

RESOLUTION ON PROPOSED PERMANENT DIVERSION OF WATER OUT OF GREAT LAKES BASIN AT LOWELL, INDIANA

WHEREAS the State of Indiana proposes to permit a diversion of up to 3.8 million gallons/day of Lake Michigan water to the Town of Lowell, Indiana to replace its present fluoride-contaminated well water source, AND

WHEREAS Lowell, Indiana lies outside the Great Lakes Basin and will send this water after treatment into the Mississippi River Basin, AND

WHEREAS U.S. Public Law 99-662, Section 1109 requires the proposed diversion to be approved by all eight Great Lakes governors, AND

WHEREAS, Indiana is a co-signer to the Great Lakes Charter, which recognizes the threat of uncontrolled, permanent diversions to the Great Lakes; AND

WHEREAS, the proposed diversion would increase Indiana's consumption of Great Lakes water; AND


WHEREAS, Indiana is not a signer of the Great Lakes Protection Fund which bases its funding allotments to each state based on the quantity of their Great Lakes water consumption; AND

WHEREAS the Council of Great Lakes Governors has decided to use the Prior Notice and Consultation process of the Great Lakes Charter of 1986 to satisfy Section 1109, which applies to diversions under 5 million gallons/day, AND

WHEREAS the drinking water quality for Lowell and its residents is a serious issue and must be addressed, and that the environmental health of the Great Lakes ecosystem must also not be compromised when addressing the drinking water issue, AND

WHEREAS permanent diversions of water outside of the Great Lakes watershed will cumulatively lead ultimately to permanent degradation of the Great Lakes system and its hydrological integrity through permanent lowering of water levels, leading to loss of coastal wetlands, fish spawning areas, beachfront, and need for deeper dredging of navigation channels that will cause disturbance of contaminated sediments and distribution of more toxics into water, wildlife and human drinking water, AND

WHEREAS the proposed diversion is not intended just to find a replacement for Lowell's contaminated water, but also to provide for "future Growth" of Lowell, "as well as the needs of inhabitants of the territory located between Gary-Hobart's existing facilities and Lowell" (which have not been described by the State of Indiana's documentation as having contaminated water);



WHEREAS the approval of a permanent diversion at Lowell, Indiana will set a dangerous precedent because it would be the first such sizable diversion since the Great Lakes Charter was signed in 1986, and raises the specter of endless growth and demands for even greater diversions of Great Lakes water, AND

WHEREAS a previous 3.2 million gal./day diversion of Great Lakes water at Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, resulted in an agreement by Wisconsin to build a new pipeline from Pleasant Prairie's water treatment plant so that diverted water can be returned back to Lake Michigan, AND

WHEREAS Great Lakes United is not satisfied with the range of alternatives discussed and the level of detail provided for the alternatives,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Great Lakes United urges the Great Lakes governors to withhold approval of Lowell's water diversion proposal, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT alternatives should be publicly examined in more detail, including the alternative for the state to commit to supporting construction of a pipeline to re-divert the water back into Lake Michigan (as was agreed to in the Wisconsin case) and also water conservation methods that will be used with timetables for implementation of these measures.

Submitted by: Lake Michigan Federation