



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

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## **HABITAT RESTORATION**

### **Conserving Bald Eagle Habitats**

In January 2007, the St. Lawrence Bald Eagle Working Group, at the request of the United States-Canada Lake Ontario Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP), released the report, "Conserving Lake Ontario and Upper St. Lawrence River Bald Eagle Habitats." The Working Group is comprised of government and non-government agencies, groups and individuals working to-

## **MONITORING**

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gether in a variety of ways to promote conservation of bald eagles through monitoring, research, management, information exchange, assistance on bald eagle-related pro-



Bald Eagle returns to its nest  
(Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

jects, and scientific review/consultation regarding bald eagles. The report describes 40 shoreline locations with potential high quality bald eagle nesting habitats and recommends specific bald eagle population restoration goals. The geographic scope of the project was limited to the eastern Lake Ontario basin and the Upper St. Lawrence River where the highest quality habitat and the greatest amount of bald eagle activity are currently found.

The Working Group reviewed available bald eagle research and identified three major predictors of quality bald eagle nesting and foraging sites:

- More than 260 hectares of contiguous forest,
- Sites located less than 1.5 kilometers from wetlands, rivers or lakes, and
- Sites close to wetlands, lakes, or rivers covering more than 30 hectares.

A GIS habitat computer model was used to identify where these habitat features or parameters occur together. The model identified 40 shoreline sites that meet these criteria. The sites will be field checked in 2007 to confirm the modeling results.

Initial conservation goals developed by the Working Group will measure progress in restoring bald eagle habitat. The goals are:

- By 2016, at least 10 shoreline nesting territories are established.
- By 2016, at least five Canadian and five United States priority sites totaling more than 5,000 hectares are protected.
- 80 percent of bald eagle nesting pairs should fledge one or more eaglets per year.

The Working Group will continue the project throughout 2007. Financial support has been provided by GLNPO and the Ontario Minis-



Wetland in Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

try of Natural Resources.

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### **LaMP-based Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Workshop**

GLNPO and EPA Region 2 staff attended the third workshop of the “LaMP-based Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Lake Ontario” February 28<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 in Buffalo, New York. Attended by more than 50 people from Canadian and U.S. federal, state/provincial agencies and non-governmental organizations, the workshop focused on prioritizing strategies to deal with threats to biodiversity targets identified in the first two workshops. Six threats were analyzed in breakout sessions:

- Climate change,
- Current and new invasive species,
- Dams and barriers,
- Unsustainable development,
- Non-point source inputs, and
- Point source pollution.

For each threat, endpoints, broad strategies to get to endpoints, key outputs, and action steps were identified. The results of all three workshops will be incorporated into the Lakewide Management Plan for Lake On-

tario.

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### Great Lake Regional Collaboration Wetlands Initiative

As a first step toward achieving Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC) goals, the Great Lakes Wetlands Initiative will promote on-the-ground activities to protect and restore 200,000 acres of wetlands in the Great Lakes basin. This initiative is designed to accelerate efforts to protect and restore Great lakes wetlands by connecting partners, programs, funding and projects. The key elements of the initiative are:

- Bring partners together to work on wetlands restoration;
- Connect partners with necessary information on programs, funding and potential projects to make wetland restoration happen; and
- Monitor progress towards Great lakes Wetlands Initiative goals.

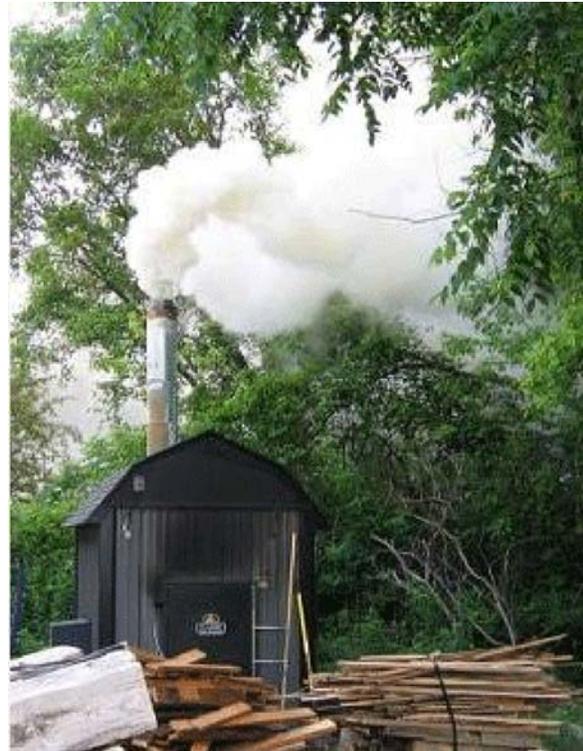
The Subcommittee of the GLRC Executive Committee will oversee implementation of this initiative.

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### POLLUTION PREVENTION

#### Roll-out of Wood Boiler Program

Outdoor wood boilers are increasing at a rapid rate because they provide a cheap source of heat and hot water. It is expected that there will be about 500,000 of these units by 2010. Unfortunately, they emit over 10 times the PM2.5 particulates and polyaro-



Outdoor wood boiler  
(Photo courtesy of Washington State Department of Ecology)

matic hydrocarbons (PAHs) as wood stoves. (Residential wood combustion is the largest source of benzo(a)pyrene emissions.). EPA rolled out a two-part strategy on January 29, 2007 for addressing the emissions from these wood boilers:

Part 1 is a voluntary program with 10 boiler manufacturers, who make 80% of the units sold in the United States and have agreed to bring out at least one unit meeting new performance specifications beginning in April 2007. These performance specifications require that emissions be 70% lower than from models currently on the market. EPA developed the voluntary program with input from boiler manufacturers, states and an industry trade group. The cleaner models will be marked by an orange hang tag showing that the unit meets the program requirements. Part 2 is a model rule that state and local

governments can use to address wood boilers in their areas. EPA provided technical and financial support to a coalition of Northeast states for the development of this model rule. That coalition, Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use management, made this rule available on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Information about outdoor wood boilers and the voluntary partnership is available on the Internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/woodheaters>. This site offers information about choosing cleaner, more efficient outdoor wood-fired boilers and using these outdoor wood-fired boilers more efficiently and safely.

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**Erie County Dental Waste Management Project**

Funded by a grant from GLNPO, Erie County, New York conducted an Erie County Dental Waste Management Project. Three workshops were held in Erie County (north, south & east of Buffalo) and one was held in Niagara County to provide information on dental waste management, focusing on proper disposal of mercury-bearing wastes. Lead and silver wastes were included as well. Outreach materials included Best Management Practices for Dental Amalgam, the Naval Institute of Dental and Biomedical Research video, information on amalgam/mercury recycling contractors, amalgam separator equipment vendors, New York State’s regulatory text detailing its Standards for the Management of Elemental Mercury and Dental Amalgam Wastes at Dental Facilities, the American Dental Association’s Dental Mercury Hygiene recommendations and information on the County’s Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator program. Grant resources allowed for five collections. Total quantities of waste collected



Dental waste can be a source of mercury, lead, and silver

were as follows:

Amalgam:	229 lbs.
Amalgam capsules:	45 lbs.
Mercury:	82 lbs.
Lead foil:	554 lbs.
Silver fixer:	173 gal.
Line Traps:	184
Lead Aprons:	16
X-ray heads:	4
Silver:	1 lbs.
Lead boxes:	1
Sphygmomanometers:	4

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**Great Lakes Green Chemistry Network Kickoff Meeting**

A kickoff meeting of the Great Lakes Green Chemistry Network was held February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The Mission of the Green Chemistry network is to create a partnership between academia, industry, government and non-governmental organizations to establish green chemistry practices in the binational Great Lakes region. The goals of the Green Chemistry Network are to:

- Create a Great Lakes Green Chemistry

#### Research Network

- Identify academic institutions in the Great Lakes dedicated to Green Chemistry research.
- Identify industries involved in Green Chemistry R&D
- Hold regular “industry showcases” where academics describe their research and industry presents their needs.
- Create “niche Green Chemistry Scholarships” in Great Lakes academic institutions, and
- Enable the creation of a Great Lakes Green Chemistry Industrial Sabbatical Program

Workgroup members include representatives from industry, non-governmental organizations and the academic community as well as all levels of government.

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## SEDIMENT REMEDIATION

### Ruddiman Creek Great Lakes Legacy Project Receives Award

The Michigan Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) awarded its Project of the Year Award (Environment \$10 - \$100 Million category) to the Ruddiman Creek Great Lakes Legacy Act Sediment Clean-up Project. The plaque will be awarded at the annual meeting in Boyne City, Michigan in May. The recipients of the award are: U.S. EPA GLNPO, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Environmental Quality Management and Earth Tech. The project is now eligible for the national APWA Project of the Year award.

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Part of Ruddiman Creek shortly after remediation

### Legacy Act Article in *LakeLine*

The Fall 2006 volume of *LakeLine* (a publication of the North American Lake Management Society) included an EPA Commentary by David Cowgill and Marc Tuchman. The article describes GLNPO's Great Lakes Legacy Act and the projects that have been completed to date.

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### Fourth International Conference on Remediation of Contaminated Sediments

During the week of January 22, 2007, members of the GLNPO Sediment Team traveled to Savannah, Georgia to attend the Fourth International Conference on Remediation of Contaminated Sediments, hosted by Battelle. Team members participated in a variety of short courses, panel discussions, and attended numerous platform presentations. The conference topics encompassed virtually all facets of the sediment remediation field, ranging from the modeling of fate and transport of contaminants to innovative technologies and remediation lessons learned. A Great Lakes platform session was co-chaired by Marc Tuchman of GLNPO and Mike

Alexander from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Marc Tuchman presented an overview of the Great Lakes Legacy Act, highlighting the continued accomplishments of the program. In this session, Mike Alexander of MDEQ presented an overview of the successful remediation of Ruddiman Creek and Pond, Dave Wethington described the baseline assessment of the Ashtabula River, and Lou Blume spoke on the Quality Management Program for the Great Lakes Legacy Act.

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## INVASIVE SPECIES

### *Hemimysis*: New Great Lakes Invader

Steve Pothoven of NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory gave a presentation titled: "*Hemimysis anomala* - the newest Great Lakes invader" on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007. GLNPO was able to make the presentation available as a Webcast, during which information was shared about the discovery of *Hemimysis* in the Muskegon boat basin in November of 2006. It was also found in Lake Ontario in the spring of 2006 in the nearshore zone over a rocky bottom. This "Bloody Red Mysid," native to the Ponto-Caspian region, is so named because of its reddish coloration. It prefers shallow dark nearshore habitats associated with structures and has a potentially high expansion potential due to its reproductive abilities. *Hemimysis* is omnivorous, giving it the potential to affect both zooplankton and phytoplankton populations, and it may serve as a new prey item for some species of fish. Its full impact will depend on its distribution



*Hemimysis anomala*  
(Photo courtesy of NOAA-GLERL)

and abundance, but confirmation of current distribution is difficult due to its evasive lifestyle. GLNPO has offered to sample shallow reefs encountered during the Lake Guardian's spring survey for signs of *Hemimysis*, and other scientists across the basin will look for the invader during the course of their normal research as well.

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## MONITORING

### Developing PBT Monitoring in Mexico

GLNPO's Melissa Hulting attended the Workshop to Develop Mexico's Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program in Cuernavaca, Mexico, on February 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The integration of persistent bioaccumulative toxics (PBT) monitoring in North America is being coordinated by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), and a major project under this broader effort is implementing a system for monitoring PBTs in Mexico. Over the past several months there have been a series of conference calls and meetings to discuss dif-

ferent tasks that would need to be done to establish such monitoring (i.e., infrastructure needed, laboratory capacity, possible locations of satellite sites). The meeting in Cuernavaca, attended by over 50 people, brought a broader group of participants together to provide input to the direction of the program, especially from Mexican representatives. The short-term output of this project will be a proposal to the Global Environment Fund to jump-start the Mexican monitoring program. Discussions are being conducted within the Mexican government to gain long-term buy-in.

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### **Trinational Quality Assurance Workshop**

Approximately 25 government and private laboratory representatives from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. attended a 3-day quality assurance workshop February 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> at Environment Canada's Center for Atmospheric Research Experiments in Egbert, Ontario. The workshop was initiated by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) as part of its Environmental Monitoring and Assessment effort. The agenda included presentations on existing monitoring programs and laboratory expertise in the 3 countries (including one covering GLNPO's PBT monitoring programs); tours of laboratory and sampling facilities; and discussion of a recent tri-national laboratory study that involved analysis of the U.S.-Canada Integrated Atmospheric Deposition Network's common reference standards for PCBs, organochlorine pesticides, and PAHs and a split air sample from Veracruz, Mexico. Initial results from the inter-laboratory study, which were promising in terms of the comparability of the results, were discussed, and a final report will be distributed following fi-



Hammond Bay harbor of refuge on Lake Huron

nalization of the study data. Standard operating procedures and quality assurance plans were exchanged during and in following up to the workshop. Workshop participants recommended that further inter-laboratory comparison activities be conducted and that a Trinational Quality Assurance Program Plan be drafted; funds for such work will be requested in the CEC's 2008 Operational Plan.

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### **Lake Huron Cooperative Monitoring**

Planning continues for this year's Lake Huron Cooperative Monitoring/Intensive Monitoring field year. On February 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> principal investigators from Environment Canada, Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans, U.S. Geological Survey, NOAA, U.S. EPA – ORD:MED Duluth and U.S. EPA –GLNPO met to discuss station selection, scheduling and coordination of operations among the groups. Because of recent changes in the Lake Huron ecosystem, including greatly reduced fish and plankton populations and near-complete loss of the amphipod, *Diporeia* sp., much of the work will focus on assessing the food web and trying to determine the causes of the changes. The lake will be visited several times

throughout the year by ships from the U.S. and Canada to support sampling activities.

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### Great Lakes Cooperative Science Initiative

The initial meeting to develop a Great Lakes Cooperative Science Initiative (Great Lakes CSI) took place in Ann Arbor, Michigan on February 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007. This effort, undertaken pursuant to a Binational Executive Committee directive, will try to develop a framework that will identify areas of potential research cooperation based on shared issues and interests among agencies. The meeting was attended by representatives of Environment Canada, Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans, U.S. Geological Survey, NOAA and U.S. EPA, and will be followed by a number of meetings and workshops throughout the Great Lakes basin.

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### 2007 Surface Water Monitoring and Standards (SWiMS) Meeting

On January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007, GLNPO staff presented information at the 2007 SWiMS meeting on studies of pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs) and other emerging contaminants in the Chicago waterways. The presentation focused on the ongoing collaborations between U.S. EPA GLNPO, Region 5, the Chicago Regional Laboratory, and Office of Water; U.S. Geological Survey; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Baylor University; and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago to assess the occurrence and fate of emerging contaminants in the Chicago water-



Sampling for PPCPs in fish from the Chicago River

ways. The SWiMS meeting is an annual State/Tribal/EPA technical coordinators meeting aimed at sharing monitoring successes and challenges, learning about the most up-to-date scientific information, and discussing programmatic issues. SWiMS 2007 attracted approximately 200 participants. All of the presentation materials from SWiMS are available on-line at <http://www.epa.gov/region5/water/wqb/swims.htm>

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### Drinking Water Monitoring Grant Kick-off meeting, Mt. Clemens, MI

On Jan. 31, 2007, Rose Ellison, GLNPO Project Officer for the Macomb/St. Clair Drinking Water Quality grant attended the project kick-off meeting. The Drinking Water Quality project is designed to provide real-time monitoring data at eight water-intake plants along the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair to help warn against spill events and other threats to drinking water supplies. A complementary effort led by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality is providing an additional four stations in Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River. Calibration and “shake down” of monitoring equipment for the Macomb/St. Clair portion of the project began in January 2007 and will continue

throughout Spring 2007. The entire system is expected to be on-line by Summer 2007.

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### Waterborne Pathogen Seminars

David Rockwell has been invited to join a group of Water Fellows in addressing the issue of waterborne pathogens in Michigan and their effects on beaches, and will participate in a seminar series sponsored by Michigan State University (MSU). The purpose of the six workshops is to learn about sources, pathways, and impacts of pathogens in water and to discuss potential solutions. MSU goals are to characterize the issues regarding pathogens in Michigan, examine methods and solutions to address those issues, and to develop a framework for monitoring pathogens. The application of this information to the \$500,000 Pilot Sanitary Survey grants in six states will be of value to the agency as USEPA seeks to assist beach managers to identify sources of pathogens affecting the swim ability at sixty U.S. beaches.

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## OUTREACH/EDUCATION

### Outreach Events

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan Manager Liz LaPlante presented *The Great Lakes National Program Office and Careers in the Environmental Field* as part of Career Day at Holmes Junior High School in Mount Prospect, Illinois. In the presentation LaPlante shared with students the broad scope of pressing environmental problems of the day and the EPA's approach to solving them. LaPlante encouraged students to consider careers in the environmental field, which they can prepare for through internships, volunteer projects, and learning about emerging



Family enjoying a Lake Superior beach

environmental issues. The students were particularly interested in the *R/V Lake Guardian*, aquatic invasive species (especially sea lamprey and Asian Carp), global warming, and salary potential in the environmental field. Upon learning about GLNPO's collaborative work with Environment Canada, the French teacher was enthused to hear of the usefulness of school-taught language in real-world professions.

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On Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007, Liz LaPlante and Melissa Simon, an associate of the Oak Ridge Institute of Science Education (ORISE) traveled to Buffalo Grove, Illinois. There they spoke to 30 members of the Peacemakers Committee at Kingswood United Methodist Church. In the presentation titled *Protecting, Restoring, Enjoying Our Great Lakes*, they provided an overview of Great Lakes history, past and present environmental challenges, and successful initiatives to restore the basin ecosystem. Simon provided examples of successful environmental projects carried out by local faith groups and also offered recommendations for future activities for the Kingswood Church. Discussion focused on energy conservation, pollution prevention, and resource use. Participants were particularly interested in the presence of chemical contaminants and the effects of agriculture on Lake Michigan.

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Judy Beck (GLNPO) and Melissa Simon (ORISE) spoke to sixth-grade students at the Elmwood Elementary School in New Berlin, Wisconsin about Lake Michigan's environmental challenges and what they can do to help. Communication between the school and GLNPO was initiated by three students seeking assistance on their interactive project titled *What environmental impacts do individuals, families, communities, business, and governments have on Lake Michigan?* GLNPO has supplied educational materials and hosted a videoconference to help the students. The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District was also contacted by GLNPO to donate additional learning materials to the school, including rain gauges and a rain barrel. While at the school, Beck and Simon viewed a presentation of the project. Simon engaged students in an interactive lesson on watershed stewardship and non-point source pollution using a model provided by U.S. EPA Region 5's Office of Public Affairs.

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On February 12<sup>th</sup>, Erin Newman (U.S. EPA Region 5 Air Division) spoke and Jessica Winter (GLNPO-ECO Intern) presented a poster on methods for reducing the practice of household trash burning at the National Air Quality Conference in Orlando, Florida. About 70 people attended Erin's talk on the first day of the conference, and dozens more visited the poster and requested copies of the "Learn Not To Burn" CD resource kit. At least 30 CDs were distributed, along with copies of the poster and brochures. Most of the interested parties were state and local air department outreach coordinators who will help distribute the information to county and township officials who can implement local programs to cut back on trash burning in



Judy Beck speaks to students at Elmwood Elementary School, New Berlin, Wisconsin

their communities. Additionally, EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning & Standards is planning to develop a CD like GLNPO's on wood stoves in the coming months.

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On February 24<sup>th</sup>, GLNPO's Susan Boehme had planned to give a presentation and join a panel on pharmaceutical disposal issues at the American College of Preventive Medicine Annual Meeting in Miami, Florida. Due to the inclement weather, Susan did not attend the meeting, but Lara Polansky (University of Miami student and intern who began this project last summer here in GLNPO), was able to step in and give the presentation. Lara reported back that the audience seemed very interested in the issue and asked numerous questions afterwards. Susan received 2 emails from audience members within hours of the Saturday afternoon

session requesting more information and resource kits.

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**Newly elected GLEAMS Officers**

GLNPO’s Elizabeth Hinchey Malloy and Jacqueline Adams were elected to serve as 2006-2007 officers of the Great Lakes Aquatic and Marine Science Educators (GLEAMS). Hinchey Malloy is the current GLEAMS President and GLEAMS Chapter Representative to the National Marine Educators Association board. Adams is the current GLEAMS Membership Secretary. GLEAMS is a supportive network of aquatic science professionals from many fields, working together for the advancement of aquatic education. GLEAMS provides educators with information, methods and materials for including water-related content and activities into their curricula. GLEAMS members also learn of opportunities to network and connect with marine and aquatic science educators throughout the Great Lakes region and beyond. Visit the GLEAMS web site (<http://www.sheddaquarium.org/gleams>) to learn more.

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**LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLANS**

**Making a Great Lake SUPERIOR 2007**

Planning is under way for *Making a Great Lake SUPERIOR 2007: a Conference Linking Research, Education, and Management*, which will take place in Duluth, Minnesota,



Duluth Lift Bridge, a local landmark

October 29 – 31, 2007. The first of its kind, the conference will bring together researchers, resource managers, elected officials, educators, policy makers, government staff, Tribe members, and citizen activists from throughout the Lake Superior basin from both the US and Canada. For 3 days participants will report out on, collaborate, network, plan for and learn about the state of the lake and the actions necessary for its continued protection and restoration. Topics will include climate change, AOCs, monitoring, sustainable development, human health, habitat management, watershed stewardship, and toxic management. The call for participation is currently posted on the conference website and the conference planning committee has received its first batch of proposals for presentations. The committee is currently selecting a key note speaker. The committee is also working on involving the Lake Superior Binational Forum and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Mayors Initiative in organizing the event. The conference website is: <http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/superior2007/>

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**Lake Superior Binational Forum Meeting**

The Lake Superior Binational Forum is funded by a GLNPO grant and works closely with the Superior Workgroup, a team of representatives from state and federal agencies from the US and Canada. The Forum held a

public input session and meeting in January, 2007, in Ashland, Wisconsin, titled *Taking Natural Steps into Economic and Environmental Sustainability*. The meeting was to discuss a sustainability model called The Natural Step which is currently in use in Sweden. Over 80 people attended, including students, politicians, business leaders, Tribes members, mayors, and city officials.

Northland College President Karen Halbersleben described what the college is doing to implement sustainable design features and practices on the college's campus in Ashland, Wisconsin. Washburn Mayor Irene Blakely described actions city staff and council are taking to promote and implement sustainable practices. Blakely and the Washburn city council led the way to be the first municipality in the United States to pass an eco-municipality resolution that pledges to incorporate sustainable practices in all city operations.

Erv Soulier of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa gave a presentation on what the Tribe is doing to implement sustainability practices on the reservation. There were also presentations by local business and community leaders, including that of a local hotel owner who remodeled using green metrics. The forum meeting included a tour of Sustainable Northland College, including a "green" residence hall, solar heated swimming pool, cafeteria composting machine, wind generator, and geo-thermal heating/cooling system.

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Northland College President Karen Halbersleben describes the College's sustainable design features

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](mailto:kizlauskas.anthony@epa.gov).