

# Management Plan Update



A Periodic Status Report on the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River Comprehensive Management Plan - March 2002

Now for a word from our sponsor ...

## Why I sponsored the management plan legislation

By Congressman David Bonior



Lake St. Clair is our Lake. It defines us. It shapes who we are. For some of us, it's why we've chosen to live here. All of us who have lived along the Great Lakes have a

deep appreciation for just how important our water is. It's part of our identity and our history.

Indeed, this is a precious natural resource and we need to do all we can to protect it. Yet in the Great Lakes basin, Lake St. Clair is often an afterthought — the poor, neglected

see *Bonior*, p. 4...

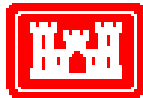
### Inside

How the plan is being developed .....	2
Preliminary outline .....	2
What the plan will look like .....	3
Management plan focus area .....	3
Schedule .....	3
Management plan website .....	3
Related initiatives .....	4
Make a recommendation .....	4
Management plan in the news .....	4
Contacts .....	4

## Dear Colleague:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Great Lakes Commission are pleased to present this update on the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River Management Plan. We will distribute periodic updates to let you know how the management plan is progressing and to solicit suggestions on how the document can best serve our collective efforts to restore and protect these important, shared resources. Please share this with your friends and colleagues and stay involved. We look forward to hearing from you!

Lt. Col. Richard J. Polo, Jr.  
District Commander  
Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District



Michael J. Donahue, Ph.D.  
President/CEO  
Great Lakes Commission



## The Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River Management Plan: An Overview

A coalition of U.S. and Canadian agencies is developing a comprehensive management plan for Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River. The management plan was authorized by the U.S. Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 1999, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designated as the lead agency. Funding for the plan was provided in 2001.

The legislation, sponsored by Congressman David Bonior (D-MI), directs the Corps of Engineers to develop a comprehensive management plan that identifies the causes of environmental problems facing Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River and recommends measures to address them. The plan is to be developed in cooperation with state and local governments and Canadian federal and provincial agencies.

The Corps of Engineers is collaborating with the Great Lakes Commission in developing the management plan. The project was initiated in the summer of 2001 and is scheduled for completion in early 2003. The draft management plan will be released for public review in the fall of 2002.

## Preliminary management plan outline

This preliminary outline was developed by the Project Management Team in consultation with the Advisory Committee. It may change as the Technical Workgroups draft the individual chapters.

**Chapter 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations**

**Chapter 2 Introduction**

**Chapter 3 Overview of Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River**

**Chapter 4 Sources and Causes of Environmental Degradation**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, point source discharges, nonpoint source pollution, contaminated groundwater, contaminated sediments, tributary inputs, spills, and airborne deposition.*

**Chapter 5 A Vision for Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River**

Vision, Principles, and Goals and Objectives

**Chapter 6 Habitat and Biodiversity**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, wetlands and habitat, fisheries, critical habitats, habitat modifications and impacts, threatened and endangered species, nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species, and aquatic plant management.*

**Chapter 7 Human Health: Drinking Water, Fish Consumption and Beach Closures**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, beach closures, drinking water, bioterrorism/security, and fish consumption advisories.*

**Chapter 8 Land Use and Coastal Management**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, land use trends, land use impacts, lake levels and hydrology, and dredging and sediment management.*

**Chapter 9 Recreational Boating and Commercial Navigation**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, dredging, marine sanitation, personal watercraft, ballast water discharges, winter navigation, and cargo sweeping.*

**Chapter 10 Monitoring and Data Management**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, overview of monitoring purposes, existing monitoring programs, monitoring gaps, regional monitoring strategy, and funding.*

**Chapter 11 Economic Benefits and Impacts**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, regional and national economic benefits, economic impacts from pollution, and return on investments in protection and restoration measures.*

**Chapter 12 Achieving Our Vision**

*Topics to be addressed include, among others, existing management structures, administrative/management needs and management plan implementation.*

## How the plan is being developed

The Corps of Engineers and the Great Lakes Commission are collaborating with a wide range of U.S., Canadian and tribal/First Nation agencies in developing the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River management plan. The project is being administered through a binational structure featuring a Project Management Team, Advisory Committee and Technical Workgroups.

- **The Project Management Team** includes representatives from U.S., Canadian and tribal/First Nation agencies with planning and management responsibilities for Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River and their watersheds. It provides overall leadership and direction in developing the management plan and is the primary mechanism for coordinating public agency participation in the effort.
- **The Management Plan Advisory Committee** includes a larger group of local agencies and nongovernmental stakeholders with an interest in Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River. The committee will provide input on the purpose and scope of the management plan, review and comment on the draft management plan, and help plan a “State of the Lake” conference.
- **Technical Workgroups** are the primary mechanism for drafting the management plan. The workgroups are composed primarily of agency staff with technical knowledge related to specific sections of the plan. Workgroups have been formed for each of the major, topical chapters of the management plan.

The technical workgroups began meeting in March 2002. The final draft plan will be released for public review in September in conjunction with a “State of the Lake” conference.

## What the plan will look like

Last fall the Project Management Team and Advisory Committee convened their kick-off meetings and grappled with the question of what the management plan should “look like” and how it can best advance management efforts for Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River. Despite the many players involved, a consensus quickly emerged that the management plan should

- T** be a concise, action-oriented document that synthesizes existing studies, plans and recommendations into a cohesive framework;
- T** build upon and elevate initiatives already underway or planned without duplicating existing efforts;
- T** adopt an ecosystem approach that addresses the full suite of issues affecting Lake St. Clair, the St. Clair River, and their surrounding watershed;
- T** provide a vision for the binational Lake St. Clair community and guidelines and recommendations to achieve that vision; and
- T** elevate the profile of the lake and river within the broader Great Lakes system.

The preliminary outline for the management plan calls for a review of the sources and causes of environmental degradation to Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River followed by a series of topical chapters.

Each chapter will include an overview of the current status and trends for the chapter topic; goals and objectives; brief synopses of important issues; key findings; and detailed recommendations with associated resource needs and responsible parties. A vision statement and principles will provide a guiding framework for the document.

## Management plan focus area

The Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River management plan is taking an ecosystem approach that considers the full range of issues affecting the lake and river. The plan will assess impacts resulting from conditions in the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River watershed, as illustrated in the map. The plan’s primary focus, however, will be on the lake and river and their immediate coastal areas. The management plan will address the tributary watersheds where feasible, while recognizing that they are, or will be, the subject of more detailed watershed management plans.



## Management plan web site

[www.glc.org/stclair/](http://www.glc.org/stclair/)

Visit our web site for additional background on the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River management plan. The site includes a fact sheet; map of the management plan focus area; membership lists for the Project Management Team, Advisory Committee and Technical Workgroups; meeting summaries; the preliminary table of contents; a PowerPoint presentation; newspaper articles; and a direct link for submitting recommendations to the management plan.

## Management Plan Schedule

**March - May, 2002:**

**May - August:**

**September:**

**Fall:**

**February 2003:**

**Technical Workgroups meet**

**Draft management plan developed**

**Draft management plan available  
for public review**

**State of Lake St. Clair Conference**

**Final management plan**

...*Bonior, continued from p. 1*

cousin of the five big lakes. Lake St. Clair can no longer be our secret. It needs national and international attention. For too long, and by too many — our lake has been neglected.

Since the events of 1994, we've seen some great progress — and a great community spirit to roll up our sleeves and protect this great resource. But for all this good work, we still have more to do. We need to bring it all together in a coordinated and comprehensive way. We need federal and international support. We need a doable, achievable and manageable plan of action — not just another study. And that's what the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River Management Plan is all about.

In 1999, I passed legislation for the Army Corps of Engineers to become the lead federal agency in charge of putting a plan of action together. Now it's time to get to work. It won't be quick and it won't be easy, but we can do it even in tough times.

As we move ahead with the plan, we should never forget that our action didn't come from some far-off planner in Washington or Ottawa. Our action didn't just spring from the pages of the federal law that gave this project life. It began right here — with community activism, concern and compassion.

Even though our progress involves just about every organization imaginable, we know that our success lies with the people of Michigan and Ontario. I know that by coordinating our efforts, we can ensure that our drinking water is safe, that our water is not a health risk and that this treasure will be left for our children to enjoy.

I pledge to continue to work with the members of the management team and advisory committee to get the job done.

*(Excerpted from remarks to the Project Management Team and Advisory Committee, Nov. 19, 2001.)*

## Related initiatives

### *Lake St. Clair Management Initiative*

Responding to comments at the 1999 Lake St. Clair conference, the Great Lakes Commission is developing recommendations for a binational management forum for Lake St. Clair. A briefing paper and preliminary recommendations will be presented to the Project Management Team and Advisory Committee, and then presented to U.S. EPA, which is supporting the project. Contact Matt Doss, [mdoss@glc.org](mailto:mdoss@glc.org), 734-665-9135.

### *Lake St. Clair Monitoring Inventory and Strategic Plan*

With support from the Army Corps of Engineers, the Great Lakes Commission will develop an inventory of water quality monitoring programs in the Lake St. Clair watershed and a strategic plan to integrate and fill gaps in the overall monitoring regime. Contact Ric Lawson, [rlawson@glc.org](mailto:rlawson@glc.org), 734-665-9135.

### *Anchor Bay Watershed Plan*

A watershed management plan is being developed for the Anchor Bay portion of Lake St. Clair. The Anchor Bay watershed includes parts of Macomb and St. Clair counties and numerous agencies from the counties, local municipalities and SEMCOG are involved in the planning process. The plan is a required component of General Stormwater Permit for the two counties. The plan is scheduled for completion in October 2002. Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. (ECT) has been hired to assist in developing the watershed plan. Contact Roy Schrameck, ECT, 313-963-6600, [rschrameck@ectinc.com](mailto:rschrameck@ectinc.com).



## Make a Recommendation!

Do you have a recommendation for the management plan? If so, let us know and we'll consider it as we develop the plan. You can send comments via email to [mdoss@glc.org](mailto:mdoss@glc.org) or visit the management plan web site at [www.glc.org/stclair/](http://www.glc.org/stclair/) and click on "Make a Recommendation."

## The management plan in the news

Internet links to these articles are provided on the management plan web site at [www.glc.org/stclair/](http://www.glc.org/stclair/).

***Lake St. Clair cleanup proposal in works***, Detroit Free Press, Feb. 26, 2002.

***"Sixth Great Lake" finally gets its due*** Great Lakes Commission, Jan. 16, 2002.

***State, federal, Canadian officials say "enough studies," they're ready to rescue Lake St. Clair***, The Macomb Daily, Nov. 20, 2001.

***Cleanup plan eyed for lake***, The Windsor Star, Nov. 5, 2001.

Management plan staff have also participated in interviews on several radio stations in the Detroit-Windsor area.

## Contacts

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