

Lone Tree Council
P.O. 1251, Bay City, Michigan 48706
(Fighting for environmental justice
since 1978)



February 18, 2008

Support for Open Government and Cleanup of the Saginaw Bay Watershed

Background:

Saginaw Bay watershed's 8,700 acres and 240 miles of shoreline make it Michigan's largest watershed. The resource provides 27 million gallons of water daily for 1.4 million residents, and one million people visit its state parks every year. Tens of millions of dollars are contributed from recreational fishing, and commercial fisheries contribute another \$5 million to the region annually. Viable fishing and recreational opportunities and the health of Lake Huron are critically linked to the health of the Saginaw Bay watershed.

It has been five years since the discovery of 8,000 ppt of dioxin in the Tittabawassee River -- 80 times the level considered safe by the State of Michigan. The highest level of dioxin ever measured in the environment was found in the watershed, along with other highly toxic chemicals. The contamination extends over 50 miles from Dow Chemical Company's headquarters to the Saginaw Bay, defining one of the largest contamination sites in the country.

Dioxin is widely acknowledged to be toxic to humans and wildlife even at levels as low as a few parts per trillion. Both people and wildlife in the region have elevated levels of dioxin in their bodies. The contamination has led to extremely conservative consumption advisories for both fish and wild game.

Dow is legally obligated under both federal RCRA and CERCLA statutes, and under state law, to clean up the contamination. The state and federal governments are legally obligated to require Dow to clean up. The timeline, and the adequacy of that cleanup should be determined, as the law suggests, through an open, transparent and public process.

We Believe:

We believe it is the duty of elected state lawmakers, our congressional representatives, our United States Senators, and the Governor of the State of Michigan to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Our economy, our public health, and our future depend on them exercising this solemn obligation.

We believe the goal of a comprehensive cleanup must be to restore the full economic development potential of the region, to restore the health of the watershed and of the food web, and to reduce the level of dioxin in the bodies of residents, particularly the most highly exposed and the most vulnerable.

The undersigned urge our elected representatives and regulatory agencies to hold the Dow Chemical Company accountable to the highest standards for cleanup, to be transparent and to engage all stakeholders in cleanup decisions as this proceeds, and to enforce aggressive timelines for restoration.

Signed

Terry Miller
Chairman
Lone Tree Council
Saginaw Bay Watershed

Anne Woiwode, Director
Sierra Club Michigan Chapter
Lansing, Michigan

Lisa Wozniak,
Executive Director,
Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Diane Hebert
Midland, MI

Valerie Heinonen, o.s.u.
Consultant, Corporate Social Responsibility
205 Avenue C, #10E
NY NY 10009
For the:
Dominican Sisters of Hope, New York
Mercy Investment Program, U.S.
Sisters of Mercy, Regional Community of
Detroit, Michigan
Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk-U.S. Province, New
York

John Witucki
Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical
Contamination
Lake, MI

Andy Buchsbaum
Regional Executive Director
Great Lakes Natural Resource Center
National Wildlife Federation
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Shelley Alpern
Director of Social Research & Advocacy
Trillium Asset Management Corporation
711 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02111

Lana Pollack, President
Michigan Environmental Council
Lansing, MI

Margaret Weber
Coordinator of Corporate Responsibility
Portfolio Advisory Board
Adrian Dominican Sisters
Adrian, MI

Diana Oleskevich CSJA
Justice Coordinator
Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet
St. Louis Province

Pat Bradt
CATS (Residents on the Saginaw River)
Saginaw, MI

Bill Freese, Director
Huron Environmental Activist League (HEAL)
Alpena, MI

Kathy Henry
Tittabawassee River Watch
Tittabawassee Twp, MI

Mary Ellen Gondeck, CSJ
Congregation of St. Joseph
Office of Peace and Justice
975 E. Gardenia
Madison Heights, MI 48071
248-541-3094 (phone)

David Holtz, Director
Clean Water Action
Lansing, Michigan

Tracey Easthope
Environmental Health Policy Director
Ecology Center
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Chuck Caldart JD
National Environmental Law Center
44 Winter St., Boston, MA 02108

Danielle Korpalski, Environmental Associate
Environment Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI

Grenatta Thomassey PhD
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
Petoskey, MI

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter
109 E. Grand River Avenue Lansing, Michigan 48906 tel. 517.484.2372
www.michigan.sierraclub.org