



GREAT LAKES
COALITION

*Michigan/Lake Michigan Chapter
For Shoreline Preservation*

P.O. Box 429

Saugatuck, Michigan 49453

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Newsletter – Summer 2015

45 INCHES AND RISING

As previously reported, in January, 2013 an all-time record low level of 576.02 feet was set on Lake Michigan-Huron. Since that time lake levels have risen and are continuing to rise. As of June 25, 2015, Lake Michigan-Huron was at 579.81 feet, or 3.79 feet higher than 2013 and 0.61 feet above the long term average for the month of June and 1.15 feet above June of last year. Many Coalition members are reporting bank undercutting and shoreline drop-offs, some up to 7 feet. Loosening of protective marram grass is occurring. A poll taken at our last Board of Directors meeting held in May, 2015 showed that of the 9 directors, 7 were experiencing beach drop-offs. Levels will continue to rise into the summer beyond original predictions due to above average rainfall in May and June. Some property owners in the Saugatuck area have already lost all of their sand beach. Has your shoreline been affected? Let us know.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Michigan/Lake Michigan Chapter of the Great Lakes Coalition will hold its Annual Membership Meeting on **Saturday, August 8, 2015** starting at 10:00 a.m. (EDT) at the Haworth Inn and Conference Center (on the campus of Hope College), in the Donnelly Room, 225 College Avenue, Holland, Michigan. Along with our regular business meeting, we will have as guest speaker Mr. Luis Saldivia, Grand Rapids District Supervisor of the Water Resources Division of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). In this time of rising water levels, Mr. Saldivia will discuss shoreline protection. Please plan to attend this important meeting. Contact: marciawineberg@yahoo.com or call 847-965-5616.

LETTER TO THE IJC

In our Winter 2014 newsletter we reported on the Coalition's letter to the International Joint Commission (IJC) thanking them for their foresight and good judgment in deciding not to recommend that barriers be installed immediately in the St. Clair River to alleviate low water levels on Georgian Bay and Lake Huron shores. However, subsequent to the issuance in 2013 of the IJC's report "Advice to Governments on the Recommendations of the International Upper Great Lakes Study," the IJC commissioners issued a statement that governments undertake further investigation of options to increase water levels in Lake Michigan-Huron. In a follow-up inquiry made this Spring by the Coalition, an IJC spokesperson reported that no response has been received from the governments (US and Canada). In the meantime, though, it looks as if Mother Nature has responded. Water levels on Lake Huron along with Lake Michigan have risen significantly.

UPDATE ON COOK NUCLEAR PLANT

Director John Ehret has been communicating with the Cook Nuclear Plant's Director of Public Relations, Bill Schalk, regarding safety issues at the plant in light of the rising water levels. The Halloween storm of October 31, 2014 caused shoreline marram grass to be loosened causing partial cooling water intake plugging at the plant. With the Spring thaw, rising water levels have caused shoreline undercutting and bank drop-offs in many areas thereby causing more marram grass to be loosened and placed in the littoral drift. At the Cook plant, additional pumps and generators were purchased in response to the Fukushima event and are not solely dependent on the intake tunnels as a suction source of cooling water. When asked, "Would the new Flex pumps work in a dune grass incident like we had last Halloween?", Mr. Schalk answered "Yes" and reported as follows:

"With both units at full power, we take in approximately 1.5 million gallons of water from Lake Michigan per minute. The dune grass incident blocked the screens that feed water to those pumps, but did not block the intake tunnels themselves, so water was still available in the waterbox that is fed by the intake tunnels.

"In an emergency situation, we only need 10,000 gallons of water per minute to cool the reactors, not the full 1.5 million gallons we need to operate at full power. And that much water would be available in the waterbox fed by the intake tunnels during a dune grass incident. The units were shut down because of the dune grass, but they were still capable of being cooled down.

"If water were not available through the intake tunnels, we also have the option to draw water directly from the lake, and not through the intake tunnels. There is suction hose that would go directly into the lake that is available as part of the emergency equipment if needed.

"In general, we understand your concerns about lake-bottom reduction and littoral drift, but do not believe there is a safety consequence to our plant. We did extensive analysis during the design of the plant, and continue to monitor lake level, water availability and seasonal and trending effects of lake level changes. We're not passing judgement on whether littoral drift is happening or is an issue caused by the St. Joseph piers, but we are completely confident that this is not a problem for us."

Director Ehret would like to thank Mr. Schalk for this clarification of the Cook Nuclear Plant emergency cooling plan.

INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY PANEL

Coalition President, Dr. Larry J. Robson, a member of the Study Panel, reported that surveys have been sent out by participating organizations to their respective memberships. As a member of the Coalition, you may have participated in this online survey and we thank you for your comments. Dr. Robson stated that the information obtained will be analyzed by college researchers at the University of Michigan's Graham Sustainability Institute's Water Center. The panel will be in force until 2016 and at that time will present its findings.

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Donnelly Room
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Holland, Michigan

Guest Speaker:

Luis Saldivia
Grand Rapids District Supervisor
Water Resource Division
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

"Shoreline Protection"

PLAN TO ATTEND THIS IMPORTANT MEETING

Please let me know if you will attend:

Call Marcia Wineberg at
847-965-5616
or e-mail at marciawineberg@yahoo.com

Time to renew your membership for 2015, or join us if not already a member:

Michigan/Lake Michigan Chapter-Great Lakes Coalition
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(269) 857-8945

We are a 501(C) (3) tax-exempt organization
Contributions are deductible to the full extent of the law

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

LAKE PROPERTY ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT:

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SUGGESTED MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION: _____ \$35 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MISSION STATEMENT

The Great Lakes Coalition (GLC) concentrates on water levels; natural sand supply to beaches, dunes, and bluffs; and coastal management. The objective is to promote environmentally sound management of the coastal zone. Natural conditions have been changed by sometimes flawed government intervention and judgment. The GLC is a respected advocate for shoreline property owners that challenges inappropriate regulations and encourages beneficial government decisions.