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GREAT LAKES FACTS

- As much as 90 percent of some toxic substances, such as PCBs, that enter the Lakes come from air pollutants.
- A 1988 study of cormorant embryos from Lake Michigan's Green Bay found they had twice as many severe birth defects as embryos collected in other areas. Toxic chemicals are the suspected cause.
- The estimated economic value of the Great Lakes sport fishery is \$4 billion. More than four million people fished the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River in 1985.
- Twenty-five percent of Canadian agricultural production takes place in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.
- Over 50 percent of Great Lakes region wetlands have been lost since European settlement.
- More than 150 million tons of hazardous commodities are transported on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River each year.
- Water withdrawals from the Great Lakes Basin (not including hydroelectric use) totalled 37 billion gallons per day in 1987. Consumptive use (that which is not returned) was 1.2 billion gallons per day in 1987.
- All but one of the 43 Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River have contaminated sediments. Sediments in some sections of Waukegan Harbor, Illinois contain as much as 500,000 parts per million of PCBs.
- There are over 160 inactive landfill sites, many of which contain toxic chemicals, within three miles of the Niagara River.

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GREAT LAKES UNITED



*An international organization
dedicated to conserving and
protecting the Great Lakes -
St. Lawrence River ecosystem.*

"Great Lakes United begins its 2nd decade of service to the citizens of the Great Lakes Basin. With their continued support, we will successfully meet the environmental challenges of the 90s as well as those of the coming 21st century."

Richard Kubiak, President



GREAT LAKES UNITED

Since 1982, Great Lakes United has been a catalyst for citizens to have a stronger voice in policies and programs that affect the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.

An international coalition of environmental, conservation, labor, hunter, angler, business, academic and community and native organizations, and individuals from the eight Great Lakes states, Ontario and Quebec, Great Lakes United works to protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

The Great Lakes: A Treasured and Fragile Ecosystem

The Basin contains the watersheds of Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. Together the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River form the largest surface expanse of fresh water in the world.

Forty-five million people, both Canadian and American, live within the Basin. The future of all of us who call the Basin our home depends upon our ability to protect this fragile beautiful Ecosystem.

An Ecosystem Imperiled

The health and beauty of the Ecosystem cannot be taken for granted. The loss of wetlands, the threat of diversions and poisoning of the lakes by toxic chemicals are just a few of the dangers to the Ecosystem.

Despite the significance of the Great Lakes and our collective rhetoric to restore and enhance them, we as a society continue to mortgage our future by poisoning, suffocating and otherwise threatening them because of insufficient knowledge, other priorities and short-sightedness.

What our generation has failed to realize is that, what we are doing to the Great Lakes, we are doing to ourselves and to our children.

International Joint Commission
Fifth Biennial Report on Great Lakes Water Quality, Part II

Toxic chemicals are deposited in the Basin from sources such as leaking dumps, direct discharges from pipes, and rain contaminated with air pollutants. These chemicals, such as PCBs, dioxins, mercury and lead, accumulate in the bodies of fish, birds and other wildlife and severely affect them. These chemicals also make some fish and wildlife unsafe to eat.

The contamination and degradation of the Ecosystem calls for international cooperation and coordinated citizen action.



Great Lakes United (shown here during a TV interview) has been the lead organization to prevent out-of-basin diversion of Great Lakes water that would endanger the entire ecosystem.

Great Lakes United: Making the Difference

Great Lakes United helped stop a recent proposal to divert Lake Michigan water to the Mississippi River watershed. GLU publications have brought public awareness to the problem of toxic contaminants, the hazards of winter navigation, and airborne toxics in the Basin.

In 1987, for the first time, the public through the leadership of Great Lakes United was a major player in shaping the terms of the Great Lakes Water Quality

"Great Lakes United is the broad-based, basin-wide, grassroots movement for Great Lakes water quality that many of us have long hoped for. Great Lakes United is informed, effective and influential."

Former Michigan Governor James Blanchard

Agreement. This agreement strengthened the protection of the lakes from pollution and other threats and provides a framework for cleaning up and rehabilitating degraded areas.

Great Lakes United has led the fight for stronger U.S. and Canadian cooperation on key environmental issues facing the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. We will continue to fight until our goals for a restored Ecosystem are met.

"Great Lakes United has been exemplary in demonstrating the need and effectiveness of citizen participation in environmental policy formation and implementation. A leader in local, national, and international environmental issues, it has proposed innovative, action-oriented solutions to reclaim the Great Lakes from pollution."

U.S. Congressman Henry Nowak

You Can Make the Difference

Public pressure for a cleaner environment can, and does, make a difference. If we are to protect the Great Lakes -St. Lawrence River Basin, we must address the region as an entire ecosystem and push for responsible environmental regulation.

Through our quarterly newsletter, *The Great Lakes United*, and our action alerts, members are connected to a diverse, international network of concerned citizens.

PLEASE JOIN the growing number of environmentalists, anglers, union members, businesses, scientists, community leaders and concerned individuals who are helping Great Lakes United make a difference.



JOIN US!

Name _____
Organization _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Province _____
Zip/Postal Code _____
Phone () _____

- Individual Membership (\$20.00)
- Organizational Membership (\$100.00)
- Additional Contribution _____
- Send more information on Great Lakes United, please.
- I/we would like to volunteer for Great Lakes United.
- I/we would like to join a Task Force.

Please return this form with check payable to:

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