Update on state, federal Great Lakes legislation

By 
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Great Lakes Legislative Caucus [2]

The Great Lakes Legislative Caucus continues to track state and federal legislation of interest to Great Lakes lawmakers.

Recent state and provincial activity has included:

- Minnesota’s decision to establish an Invasive Species Research Center [3] at the University of Minnesota.
- The introduction of the Great Lakes Protection Act in Ontario [4], a measure that takes a “bottom-up” approach [5] to protection and restoration by creating new partnerships with communities, developing individual action plans to address specific threats to the lakes in different areas, and financing local projects via a Great Lakes Community Action Fund.
- A recently signed bill in Michigan [6] that changes the state’s beach grooming rules [7] and another piece of legislation sent to the governor that, according to The Holland Sentinel [8], would change how state’s decades-old law regulating sand dunes.
- A series of bills advancing in New York that would create a prescription-drug disposal program [11] in different parts of the state, require publicly owned sewage treatment plants to report discharges of untreated or partially treated sewage [12]; and establish new rules regarding hydraulic fracturing (AB 10234 [13], SB 6892 [14], SB 6893 [15] and SB 6895 [16]).

Great Lakes Legislative Caucus state legislative tracker » [17]

Future federal funding of Restoration Initiative

Federal lawmakers, meanwhile, will be deciding future funding levels for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative [18].

According to the Petoskey News [19], a bill recently passed by a House subcommittee would cut $50 million from the initiative — from $300 million (the level appropriated in fiscal year 2012) to $250 million (the level proposed for FY 2013 in the legislation). When the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative was first established, it received an appropriation of $450 million in its first year.

The Healing Our Waters Coalition also warns [20] that the bill “guts The the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, which helps communities across the nation fix sewers to prevent sewage...
overflows that contribute to beach closures." Funding would be reduced from $1.4 billion to $689 million.

**Great Lakes Legislative Caucus federal legislative tracker »** [21]

**Tags:**
- **Policy Area**: Environment [22]
- **Water** [24]

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