Point Rosa Marsh to fight disturbance of one of the last great pre-European settlement marsh areas on the U.S. side of Lake St. Clair. Point Rosa Marsh lies in Metro Beach Park, one of thirteen parks administered by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, the regional park authority for southeast Michigan.

In areas immediately adjacent to the marsh the authority would like to dredge a channel for boat launches and to build a large parking lot in an area already inundated with parking spots. The state Department of Environmental Quality has rejected the plan by the park authority to modify the plan and resubmit it.

The 770-acre recreational park has three marshes whose abundance of species rivals that of Point Pellee, a unique Lake Erie peninsula renowned for its diversity of plants and animals. Two hundred and forty-four bird species have been identified in the Metro Beach park, ninety of them nesting species.

Rather than building on sites next to the marshes, Friends of Rosa Point Marsh would like the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority to develop plans for reconnecting the three marshes that lie in Metro Beach Park.

For more information contact Fred Charbonneau at (810) 468-6456. To express your concern about the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's development plans, call the authority at 1-800-477-2757.

The Third Citizens' Conference on Dioxin and Other Synthetic Hormone Disrupters will be held March 15-17 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the heart of "Cancer Alley," a heavily industrialized region with elevated cancer rates.

Hundreds of grassroots activists are expected to convene and educate themselves on hormone disrupters while developing a strategy to eliminate dioxin in our bodies and the food chain.

The conference fee is \$25 for activists, \$700 for regulatory officials, and

\$1,000 for industry representatives. For more information contact Paul or Ellen Connott of Work on Waste, (315) 379-9200, or Jim Warren of the North Carolina Waste Awareness and Reduction Network, (919) 490-0747.

In a post-Québec referendum cabinet reshuffle Prime Minister Jean Chretien appointed **Sergio Marchi (PC-York West)** minister of environment. Marchi replaces Sheila Copps,



who retained her post as deputy prime minister. Marchi, thirty-nine years old, is married with two children and has a bachelor's degree in urban planning and sociology.

Marchi was first elected to Parliament in 1984. He became chairman of the Ontario Federal Liberal Caucus in 1989, and of the National Liberal Caucus in 1990. In 1993 Marchi was appointed minister of immigration.

Some twenty-nine projects have been selected for funding by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Brownfields" program. In the Great Lakes region, Detroit, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, and a suburb of Chicago have been awarded grants to redevelop abandoned, contaminated urban properties commonly referred to as "brownfields." The projects will receive \$200,000 in funding over two years.

The World Wildlife Fund has released "Reducing Reliance on Pesticides in Great Lakes Basin Agriculture," the first comprehensive overview of ways that Great Lakes farmers can reduce pesticide use. The report includes discussions of the use of beneficial organisms, biopesticides, and organic practices, among other techniques.

For a copy of the report, contact the organization's Agricultural Pollution Prevention Project at (202) 778-9690.

The 56 million U.S. voters who fish and hunt are starting to speak out against radical changes in environmental laws recently proposed in Congress.

An article in the January/February 1996 issue of *Fly Rod & Reel* by Ted Williams slams the reauthorization of the Clean Water Act passed by the House and now before a Senate committee. Williams details the damage that the additional pollution and wetlands destruction would cause to important fish and waterfowl habitat. Williams has also written an article for the magazine on the timber salvage rider to one of the budget bills signed by President Clinton that is allowing logging without laws.

Rifle & Shotgun recently published an article by Bill Wohl, manager of press relations for the Remington Arms Company, on the importance of preserving wetlands, and especially the Conservation Reserve Program. The CRP helps farmers set aside large blocks of land to provide critical nesting cover for migratory birds. Many consider the program responsible for the strong return of waterfowl and upland game populations across the country.

A strong piece by Joel Vance in *Outdoors Unlimited*, the newsletter of the Outdoor Writers Association of America, slams "takings" initiatives and highlights the destruction they could do to wetlands and wildlife.

Mike Furtman, state director of the Minnesota chapter of the Izaak Walton League is coordinating efforts to get the word out to sportsmen and women about the environmental rollback. He can be contacted at (218) 728-1991 or at 76360.2255@compuserve.com.

Scientists at the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory have found a form of **gaseous mercury that is very soluble in water**. The discovery could help explain the concentration of mercury in fish in lakes far away from sites of industrial discharge of the element.

GREAT LAKES BRIEFS

The findings are significant in the context of a recent report by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to Congress on contamination of U.S. "great waters" such as the Great Lakes. The report noted the lack of data on airborne water-soluble mercury.

This data may now be able to be gathered, possibly crippling the meagre scientific arguments against tight EPA regulation of important airborne mercury sources, principally coal combustion and the burning of municipal and medical waste in incinerators.

The Northern States Power Company and the **Minnesota Prairie Island Indian Community** have made an agreement on the storage of **nuclear waste** in metal casks near the community.

The community will receive land and cash payments; in return the Tribal Council will support legislation that ends the requirement that NSP search for another waste storage site.

"This agreement does not mean we want nuclear waste stored on Prairie Island," declared Tribal Council President Curtis Campbell, Sr. "We want it out of here and we will continue to push for a national repository for the waste, but the reality is that the casks are here, the plant is still running and the community is receiving nothing in return."

According to the agreement, NSP will purchase 1,750 acres of land and give it to the tribe, which will put it into trust for members of the tribe who want to relocate. NSP will also pay the community for the ongoing operation of the plant and the storage of the waste. Included will be a one-time lump-sum payment of \$2 million.

The agreement goes into effect only if the legislature passes the bill officially stopping the resiting process.

The Coalition to Restore Urban Waters is holding its **Friends of Trashed Rivers III** conference in Chicago, Illinois, May 16-18. Presentation topics will include: "Restoration Alternatives

and Methods" and "Restoration Bloopers" as well as community organizing, fundraising for grassroots groups, and information on generating, accessing, and using technical data, among others. Almost all of the speakers will be citizens active in community groups and non-profit organizations.

CRUW is a national coalition of diverse grassroots organizations that works with local communities to try and improve the quality of urban waterways.

Registration fees for the conference are \$45 for citizens and nonprofit orga-



nization and \$65 for consultants and government personnel. For more information call (312) 939-2789.

Republican presidential candidate Steve Forbes thinks that nature and pollution from power plants in the Midwest share blame for acid rain, which particularly affects New England states.

"It turns out a lot of it is created by nature, not by smokestacks," the multi-millionaire publisher said January 30.

Forbes said he would also contain the "excesses" of the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Nine Ohio environmental, conservation, and sports groups are suing Gov. George Voinovich and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Director Donald Shregardus in state court in response to a plan to allow **increased pollutants into Ohio waterways**.

In 1993 the Ohio legislature passed a law allowing decreases in the quality of state water bodies so long as pollutant

levels meet state standards. This would allow industries and sewage plants to increase their pollutant discharges to 95 percent of the state's waters.

Fortunately, the federal Clean Water Act requires a review whenever an action will "degrade" the quality of a body of water, that is, make it worse than it already is. This "antidegradation" review is essentially an analysis by the applicant quantifying the costs (the environmental degradation) and benefits (such as increased jobs) of the proposed water-quality-degrading activity. Ohio EPA then holds public hearings on the proposal and makes a decision on allowing the activity.

In 1992 the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that any decrease in water quality constitutes degradation and is subject to the antidegradation review required by federal law. Ohio EPA, however, is interpreting "degradation" to exclude the changes permitted by the 1993 law and mean only the exceeding of maximum limits on various pollutants set for a given water body.

In their suit, the Ohio groups charge the state with failing to comply with the Federal Clean Water Act and violating Ohio's single-subject rule, which forbids lumping disparate topics in a single bill. For more information, call Rivers Unlimited, (614) 262-3764.

One more Zone d'Intervention Prioritaire—the equivalent of Areas of Concern in the rest of the Great Lakes Basin—has been born in Québec. The "ZIP de l'Est" encompasses the eastern part of the island of Montréal, where all the heavy industries like oil-refineries are located.

The ZIP held its first official general assembly in Montréal in December. Fifty people came, representing a wide range of organizations, from industry to social and health organizations to environmental nongovernment organizations.

In one of his last acts as Québec's
continued next page

Great Lakes United

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executive director

stéphane gingras
field coordinator
(montréal office)

scott sederstrom
field coordinator
(ann arbor office)

david mahony
field coordinator

y-lang nguyen
field coordinator

reg gilbert
communications coordinator

libby jewett
development coordinator

donna zellner neal
administrative coordinator

maureen hoellig
research assistant

barbara wallenhorst
administrative assistant

GLU's nonexecutive staff is represented by
United Auto Workers Local 55, Buffalo, New York

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krista batterson, bolly martin
michael richards, james rychlik
jill spisiak, corinne thibault
mary wahl, mike zellner

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funded by grants from the
joyce foundation

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BUFFALO OFFICE NOTES

by Donna Neal

GLU Administrative Coordinator

Happy New Year to all from the Buffalo office. We take pride in the completion of a productive and satisfying 1995 and anticipate an even more fruitful 1996. Thank you all for your continued support of our efforts.

Volunteers

Maureen (Moe) Hoellig, who served as a volunteer for several months while completing her education at the University of Buffalo, joined our staff in December on a part-time basis as research assistant. Moe contributed 150 hours of volunteer service to GLU prior to her graduation in December.

Barbara Wallenhorst joined the staff in January as part-time administrative assistant after contributing over 200 very valuable hours of volunteer service in 1995. Barbara is also active in other volunteer efforts in our community.

Mary Wahl continues as a permanent volunteer, giving us one day of service a week. Mary's 1995 service exceeded 235 hours. Hal Babb spent 105 hours in the GLU offices last year.

We bid farewell in December to our Buffalo State College student volunteer, **Corinne Thibault**, who became a volunteer after attending an open house in our offices in August. Although she was able to spare only a couple of hours a day between classes, Corinne managed to contribute 84 hours of service in 1995.

Our efforts were significantly enhanced in the last months of 1995 by additional volunteers who performed a variety of tasks on an as-needed basis.

Many thanks from all of us to Olga Krajniak, Yvette D'souza, Memo Oshei, Bernie Naylor, David Gianturco, Terri Lauer, Patricia Muck, Michael Perchalik, Kathy Tussing, Paul Lewis, Linda Williams, Mike May, Tim Schunk, Sean Enright, and Mark Kmudowski. Their combined efforts equalled over 150 hours of service to GLU in 1995.

A special thank you to our neighbor organization in Cassety Hall, the **Education Intervention Program**, for supporting us in many ways during 1995. EIP staffers asked their students to volunteer on a number of projects and allowed us to use their facilities for meetings too large to accommodate in our cramped quarters.

As we begin 1996, we welcome new volunteers Michael Altieri and Krista Batterson and new interns Holly Martin of Cornell University and Michael Richards, Jill Spisiak, and James Rychlik of the University of Buffalo.

Activities

Great Lakes United sponsored a media skills training workshop in Buffalo on the weekend of October 27-29. Conference participants came from all over the basin. The conference was conducted by the **Safe Energy Communication Council** of Washington, D.C. Funding for the workshop was provided by the **W. K. Kellogg Foundation** of Battle Creek, Michigan. Guest speakers during the sessions were **David Debo** of *Business First*, a weekly Buffalo business newspaper, and **Jerry Zremski** of the Washington bureau correspondent for the *Buffalo News*.

continued from previous page

prime minister, **Jacques Pariseau** has lifted the ten-year-old moratorium on the dumping of **pig manure** into the Assomption River, along which most of the Québec's pig producers are located.

The Assomption empties into the St. Lawrence River. The province spends

millions of dollars each year to clean up drinking water supplies, primarily of bacteria contamination, making the decision to dramatically increase the level of bacteria particularly perplexing. The manure-dumping moratorium was imposed after human health and environmental problems arose from the practice.

GLU fundraising update

by Libby Jewett
GLU Development Coordinator

Membership drive

The first annual GLU membership campaign is well underway. Our goal is to double our organizational and individual membership by the end of spring. With each new member, GLU increases its capacity to make a difference in this anti-conservation era.

We are also updating and improving our membership services. Please call or write to give us feedback on any of our member services or if you have questions about your own membership.

In the spirit of making our membership grow, please consider giving the gift of a GLU membership to a friend or loved one.

We have changed our mailing labels to show your membership expiration date. Now you will always know when it is time to renew.

"Shake for the Great Lakes"

On December 14 Great Lakes United held its first fundraising concert. The show was held at Hallwalls, in Buffalo, New York, the city's premiere avant garde art museum.

Donating their services to the event were local acts Plaster Sandals, A Potter's

Field, Liz Abbott with Talking Drum, and First Nations group Neto Hatinawe Onkwehwe, direct from Ohsweken, Ontario.

Among the corporate sponsors of "Shake for the Great Lakes" were Genesee Brewing Company, Fox Run Vineyards, Pepsi, and 103.3 The Edge, a leading young adult radio station.

Donors

We would like to thank and publically recognize some of our fall 1995 donors:

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Donating in memory of George Cada, a Lake Michigan fisherman and officer of the Riverside Fishing Club:

Loretta Ford and Frank Kobes

Stanley Geisler

Linda Jackson

Paul H. Kimpton

Susan and Mark Simnick

Donating in honor of Lester Milbrath, a professor of environment at the University of Buffalo:

Linda and George Levine



Introducing Libby Jewett, Great Lakes United's development coordinator. Libby organizes our membership drives and fundraisers, and helps the executive director plan for GLU's financial future. Libby started working at GLU in September.

Libby grew up in near Washington, D.C., earned her bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies from Yale University and completed her master's degree in Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Libby recently moved to Buffalo with her husband and two young children from Boston, Massachusetts, where she worked with several social service agencies.

Libby's most recent position was as business manager for the Child Care Resource Center, an agency dedicated to improving the quality of child care in Massachusetts. Over the years, Libby has led fundraising campaigns for organizations and political campaigns, both at work and as a volunteer. Her interests range from cross country skiing and exotic travel to teaching workshops for preschoolers.

Libby's last position with an environmental group was also her first job out of college, as a campus organizer with the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group.

Qui paiera le nettoyage du *Irving Whale*?

à Stéphane Gingras

GLU coordonnateur régional

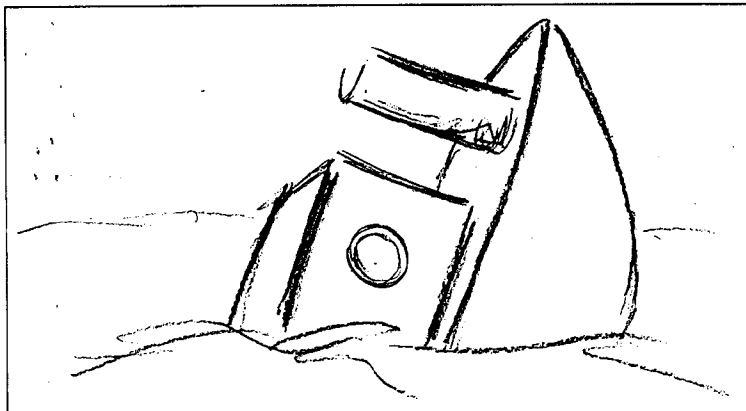
Un jour de tempête, en 1970, l'*Irving Whale*, une barge de la compagnie Irving coulait au large des Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Cette épave gît toujours à 200 pieds de profondeur avec sa cargaison toxique de 9 tonnes de BPC et de plus de 3000 tonnes de mazout. C'est une menace pour la survie du béluga.

Le dossier *Irving Whale* plonge le gouvernement canadien dans l'eau bouillante puisque ce dernier n'arrive pas à forcer Irving à payer les coûts du renflouage

de sa barge: une facture, aux frais des contribuables, qui s'élève déjà à 12 millions de dollars. De plus, de nombreux écologistes ainsi que certains experts remettent en question le scénario du renflouage de la barge avec sa cargaison à l'intérieur. On craint que celle-ci se brise lors de l'opération relâchant ainsi sa cargaison toxique d'un seul coup.

On sait déjà que les polluants organiques persistants (POP), tels les BPC ont des effets dévastateurs sur la faune marine des Grands Lacs et du fleuve St-Laurent au niveaux de con-

tamination actuels. Le Dr. Béland, spécialiste mondialement reconnu du béluga est convaincu que le béluga du St-Laurent fait face à l'extinction à cause de ces mêmes POP. Selon une étude qui sera bientôt publiée par le Centre



Y. Long Nguyen

d'écotoxicologie du St-Laurent les béluga nouveaux-nés subissent un choc toxique lors de l'allaitement qui serait à l'origine du taux de mortalité infantile élevé. On estime à 500 la population de béluga du St-Laurent. On a dénombré 170 cas de mortalité de ces mammifères depuis 1970. En 1995 seulement, 17 cas de béluga morts échoués sur les berges du fleuve ont été rapportés.

Dans le cas où la barge *Irving Whale* se briserait lors de son renflouage, il serait relâché des quantités de BPC 5 fois plus élevées que celle que l'on retrouve

dans l'ensemble du fleuve actuellement. Les groupes écologistes du Québec demandent donc la création d'un comité d'experts indépendants pour l'analyse des différentes options de renflouage de la barge avec de vrais études d'impacts.

Une option beaucoup plus logique serait de vider la barge avant de la lever. De plus, tout le monde s'entend pour demander à la compagnie pétrolière Irving d'assumer les frais de cette opération. Le temps presse car en attendant le *Irving Whale* continue de rouiller au fond de l'eau et sa cargaison mortelle continue de polluer le fleuve St-Laurent.

Action: Écrivez à monsieur Marchi ministre fédérale de l'environnement demandez la création du comité d'expert chargé de réviser les différentes option de renflouage: À Sergio Marchi, Terrasses de la Chaudière 10, rue Wellington, Hull, Québec K1A 0H3, fax: 819 953 5901.

Mais plus important écrivez à Irving pour demander de payer pour le nettoyage de cette catastrophe écologique: À m. Arthur Sr Irving, président de Irving Oil Ltée, PO Box 1421, St-John, New Brunswick E2L 4K1, fax: 506 632 7161.

Who will pay for the cleanup of the *Irving Whale*?

by Stéphane Gingras

GLU Field Coordinator

During a 1970 storm the barge *Irving Whale* sank to the bottom of the St. Lawrence River near the mouth of the river in front of the Îles de la Madeleine. Twenty-five years later the wreck remains under two hundred feet of water—with a toxic cargo of 9 tonnes of PCBs and 3000 tonnes of crude oil.

The site is slowly leaking its contents

and over the long term is a major threat to the river ecosystem, particularly the river's beluga whale population. Ocean tides can carry toxics leaking from the sunken barge several hundred miles upstream, all the way to Québec City.

The *Irving Whale* case has embarrassed the Canadian federal government because it has so far been unable to make the huge company, pay for cleaning up the wreck. Irving, the largest business in

New Brunswick and one of the largest in eastern Canada, is a multinational oil company with interests in a number of other industries. The currently estimated \$12 million bill is scheduled to be paid by Canadian taxpayers.

Cleanup plans are controversial and are contributing to delays in the cleanup effort. The government wants to refloat the barge before emptying it, but if the barge were to break and release its cargo

The U.S.-Canada Air Accord must be modernized

by Paul Muldoon

Canadian Environmental Law Association
Transboundary air pollution remains a significant problem along the U.S.-Canada border. According to a recent report by Environment Canada, there were 278 million pounds of chemicals released by U.S. and Canadian industry to the air of the Great Lakes Basin.

The signing of the Agreement Between Canada and the United States on Air Quality (the Air Quality Accord) in March 1991 was an important step forward in addressing certain transboundary air pollution issues, particularly emissions that cause acid rain.

The existing Air Quality Accord remains useful, but in the years since its signing other air quality issues, such as toxic chemical air pollution, have become more evident. The Air Quality Accord needs to be broadened.

Toxic air pollution is not a new problem either within the Great Lakes or along the international border. But there is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the environmental and human health effects of toxic air pollution.

In 1994 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its "Great Wa-

ters" report to Congress. "Deposition of Air Pollutants to Great Waters" was heralded as a milestone because it documented that current releases of toxic air pollution were posing a national and international threat.

The governments should respond to this threat by negotiating an expanded Air Quality Accord to include provisions and annexes directed to transboundary toxic air pollution:

- 1) The provisions of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement relating to persistent toxic substances should be mirrored in the revised accord. In particular, article 3 of the accord should be amended to include the general objective of eliminating the use and generation of persistent toxic substances that will, or have the potential to, cause transboundary air pollution. Transboundary air pollution of toxic pollutants in toxic quantities should be prohibited.
- 2) The accord should include detailed annexes on expanded monitoring regimes, emissions inventories, and modeling efforts. The governments should immediately begin coordinating emissions inventories. Efforts

should be made to negotiate similar emission inventories with Mexico.

- 3) The accord should give the International Joint Commission an expanded role, including the power to undertake studies and verify government studies.
- 4) The accord should establish formal citizen input by creating a separate citizens' advisory board or citizen membership on the Canada-United States Air Quality Committee.

Toxic air pollution is a problem. What is known from available loading data is quite staggering. The U.S. Toxics Release Inventory and the Canadian National Pollutant Release Inventory reveal that every year millions of pounds of airborne toxic chemicals are released within the Great Lakes airshed, and millions more deposited in the watershed from air sources both in and out of the Great Lakes Basin. This data alone should convince the U.S. and Canadian governments to renegotiate the air quality accord.

This article is based on a presentation to the International Joint Commission delivered in December 1995 in Washington, D.C.

of PCBs while being lifted, the level of PCB contamination in affected portions of the river would increase by a factor of five. It would be far safer, though somewhat more expensive, to empty the barge first, then refloat it.

Studies have shown that the St. Lawrence River's current level of persistent organic pollutants such as PCBs are harming river fauna. Pierre Béland, a member of the International Joint Commission and a world authority on the beluga whale, believes that the species is dying due to contamination by persistent organic pollutants.

According to a study soon to be published by the St. Lawrence River Ecotoxicology Center, the newborn bel-

uga faces a very high mortality rate due to the toxic shock they receive from breast feeding. The beluga whale population in the St. Lawrence River is estimated to be about five hundred. Since 1970, 170 of the whales have been found dead on the shores of the St. Lawrence. In 1995 alone 17 beluga bodies were found.

Québec's environmental movement is asking for the formation of a committee of international experts to look at technical options for dealing with the *Irving Whale*, including the writing of a legitimate impact assessment study. One logical option would be to empty the barge before lifting it. Moreover, the Irving company should pay for the cleanup operation.

² In any case the cleanup must begin quickly, because the boat is rusting and its cargo is slowly leaking into the water.

Please write or fax federal Environment Minister Sergio Marchi to ask for the formation of a committee of international experts to look at options for cleaning up the wreck of the *Irving Whale*: Hon. Sergio Marchi, Minister of the Environment, Terrasses de la Chaudière, 10 Wellington St., Hull, Québec, K1A 0H3, fax: (819) 953-3457.

Those who are sufficiently outraged should also write or fax the Irving company and urge them to pay for the mess they have made: Irving Oil, Ltd., P.O. Box 1421, St. John, New Brunswick E2L 4K1, fax: (506) 632-7161.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If not RAPs, what?

Ten years after the Areas of Concern, or the Great Lakes' toxic hot spots, were designated by the International Joint Commission in 1985, only one has been cleaned up. Nonetheless, with the job very far from done, many governments are withdrawing their support of the Remedial Action Plan process that guides cleanup efforts.

The state of Michigan has dramatically reduced its work on RAPs. Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ontario have reduced their financial and time commitments to RAPs.

Michigan is typical of the other governments in the reasons it gives to justify withdrawing from the RAP process. It claims to want to move the process to local leadership. After ten years, the RAPs are being unceremoniously dumped on local communities in the name of encouraging community control. This shift has nothing to do with providing for local control. It is purely the product of trying to save money.

Many of us have questioned the success of RAPs. But this does not mean that they should be dropped without

provide some other way of ensuring that cleanup occurs.

The job for local communities and the numerous volunteers who are now being asked to give even more volunteer time to clean up the toxic hot spots in the Great Lakes is being made harder by the withdrawal of the governments from support for the RAP programme. This job is also being made harder by the other budget cuts that will result in less stringent enforcement of regulations in all jurisdictions around the Basin and in less financial commitments for actual cleanup.

In 1987, when the two federal governments signed the revised Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, they committed themselves to clean up the toxic hot spots. They must not now dump them on us in the name of community control.

All of us who live in the areas of concern must insist that the governments follow through on the commitment they made in 1987. The governments' job is far from being completed.

—John Jackson

... timber "salvage"

continued from page 8

portion of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is also scheduled for salvage sale. It contains the Betchler Marsh peatlands, a candidate for status as a Research National Area (RNA), one of the highest levels of land protection. Betchler Marsh is an important nesting center for the greater sandhill crane. The project area also contains the headwaters of the Tahquamenon River, currently a study river for National and Scenic status.

Forest Service officials have indicated a willingness to work with the public to protect this candidate RNA site.

Repeal the rider

Rep. Elizabeth Furse (D-Oregon) has introduced H.R. 2475, a repeal of the timber salvage rider, with one hundred co-sponsors. Sen. Bill Bradley has said he will introduce a companion bill.

Save America's Forests has written a letter to President Clinton signed by more than three hundred groups and businesses urging him to help repeal the "worst anti-environmental legislation in history . . . [that] is causing the destruction of irreplaceable Ancient and natural forest ecosystems across our nation."

For more information contact Save America's Forests at (202) 544-9219.

GLU co-founder Tom Washington passes away

Tom Washington was a conservation giant. For nearly a quarter century he directed the 120,000-member Michigan United Conservation Clubs, a founding member of Great Lakes United. Better than most, Washington understood the link between hunting and fishing and a clean environment. He led a passionate life filled with conservation battles, hunting exploits, and a remarkable record of legislative, educational and legal victories for the environment.

Washington died December 5 of heart failure following a heart attack November 16. He had been preparing for a second day of deer hunting in his beloved Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He was fifty-eight years old.

During the 1970s, Washington was among the first to see the need for hunters and anglers to engage in issues affecting water quality, wetlands, and land management. Under his tenure, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) programs and staff expanded, and its annual budget grew from \$65,000 to today's \$5 million. Washington unleashed that power, and his own considerable bearing, upon polluters and politicians with equal fervor. He spoke with eloquence and conviction on behalf of ordinary people who, like himself, loved the outdoors.

Among his many accomplishments, environmentalists credit Washington's leadership for Michigan's popular bottle bill; a trust fund, which has used oil and gas revenues to buy more than 140,000 acres of choice recreation and wildlife

land and waters; and a constitutional amendment last year to fund parks.

Working closely with the National Wildlife Federation, Washington won from power companies a settlement package of mitigation and compensation for Lake Michigan fish kills worth \$172 million. He built a conservation education program that is second to none, with a staff of professionals that reach school children through classroom programs, teacher training, and MUCC's *Tracks* monthly magazine, which is read by than 100,000 children.



National Rifle Association

In the course of his career, Washington received numerous national and state awards for his service, including the American Motors Conservation Award, the Safari Club International Chairman's Award, and the Miles D. Pirnie Award from the Michigan Duck Hunters Association for his association in wetlands protection.

Washington was a member of the steering committee that led to the formation of Great Lakes United in 1982. Since 1994, Washington served as president of the 3.4 million-member National Rifle Association, one of the most powerful lobbying groups in the country.

"The nation has lost one of its greatest conservation leaders in the last quarter century," said Bill Howard, president of the National Wildlife Federation. "Tom's leadership built one of the most effective coalitions of sportsmen, outdoor enthusiasts and environmentalists

in the nation. I've worked with Tom for over twenty years. He has always been one of the strongest and most complex figures in the conservation movement.

"In Michigan he was universally recognized as a tireless, effective, and courageous conservation force to be reckoned with by politicians, the press, and other organizations. All of us will miss the force of Tom's intellect and personality in dealing with the conservation challenges of the future."

Those who knew Tom Washington will remember a personality of baffling complexity. At once overbearing and sensitive, respectful yet profane, a lover of guns and all of life, he was a self-made man who led Michigan to permanently improve its stewardship of its natural resources. He leaves a legacy of leadership and achievement in conservation for the citizens of Michigan, and indeed, for the whole country.

—Wayne Schmidt
National Wildlife Federation

In this issue

Sandmining proposal defeated 1

Health conference draws 350 1

Focus groups on environment 2

We will miss John Manty 2

Biodiversity & Habitat

Fisheries conference 1 3

Fisheries conference 2 4

Marsh monitoring project 5

Biodiversity Task Force update 6

Conservation Authorities threat 6

Timber "salvage" rider 7

Basin "takings" laws 8

Boundary Waters park update 10

Healthy Communities

Governments abandon RAPs 11

Cuyahoga Area of Concern 13

Healthy Communities Task Force Update 14

St. Clair Area of Concern 15

Clean Production

Drycleaners promote wet cleaning 17

Dioxin Corner 19

Strategic Options Process 20

EAGLE factsheets 21

Clean Production Task Force Update 22

Books 22

Profiles of grassroots groups 23

Clinton on environment 23

Briefs 24

Office notes 26

Fundraising update 27

Cleaning up the Irving Whale 28

U.S.-Canada Air Accord 29

President's message—RAPs 30

Tom Washington passes away 31

Join Great Lakes United!

Unless someone like you, Cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better, It's not!—The Lorax, by Dr. Seuss

Sure! Somebody's got to care! Sign me up as an:

☐ Individual member—\$25 ☐ Family member—\$35 ☐ Sustaining member—\$50

☐ Library subscriber—\$50 ☐ Organizational member—\$25* or \$100

*annual budgets of \$15,000 or less

All members get a year's subscription to the GLU newsletter—four issues.

Organizational members may designate 2 additional subscriptions and vote at the annual meeting.

Name: _____ Affiliation: _____

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In Canada please make checks payable out to "Great Lakes United Foundation" and send to
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