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Help us to speak for your Rivers...
For your Rivers have no voice

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Understanding the Depth of Northeast Indiana Water Related Issues

The Maumee River is the largest and longest contributing stream to the Great Lakes in the U.S. The headwaters lie right here in Fort Wayne, Indiana, directly downstream from 2 other rivers on the 303 (d) list for impaired waters. Up to 80% of a streams water quality is inherited at the headwaters! The Maumee flows into Lake Erie through the Maumee Bay, where dredging is costing millions annually and algae blooms are creating dead-zones.

Since 2005, Save Maumee has been dedicated to raising awareness and facilitating ecosystem restoration projects to improve YOUR waterways. To date, our volunteers have removed over 7.5 tons of garbage, secured over 10,000sq ft of erosion control mats, planted over 700lbs of native DNR approved riparian seed, installed over 750 trees, planted fruits, vegetables and wildflowers for diversity.

We have done so with our generous volunteers and our good word alone. We set the example of effective ways to help with the No. 1 pollutant in our watershed ~ sedimentation/erosion ~ and rallied our local citizens, business and government to action!

*Comprehensive restoration activities supported by wetlands such as fishing, hunting, and wildlife-watching generate over 50 billion dollars of economic activity annually and generate hundreds of thousands of jobs. (Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy Report)

Indiana Water Quality

*Indiana has the highest amount of toxic discharges to bodies of water among all states – more than 11 percent of the nations total (EPA, 2007), Indiana's toxic releases to water even decreased for the second year in a row, but still leads all states in discharging pollutants and toxic chemicals into waterways. (EPA & IDEM, '07)

*800 Indiana waterways are swimmable (IDEM extrapolation from Impaired Waters List). 2,882 waterways are classified as 'impaired' and fail to comply with water quality standards for Mercury& PCB's from industrial pollution, E. coli bacteria from animal and human waste, nutrients and impaired biotic communities. (IDEM-Draft 2010 303 (d) List of Impairments)

*"Protecting our natural resources is crucial to economic growth...but the practice of issuing water pollution permits that exacerbate these impairments is contrary to the Clean Water Act – and is a threat to public health and future economic development." (Dr. Rae Schnapp, HEC, Oct. 2009)

*Ohio decided [2009] to discard data from the Maumee River, stating the information was more than 10 years old and not reliable; stating the river will be resurveyed. [which is directly downstream from Fort Wayne/NE Indiana] (*Columbus Dispatch*, 12/24/09)

*Public records on waste missing from IDEM database – "I don't know what happened to those files" (Larry Davis, ArcelorMittal Worker & Save the Dunes Council Member, 11/16/09)

Needed Action:

Save Maumee's official stance remains to uphold the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, through immediate federal funding of 475 million through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (this funding was signed into law by President Obama on Oct. 30, 2009) to improve the largest fresh water source in the World ~The Great Lakes ~ with funding to spread across 8 States within the basin. Enforcement of current laws to improve water quality standards, protecting public health and aquatic life through regulation enforcement and conservation is necessary. Part of our area's challenge is that the Upper-Maumee Watershed crosses the political boundaries of 2 states (IN & OH), 4 counties, and several cities and is considered a "low priority stream".

Remember: we all live downstream.

Northeast Indiana Specific Problems:

Save Maumee Grassroots Organization believes that protection of our rivers and its tributaries is crucial to economic growth, aesthetic & recreational value and the health of 34 million people within the Great Lakes Basin.

*"25 Northeast Indiana schools violated the Safe Drinking Water Act, over a 15 year period, according to data provided by the US EPA. Most of the schools were found to have coliform in their water—bacteria within the E. coli family...and inappropriate levels of lead and copper, arsenic or nitrate." (*Journal Gazette*, 10/04/09)

*In 2002 there were 249 active permits to discharge legally into open water in St. Joe/Maumee watersheds, called NPDES Permits. Seven out of the 249 permits were for major discharges (over 1 million gallons/day). Fort Wayne is home to 38 of the 249 NPDES Permits listed as "significant industrial contributors." (St. Joe/Maumee Watershed Restoration Strategy 2002, pg. 19) Currently, IndianaMap GIS & City/County GIS websites do not appear to have accurate accounts of legal permitted discharges, called NPDES, available to the public.

*"A concrete/asphalt dump and grinding 'recycling' facility has the approval of Fort Wayne, Board of Zoning Appeals to store discarded asphalt and concrete on a previous floodplain," with the facility eventually to grind and release carcinogens into the air approximately 75 ft. from the Maumee River. (*News Sentinel* 1/19/08)

Toxic Discharges to Waterways Ranked IN:

#1	for ALL TOXIC RELEASES	27,298,889 lbs
#6	for REPRODUCTIVE TOXICS	13,567 lbs
#8	for DEVELOPMENTAL TOXICS	18,299 lbs
#16	for CANCER-CAUSING CHEMICALS	29,235 lbs

*16th highest in the U.S. for the number of people exposed to tap water with contaminants above acceptable limits, out of 42 states studied (National Tap Water Quality Database, 2005)

Indiana is 1 of 12 other states that does not count birth defects. (CDC, 2009)

Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals

*Only 91 contaminants are regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act, yet more than 60,000 chemicals are used within the United States. (EPA Estimates, from *NY Times* 12/17/09)

*287 pharmaceuticals were analyzed for possible inclusion on draft list for regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act, ONLY nitroglycerin was on the list. (AP Investigation 3/9/08)

*But not one chemical has been added to the list of those regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act since 2000. Other recent studies have found that even some chemicals regulated by that law pose risks at much smaller concentrations than previously known. However, many of the act's standards for those chemicals have not been updated since the 1980s, and some remain essentially unchanged since the law was passed in 1974. (NY Times-Toxic Water Series '09)

*Exposure to atrazine [the 2nd cheapest corn herbicide] increased the odds of 9 of the 11 birth defect categories. High levels of atrazine and other pesticides in the urine of men were associated with abnormal sperm. The EPA announced last month that it is going to reconsider whether atrazine is safe enough to be used on this country's crop fields. (Twin Cities Daily Planet Newspaper 12/3/09)

*A vast array of pharmaceuticals have been found in drinking water supplies of at least 41 million Americans and is showing alarming effects on human cells and wildlife – situation is undoubtedly worse than suggested. (AP Investigation, 3/9/08)

*The federal government does not require any testing and hasn't set safety limits for drugs in water – some providers screen only for 1-2 pharmaceuticals but may be others present. Adding chlorine makes some pharmaceuticals more toxic (AP Investigation 3/10/08, ABC)

~INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES DUMPED A TOTAL OF 232 MILLION POUNDS OF TOXIC CHEMICALS INTO AMERICAN WATERWAYS (TRI Federal Government Data 2007)

Save Maumee's Ideas for Improvements:

Develop a Watershed Management Plan through support of the Upper Maumee River Watershed Management Group; this will aid in the development and implementation of BMP's!

Request should be fulfilled for \$800,000 from Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.

Stronger enforcement of NPDES-MS4 & CSO supervision and fines. Avoiding the oversight of 'legal' straight pipe discharges into waterways is causing an increase of chemicals & pharmaceuticals in streams.

Anti-degradation laws from each state need to be correlated and consistent with other states and nations sharing the same receiving waters.

Hold States to Federal standards of the Clean Water Act.

Reforestation of floodplain, wetlands, shoreline habitat; preservation, planting grass in farm field buffer strips should be tried before construction projects are launched. Sustainable projects will increase green-space and alleviate flooding and sediment while creating "green-jobs" for our area.

Create an alternative designation for wetlands to be considered a vital "protected area" to alleviate pollution problems. Wetland areas (nature's kidneys) are considered "other" in Northeast Indiana zoning.

Floodplains should remain free and clear of structures or added fill-dirt. Variances continue to be issued in Northeast Indiana on the rivers right-of-way. Millions have been spent in flooding downstream, caused from built-upon/filled floodplain upstream.

WIND, SOLAR, GEOTHERMAL and Energy Efficiency: Help Water in Indiana—RENEWABLES DO NOT INCLUDE COAL OR NUCLEAR

Indiana burns coal to generate 96 percent of its energy. – Duke Energy President 10/8/09

• **Wastewater guidelines for coal-fired power plants were last revised in 1982. (Great Lakes Echo, Dec. '09)**

We need to genuinely clean up pollution rather than just shift it from the air to water. U.S. citizens depend on the services that healthy streams and rivers provide at an extremely fundamental level. Laws should strengthen the language of the Clean Air Act.

• Hatfield's Ferry in Pennsylvania [considered the dirtiest coal-fired power plant in USA] has violated the Clean Water Act 33 times since 2006; paid less than \$26,000 in fines, but earned \$1.1 billion in the same time period. Indiana power plants have dumped other chemicals at dangerous concentrations, but few have ever been sanctioned for those emissions, nor were their discharge permits altered to prevent future pollution. (NY Times, Oct. 13, 2009) "We discharge into our cooling lake as a way to avoid having to release into a natural water body, said Eric Myers, Duke Energy's Environmental Director (Great Lakes Echo, 12/17/09)

• Fish Contamination advisories being issued on Indiana rivers, streams, and lakes are for PCB's and mercury." (IDEM, 2010 Draft) "People living near some power plant landfills faced a cancer risk 2,000 times higher than federal health standards." (EPA, 2007) Coal ash sites contain harmful levels of arsenic, lead, mercury and other toxins, which can leech out slowly and contaminate drinking water sources or flood communities as happened in TN. The EPA so far has identified 49 coal ash impounds as "high hazard" sites, meaning that a failure at one of the facilities could lead to the loss of human life. (Earthjustice, Dec 2, '09)

• "If all states used electric energy as efficiently as the top 10 states in the nation, we could displace 62 percent of U.S. coal-fired output." (Amory Lovins-Rocky Mountain Institute)

• Particulate emissions from coal plants cost Hoosiers \$5 billion/year in health costs. Alternative energy create 4-5 times more jobs than fossil-fuel and nuclear investments. (Citizens Action Coalition, 2009 **Wind, solar, geothermal and energy efficiency are technologies that will create jobs, and benefit the health, environment, and pocketbooks of ALL Hoosiers to TRULY re-tool America for the future!**)