



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) Significant Activities Report

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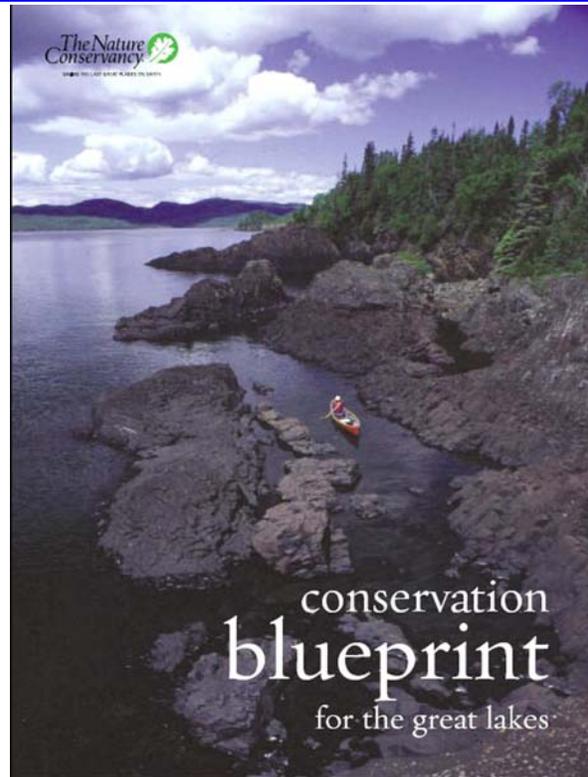
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Great Lakes Conservation Blueprint

The Nature Conservancy has just released the “Conservation Blueprint for the Great Lakes”. Jointly funded by GLNPO, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Gund Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Richard Ivey Foundation, and the Living Legacy Trust, the blueprint was a binational, collaborative effort to identify areas of biodiversity significance throughout the Great Lakes basin.

A total of 501 places were identified, mapped, and inventoried, and an analysis of threats to each place conducted by more than 200 scientists from federal and state/provincial agencies and private organizations. The results are impressive: the basin contains 46 species found nowhere else in the world and 279 globally rare plants, animals and natural communities in a region of boreal, mixed and deciduous forests, tall-grass prairies, wetlands, sand dunes, alvars



Conservation Blueprint for the Great Lakes cover
(photo courtesy of The Nature Conservancy)

and islands. The areas are critical to the preservation of biodiversity and represent the best opportunities to preserve species, natural communities and ecological systems. For each area, the blueprint contains information about Great Lakes species, natural communities and ecological systems; maps of where conservation is underway; summaries of current projects and strategies; information on threats to biodiversity; and, detailed descriptions of plans. The blueprint also offers actions that can be taken to protect these areas. The Nature Conservancy is making this information available to the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration for use in Great Lakes indicator and habitat protection and restora-

tion work. The Conservation Blueprint is available online at: http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/greatlakes/files/conservation_blprnt_final.pdf.

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Pollution Prevention Pays

The results of the work carried out under a GLNPO grant to the University of Illinois Waste Management & Research Center (WMRC) are in and they are a concrete example of how pollution prevention can pay off in both environmental and monetary benefits. The purpose of the project was to identify, evaluate, and implement pollution prevention opportunities in the Koppers' Phthalic Anhydride Plant located at 3900 South Laramie Avenue in Stickney, Illinois. Between June 2004 and March 2005, engineers from Koppers and WMRC worked collaboratively to identify opportunities that simultaneously reduced operating costs, waste generation and emissions in the phthalic anhydride manufacturing process. Additional emphasis was placed on pollution prevention opportunities that reduced persistent bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT) compounds.

During the project, eleven pollution prevention opportunities were identified, evaluated and prioritized. In March 2005, Koppers successfully implemented a high priority opportunity. They began reducing the compressed air feed to the phthalic anhydride reactors during low production periods. This change in operations has resulted in a reduction of phthalic anhydride emissions of 1,400 lbs per year while also reducing energy consumption by 4,200 kWhr per year yielding a total annual savings of \$263,000.

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Chicago Mayor Encourages Boating/Fishing Dialogue

Chicago's Mayor Richard M. Daley held a meeting with leaders of the boating and fishing community on January 12th at Chicago's McCormick Place, to coincide with the start of the annual Boating, Fishing, and RV trade show. The Mayor urged the community leaders to get involved with issues currently facing the Great Lakes. The session was moderated by David Ullrich, Executive Director of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. Speakers at the event included Thomas Dammrich (National Marine Manufacturers Association); Bill Cullerton (radio sports announcer); and Sonny Lisowski (of the boating community). Most of the meeting's "question and answer" session focused on the timeliness of construction and federal funding for the Carp Barrier on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal near Romeoville, Illinois. The potential spread of the Asian



Great Lakes boaters had back to port at end of day

Carp from the Mississippi/Illinois River system to the Great Lakes is of paramount concern to Great Lakes fishermen and boaters. Participants at the session were informed that the Carp Barrier was addressed as a high priority issue in the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration's Strategy to Protect and Restore the Great Lakes (<http://glrc.us/strategy.html>)

For more information about the Asian Carp and its potential impacts, see: <http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/invasive/asiancarp/>.

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Binational AOC Progress

GLNPO hosted a Four Agency (USEPA / Michigan Department of Environmental Quality / Environment Canada / Ontario Ministry of the Environment) working group meeting at the Large Lakes Research Lab in Grosse Ile, Michigan on January 9th. The binational working group drafted principles and processes for setting delisting criteria, for re-designating Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs), and for delisting the binational Areas of Concern (AOCs). There are three AOCs where binational Remedial Action Plans are being implemented: Detroit River, St. Clair River, and St. Marys River. This effort, and the resulting document, is the first step in assisting local Public Advisory Committees in the United States and Canada to consider the performance measures and requirements to restore BUIs and to delist a binational AOC. As its basis, the working group considered and applied the principles set forth in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's recently released "Guidance for Delisting Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern," (<http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-wb-aoc-delistguide.pdf>). In March, the working group will present a final draft of the principles and processes to the

Four Agency managers for approval and adoption.

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Invasive Species Exhibit Opens

Chicago's John G. Shedd Aquarium opened its new "Invasive Species in the Great Lakes" display on January 5th. The exhibit highlights the threats invasive species pose to the Great Lakes ecosystem. The display also shows what a healthy Great Lakes ecosystem would look like. Funding for the display included contributions from U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Illinois/Indiana Sea Grant, and GLNPO. Additional information about the Shedd Aquarium's Great Lakes-related activities can be found at: http://www.sheddaquarium.org/con_greatlakesforever.cfm.

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Visitors view Shedd Aquarium's new exhibit on invasive species in the Great Lakes (photo courtesy of Shedd Aquarium)



GLNPO scientist demonstrates use of plankton sampling net aboard *R/V Lake Guardian*

***Lake Guardian* “Summer School”**

The new Great Lakes Center for Ocean Science Education Excellence (COSEE) recently announced a summer workshop made possible by GLNPO. The one-week cruise on Lake Erie aboard GLNPO’s Research Vessel, *R/V Lake Guardian*, will provide teachers and informal educators interdisciplinary learning opportunities for Great Lakes and ocean systems research. The “Shipboard and Shoreline Science on Lake Erie” course is scheduled to run from June 18th to 24th, 2006. Up to 15 teachers of grades 4 thru 10 or informal educators from around the Great Lakes basin will be selected for participation. Scientists accompanying the teachers include Bill Edwards (Niagara University); and GLNPO’s Elizabeth Hinchey Malloy, Susan Boehme, and Jacqueline Adams.

The course is designed to promote Great Lakes and ocean sciences in formal and informal education and forge lasting relationships between science researchers and educators. Participants will be involved in field exercises, work with scientists, examine curricula and resources, and explore classroom activities relating to the Great Lakes and ocean resources. It will offer first-hand explorations of Lake Erie geography, resources, processes and issues, and demon-

strate how Great Lakes science parallels the science of the world ocean. Days are spent on the water aboard the *Lake Guardian* collecting samples of plankton and benthic organisms. Participants will be involved in data collection and analysis, and in discussions of how the Great Lakes and oceans change with human activity, geographic location, geology, biology and weather. Evenings will be spent at anchor in ports along the U.S. shore, with chances to visit special habitats and informal learning sites. For more information about COSEE, as well as the Lake Erie course and an application for the course, see: http://coseegreatlakes.net/events/shipboardscience_erie on the Internet.

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Finding Beach Pollution Sources

USEPA’s Office of Water is responding to the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes recommendation to identify sources of contamination at Great Lakes beaches as a top priority. The eight Great Lakes States reported on 825 beaches in the 2004 Great Lake Beach survey, generally citing the reasons for beach closures as pollution from “unknown” sources at the beaches with the most frequent problems. USEPA has established a federal (USEPA Headquarters, Regions 2, 3, and 5), city, and state work group that proposes to develop a beach sanitary survey form acceptable to the eight Great Lake States during 2006. During 2007, USEPA expects to issue beach sanitary survey grants for pilot projects in each of the Great Lake states. During 2008, USEPA will evaluate the pilot projects to determine if the sanitary surveys have iden-

tified sources that affect beaches and provided a basis for determination of an optimal beach monitoring program based on beach contamination sources.

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Upcoming Events

2006

March 16	Great Lakes Day, Washington, DC
May 17-18	Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy Stakeholders Meeting, Toronto, Ontario Canada
May 22-26	IAGLR 49 th Annual Conference on Great Lakes Research, Windsor, Ontario Canada
October 11 - 13	Second International Symposium on the Lake Huron Ecosystem, Honey Harbor, Ontario Canada
November 1-3	State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) 2006 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

We welcome your questions, comments or suggestions about this month's Significant Activities Report. To be added to or removed from the Email distribution of the Significant Activities Report, please contact Tony Kizlauskas, 312-353-8773, kizlauskas.anthony@epa.gov.