

DCEC Newsletter



published by
the door county environmental council, inc.
p.o. box 114 fish creek, wi 54212

phone 920-743-6003
fax 920-743-6727
email dcec@itol.com www.dcec.us

Fall
2004

**Environmental News
for Door County**

*See page six for
membership information.
Together, we are a strong
voice for the environment
in Door County.*

Dean Hoegger

Environmental Citizen of the Year

As an annual tribute and recognition of County residents who have shown outstanding concern for and devotion to preserving the unique ecological natural features of our area, the Council has again presented this reward for achievement. This year, the committee named Dean Hoegger, Southern Door resident and fifth grade teacher in Sturgeon Bay's Sawyer School, as the honored recipient. In presenting the award, Eileen Andera, board member and committee chair, enumerated the many contributions of Mr. Hoegger to the enrichment of the student experiences in Sawyer school. Dean Hoegger, who holds a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from UW-Milwaukee with an emphasis on Environmental Education, has a long list of accomplishments at the school.

He helped fifth grade students plan, plant, and maintain a butterfly garden, and construction and maintenance of Sawyer School Nature Trail. He promoted and used Crossroads at Big Creek Learning Center with his students, and encouraged students to express their opinions on environmental issues by entering essay contests and writing "letters to the editor". Dean also guided elementary and middle school students with two summer science field research projects which brought public attention to endangered species in the County. He wrote a script for an educational video on the hazards of burn barrels, and served as a trainer for Einstein Project of Green Bay, which promotes hands on, enquiry based, science learning for elementary and middle school students.



Dean Hoegger, left, accepts award from DCEC board member Eileen Andera

In addition, Mr. Hoegger has conducted rainforest studies in Honduras and Puerto Rico, with the help of groups such as DCEC. There he did curriculum development and instruction for local fourth and fifth graders, including citizen action instruction, which resulted in the adoption and preservation of five acres of Amazon rainforest.

As a humanitarian, he founded the *Northeast Wisconsin Friends of Adopt-a Minefield*, which has brought greater awareness of the plight of millions of civilians in over 70 countries facing the dangers and economic hardships caused by postwar landmines. The group has raised over \$10,000 for minefield clearance. Some of the organizing activities were used as demonstrations for Sunrise fifth grade students who conducted their own action project.

We are proud to recognize outstanding citizens each year with this award, and it is especially gratifying to give this award to an outstanding educator and humanitarian. Congratulations to Dean Hoegger as our Environmental Citizen of the Year 2004.



DCEC Incorporated in 1971 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.



“What’s That Green Stuff in Our Water?”

Vicky Harris of UW Sea Grant, answering the question that’s on our minds.

As made evident by the large crowd at our annual DCEC Summer Program on August 25, the *green stuff* is attracting a lot of attention and making many homeowners very upset over the nuisance it is causing. There are many opinions by the agency people about the cause of the increased algae growth in the last several years. **Vicky Harris**, Water Quality and Habitat Restoration Specialist for the Sea Grant Institute at the University of Wisconsin/Green Bay came to Bailey’s Harbor for our summer program with authoritative information on the issue of water nutrients and relation to algae growth.

Vicky has been working in water resource research and planning and management for 25 years, and prior to that for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as a water resource planner and policy analyst, also with years as a biologist for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In beginning her presentation, Ms. Harris indicated that algae are not a new issue in the Lake and Bay. She related her experiences at relatives’ home near Jacksonport in the 1950’s where she said algae was a problem then on that lakeshore property.

Algae were less obvious during the decades that followed *until the early 90’s when the algae became very obtrusive with an annual increase in the amount and widespread impact. During summer the algae is visible now from NASA satellite on the Lake and Bay and that is an indication of the extent of the problems it is causing.*

The cause of the algae becoming more disastrous in our waters is the excessive amounts of nutrients in the water, causing the rapid growth of these tiny plants.

The direct impact on people and our environment affects:

- Enjoyment of water resources.
- Tourism activities
- Bad tasting water and odor from decaying algae

- Declining property values, shore property for sale
- Growth of bacteria in decaying algae - e.coli
- Beach closings - municipal closings.

Algae grows best in early summer and fall when the temperature is moderate, while growth slows down during the hot summer days. With the cool summer we have this year, conditions have been ideal for algae growth all season. While algae dies off in the fall, it can be dried (and baked with heat) and it will reconstitute and grow again in the spring with the advent of warmer weather and water.

Harris recommended harvesting the algae by whatever means possible and storing or composting the residue as far from the shore as possible to prevent re-introduction. She also stressed that the only way to really control algae is to control the amount of nutrients available for its growth. Algae needs substrate to attach itself to, it needs proper water temperature, it needs light to grow, and it needs the nutrients; phosphorus and nitrates.

The three types of algae causing problems in and near our waters can be identified as:

cladophora - most common - a filamentous, attached algae. It loves rocky or wooden surfaces and grows in strands. It produces two crops each year, first crop breaks loose and washes up on beaches. It grows on any hard surface; rocks, pilings, zebra mussel shells and thrives in 50 - 77 degree temperature range. It grows profusely on high calcium dolomite bottom.

Free floating plankton - common surface algae on placid waters, ponds, etc.

Blue Algae - It needs high phosphorus levels as Blue Algae creates nitrogen (nitrogen fixing similar to alfalfa) and will deplete the phosphorus levels causing an algae bloom. Blue Algae can produce toxins and can be fatal if ingested in large amounts.

What do we know about phosphorus in the Lake and Bay?

Concentrations are highest following spring run off and the levels are highest along near shore because spring runoff waters hug the shore moving from south to north, thus creating a zone of high phosphorus concentration. Summer prevailing winds and gradual mixing and warming of water moves the nutrients out into the main body of water.

All five of the Great Lakes are similar and nearly stable

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

except Lake Ontario where the levels of phosphorus are decreasing. Green Bay levels have been rising steadily since 1998 with a high-level spike in 1993. Zebra Mussels have been contributors to the increase in phosphorus load since 1988 as they cause clearing of the water allowing deeper light penetration which is ideal for algae bottom growth.

Harris indicated from her own research that 20 % of the phosphorus load entering Green Bay and the Lake is coming from the Fox River. She also indicated that 80% of the contributors for that Fox River amount were from non-point sources; soil erosion, livestock waste, pets, and lawn and farm fertilizer.

The remaining 20% is coming from point sources, (sources that are known) such as *municipal treatment plants and industry*. Failed septic systems which were getting much attention have been addressed in most situations, but the increase in phosphorus load continues.

What can you do to help control the phosphorus and nitrate load?

Vicky stressed we all need to help control local sources of phosphorus by:

- *Use non-phosphate fertilizer, farms, lawns and golf courses. Most soil is naturally high in Phosphorus.
- *Use downspouts on your roof drain exits and contain water in rain barrel or a rain garden to utilize the nutrients on site.
- *Wash your car at a facility designed to properly handle car wash wastewater.
- *Compost lawn waste and other material that has phosphorus content.
- *Join an organization like DCEC that can provide you with up-to-date information.!

*In our next issue we will continue with more information from Vicky Harris's presentation addressing the water level issues and the relation to mild winters and global warming. Watch for it! ****

Fish Advisories Now Include All of Wisconsin Rivers

On August 25th, the Environmental Protection Agency announced that 222 new advisories had been issued by states in 2003, bringing the total number of lakes and rivers with mercury warnings to 3,094 in 48 states. As individual states test more lakes and rivers for mercury contamination for the first time, the total number of polluted U.S. water bodies rises. Included in this advisory is the addition of ALL of Wisconsin's rivers.

Now, all of Wisconsin's lakes and rivers are under a fish advisory for mercury contamination.

"The contamination of our lakes and rivers has now reached epidemic proportions. However the answer is certainly not to fish less, but to reduce mercury from the source - coal-burning power plants" said Liz Wessel, Executive Director for Clean Wisconsin. "Mercury contamination of our fish has become so widespread that the state Health Department now warns anglers and their families to

limit the fish they eat from all of Wisconsin's lakes and rivers. *This level of contamination only underscores why Wisconsin has to take the lead in cleaning up mercury pollution from power plants and why Wisconsin cannot afford a weak federal rule.*"

On July 13, 2004 Wisconsin's mercury rule went into effect. While the rule could be stronger, it represents real progress. The rule requires a 75% reduction from power plant pollution by 2015, with an interim reduction of 40% by 2010. The reduction targets are designed to drive the installation of cutting-edge mercury control technology on the state's large power plants.

The rule sets the bar for other states; other states with similar power plants should be meeting or exceeding the mercury reductions by Wisconsin.

However, if EPA enacts a weaker regulation than Wisconsin's as currently proposed, the federal regulation would take precedent

over Wisconsin's new limits.

There are many sources of mercury to the environment. Natural sources include volcanoes, natural mercury deposits, and volatilization from the ocean.

The primary human-related sources include coal combustion, chlorine alkali processing, waste incineration, metal processing and accidental spillage.

Best estimates to date suggest that human activities have about doubled or tripled the amount of mercury in the atmosphere, and the atmospheric burden is increasing by about 1.5 percent per year.

Mercury is especially dangerous because of its known effects on the central nervous system and the long-term effects on brain cell development. This is an extremely dangerous element that is now obviously on the increase in the atmosphere all over the world. ***

“Our Great Lakes Water Is Not For Sale”



Cheryl Mendoza, Project Manager for the Lake Michigan Federation

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD IS IN PROGRESS!

This is our absolutely best chance to insure strong protections for Great Lakes waters. We need to prevent weakening of the provisions, and strengthen some of them. Please read the entire article and newsletter insert carefully. If at all possible, ATTEND the Hearing:

A formal hearing will be held for northeast Wisconsin on Thursday, September 30th at the ASHWAUBENON Village Council Chambers located at 2155 Holmgren Way, directly east of Oneida Street on Green Bay's west side. The DNR sponsored hearing will begin with presentations from 4 to 6 pm, followed by public comments from 6 pm on. This is very important! If you cannot attend the hearing, please be sure to send your comments on the draft before the October 18th deadline.

The large audience at the annual DCEC Summer Program on August 25, reacted with much concern while hearing the latest update on the progress of the Charter Annex 2001 Plan for controlling withdrawals from our Great Lakes. We were fortunate to have Cheryl Mendoza, Project Manager for the Lake Michigan Federation from Grand Haven, Michigan, give us the latest update on the progress of the water diversion control plan. Cheryl was the featured presenter at our 2003 program and she returned as promised to give us an update on the progress of the Governors and Premiers cooperative effort to control diversions from the Lakes.

The urgency for control of diversions was brought to everyone's attention in 1998, when the NOVA Group of investors sought to load ocean tankers with 156,000,000 gallons of Lake Water for export to Asia. The prior regulations from 1909 that were implemented to supervise navigation in the international waters, hinted at some controls over withdrawals but had no definitive regulations in place to control the diversions. In 1995, the governors and premiers of the surrounding lake states and provinces under the provisions of the *International Joint Commission* implemented the **Great Lakes Charter** that established some basic controls over waters within their jurisdiction. After the challenge of the Asian export crisis, the governors and premiers drafted a preliminary revision of the Charter creating the Great Lakes Charter Annex.

The new draft has provisions to: evaluate withdrawal proposals, have users restore the Great Lakes basin with projects, promote basin-wide water conservation and management, establish standards to evaluate decisions made on water issues, and involve the public in development of the new Charter. The states will be completing regulations individually in addition to those proposed in the draft for the entire Lakes area. There are

four basic standards required by the Great Lakes Charter Annex presently to manage our Lakes water resources:

1. Prevent water loss by return-to-source and water conservation practices.
2. Must be no significant adverse impact on the entire system.
3. Improvements must be made to the water resource - an investment by the user to repair and enhance the system.
4. Users must comply with all applicable laws presently in force internationally.

The new Great Lakes Charter Annex 2001 draft is now available for examination and comments, during the **Public Comment Period**. You can go online to www.speakongreatlakes.org for a complete summary of the draft annex. If you would like a complete copy of the draft Annex 2001 plan, call the Lake Michigan Federation at 616-850-0745 and one will be mailed to you. We strongly urge that you review this information and send comments before October 18th.

See sample letter on the next page; you may photocopy it, or write a letter in your own words. Be sure to include your address, for your comment to be considered!

Send by regular mail to the address on the letter, or to send a comment by email, go to the website www.cglg.org

Do this! Do it right away, and be sure to meet the deadline of October 18th.

David Naftzger
Council of Great Lakes Governors
35 E Whacker Dr. #1850
Chicago, IL. 60601

TO: Council of Great Lakes Governors

RE: Great Lakes Basin Water Resources Compact draft.

We, as residents and citizens of the Great Lakes Basin recognize the current demands and the possible future requests for freshwater diversions from our unique water resource which is going to become more desirable as shortages become evident. The provisions of the present Charter Annex 2001 which are not strong enough to prevent future abuses and uncontrolled water withdrawals need to be made much more stringent and enforceable. We rely on the State Governors and Premiers to provide the plan and controls to ensure that future proposals for water diversion are not detrimental to our basin, the control measures must originate within the basin to be effective and enforceable.

After review of the draft compact, the following suggestions are made in the interest of providing best protection for our water resource:

1. The draft compact should not be weakened in any fashion. It has been seen in the past where other agreements have been modified to react to political pressure and other forces, this must not be allowed to become a part of deliberations for the final Compact. The preservation of the water resource for untold generations is the outcome of this Compact.
2. Water withdrawal threshold periods should be averaged at 30 days or less, to prevent the user from escaping the actual time limitation by operating within a longer time period and thusly not being controlled.
3. We feel that the actual return flow should be from the source of the withdrawal and not in any way allowed from other sources, and also that the percentage of water returned to withdrawal site should be very high to prevent long range damage to our ecosystem by depletion.
4. Water conservation measures must be in place by users before any consideration is given to a proposed water user, and these plans must be genuine and enforceable. Too often plans such as these are left to discretionary volunteer action with no real means of enforcement for violator prosecution.
5. The improvement standards also should apply to all withdrawals, not just the limited number as proposed in the draft. This is a provision of the present Charter and should be expanded rather than diminished. The States and Provinces are going to be in control of the permitted water diversions and the power to enforce those permit restrictions need to be very well defined giving the States and Provinces the necessary enforcement rights and obligations.

Thank you for the good work that has been done on the draft and please ensure those future generations of American and Canadian people living within this fresh water basin have the tools to maintain these water resources far into the future.

Sincerely,

DO YOU LOVE DOOR COUNTY???

Then help us protect it... please.

I support the Door County Environmental Council, working to preserve our heritage of natural resources .
Please enlist me as one of the following: (check enclosed)

<i>Individual Member</i>	\$15	<i>Family Membership</i>	\$25
<i>Student Member</i>	\$10	<i>Sustaining Member</i>	\$35
<i>Guarantor</i>	\$50	<i>Donor</i>	from \$100

Renewal? _____ New Member? _____ Door County Voter? YES _____ NO _____

Name _____
Summer Mailing Address _____

Winter Mailing Address _____

E-mail Address and/or Fax number _____

Please name your Door County municipality (town, village or city) _____

All donations are tax deductible to the extent the law provides.

DCEC is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization.

We supply receipts that meet IRS requirements for your gift of \$250 or more.

Thank you for being part of DCEC!

mail to: Door County Environmental Council, Inc. P.O. Box 114 Fish Creek WI 54212

for more information, call DCEC at 743-6003 email dcec@itol.com

Please contact DCEC if you are interested in volunteering for the Board or special projects.

Visit DCEC on the Internet!
www.dcec.us or
doorcountycompass.com/dcec/

Read the DCEC Column in the Door Peninsula Voice (pick it up free at many locations).

Governor James Doyle Room 115 E, State Capitol Madison, WI 53702	Representative Gary Bies PO Box 8952 Madison, WI 53708	US Senate Washington DC 20510 WI Representative Mark Green US House of Representatives Washington DC 20515
Senator Alan Lasee PO Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707	WI Senators Russ Feingold and Herbert Kohls: <i>write them at</i>	

DCEC People

TREASURER
Bernice Shumway
Sister Bay

Pat Harris
Fish Creek

Honorary Directors

STAFF

PRESIDENT
Carol Sills
Liberty Grove

Tony Haswell
Tucson AZ

Margaret Cowles
Flora Langlois

Executive Director
Jerry Viste
Sturgeon Bay

1st VICE-PRESIDENT
Jon (Fritz) Renner
Gibraltar

SECRETARIES
Carol Farwell
Ephraim

James Ingwersen
Sister Bay

John Wilson

Membership
Coordinator
Ray Kostiuk
Fish Creek

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT
Phyllis Ingwersen
Sister Bay

Eileen Andera
Sturgeon Bay

Sarah Stuart
Juddville

Newsletter Editor*

DIRECTORS
Donna Brown
Baileys Harbor

Karen Wilson*
Juddville

Libby Zimmerman
Madison

NEWS RELEASE: Bush Administration Admits Failure to Protecting Great Lakes Wildlife, Agrees to Protect Great Lakes Habitat for Hine's Emerald Dragonfly

**DOOR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL – Fish Creek WI
NORTHWOODS WILDERNESS RECOVERY – Marquette MI
HABITAT EDUCATION CENTER – Madison WI
MICHIGAN NATURE ASSOCIATION – Williamston MI**

WASHINGTON DC – National and regional environmental groups won an important agreement ordering the Bush administration to protect critical habitat for the Hine's emerald dragonfly, a wetlands-dependent endangered species found in small areas of Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Missouri.

Critical habitat designation is required under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and it is extremely important for the Hine's emerald dragonfly because habitat loss is the primary threat to the species. Critical habitat designation provides protection against 'adverse modification' of habitat, and map-based guidelines for land owners and managers to allow the dragonfly to survive and recover. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had failed to protect any habitat for any species as required by law for nearly a quarter century, and the agreement marks a significant shift in the Region's compliance with critical environmental protections.

The Great Lakes Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to protect habitat for imperiled animals and plants within the region for nearly 25 years. Of the 68 imperiled animals and plants in the region, only four have critical habitat protected. Of those four, two were forced by citizen lawsuits or petition; the other two occurred in the late 1970s. The region has not designated critical habitat on its own initiative, as the law requires, since the late 70s. Today's lawsuit portends to reverse this trend.

"U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service records show that species with critical habitat are less likely to decline and twice as likely to be recovering as those without." said Brent Plater, a Michigan-native and attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity. "This agreement will not only insure the Hine's recovers, but also shift the Fish and Wildlife Service into high gear to protect our region's precious biological heritage."

The agreement was made in part due to the recognition that the administration's political excuses for not implementing the ESA are false. Indeed, in a response to a Freedom of Information Act request, the Bush Administration stated that it has absolutely no documents to support its primary claims that there are no benefits to listed species. With no support for these statements, the Service agreed to protect the habitat of this dragonfly and reverse its non-compliance with the law.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE HINE'S EMERALD DRAGONFLY

The Hine's emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana*) was listed as an endangered species in 1995. It has brilliant green eyes, and is distinguished from all other species of *Somatochlora* by its dark metallic green thorax with two distinct creamy-yellow lateral lines. The dragonfly is endangered by urban sprawl, agricultural development, toxic pollution, logging, water diversions, off-road vehicles, vacation home development and road & pipeline construction.

The dragonfly's habitats have big economic benefits for the region, and the destruction of these habitats are drastically affecting human quality of life. The dragonfly is a wetland dependant species, and wetlands provide human benefits in terms of waterfowl production, water quality for drinking water and the Great Lakes themselves, and recreational opportunities. The Hine's emerald dragonfly is still found in Mackinac, Presque Isle and Alpena Counties, Michigan; Door, Keweenaw and Ozaukee Counties, Wisconsin; Cook, DuPage and Will Counties, Illinois; and Iron and Reynolds Counties, Missouri. It is suspected that it has already been lost in Ohio, Indiana and Alabama.

FWS has fallen behind in listings and critical habitat designations and the Bush administration has claimed that they do not have the funding to designate critical habitat for endangered species, and have attempted to use that as an excuse to avoid court-ordered designations. In fact, FWS stated in 2003 that they would need \$153M to address the backlog, but the Bush Administration instead requested only \$12.3M, despite the fact that Congress expressed that they were willing to provide more funding.

More info on critical habitat: <http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/swcbd/Programs/policy/ch/sub1.html>



door county environmental
council, inc.
p. o. box 114
fish creek, wi 54212

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fish Creek WI 54212
Permit No. 15

***Some answers about where
the green stuff is coming
from*** *page two*

***Our Great Lakes Water is
"Not For Sale"*** *page four*

"Cost of Community Services" Study

What kinds of land use make your property taxes higher? Will new development really lower your taxes?

We long have needed an in-depth cost comparison of various types of land uses within Door County, and now DCEC and the Door County Land Trust (DCLT) are doing something about it. The need for such a study has become more obvious in recent years with the profusion of development plans that are claimed by their supporters to benefit the community by increasing the tax base for that community. While this may seem logical, the reality of the actual costs generated by some land uses in many instances does not justify the argument that "tax base increase will lower my own real property taxes".

DCEC and DCLT have commissioned a study in which actual cost comparisons are made between various land uses, and those costs are compared with the revenue generated by those uses. The costs of all land-use services are included: school costs, both public and tech schools; fire protection; extra road maintenance and construction; county government and services; town government and services; and extra police protection.

In other areas of Wisconsin where these studies have been conducted, the outcome has shown that agriculture and light industry are the only land uses that generate more revenue than cost. We expect our Door County study to be completed late in the fall, with the information released at that time by DCEC and the Door County Land Trust. Watch for it!