



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5  
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD  
CHICAGO, IL 60604

R-19J

November 16, 2006

Steven E. Chester, Director  
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Constitution Hall  
525 West Allegan Street  
P.O. Box 30473  
Lansing, MI 48909-7973

Dear Mr. Chester:

This letter is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) official response to the letter from Mr. Richard Powers, Chief of your Water Bureau on September 20, 2006 requesting the delisting of the Degradation of Benthos Beneficial Use Impairment in the Manistique River, Michigan Area of Concern (AOC). As Mr. Powers' request points out, and the supplied data support, the statewide restoration criteria for the Degradation of Benthos Beneficial Use Impairment have been met in the Manistique River AOC since *"All remedial actions for known contaminated sediment sites with degraded benthos are completed and monitored according to the approved plan for the site."*

Based upon this review and the supporting data, and upon our shared desire to show progress as we move all of the Great Lakes Areas of Concern toward restoration of all beneficial use impairments and formal delisting, EPA approves the request for the delisting of the Degradation of Benthos Beneficial Use Impairment in the Manistique River AOC. EPA will notify the International Joint Commission of this significant positive change in the environmental health of the Manistique River AOC.

We congratulate all of the parties involved in this Federal/State/local partnership which has been instrumental in achieving this important environmental improvement that will benefit the citizens of the Manistique River AOC, the State of Michigan, and of the Great Lakes Basin. We look forward to the continuation of this important and productive relationship with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Manistique River AOC Public Advisory Council as we work together to fully restore all of Michigan's AOCs.

If I or my staff can be of further service to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Gade  
Great Lakes National Program Manager

cc: Representative Bart Stupak  
Richard Powers, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Julie Sims, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Roger Eberhardt, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Merilee Blowers, Manistique Papers, Inc.  
Mayor Dave Peterson, City of Manistique  
Gary Gulezian, USEPA – Great Lakes National Program Office  
Anthony Kizlauskas, USEPA – Great Lakes National Program Office  
Mark Elster, USEPA – Great Lakes National Program Office  
Pete Christich, USEPA – Office of International Activities  
Director, Great Lakes Regional Office, International Joint Commission