



Posted Nov 18, 2007 MJS Letters

GREAT LAKES

Suburban officials must apply proper fix

I couldn't agree more with letter writer Steven Bukosky ("Waukesha County can't keep expanding," Nov 15).

With a water crises looming in the counties west of the subcontinental divide, it's time to halt the out-of-control westward expansion of Waukesha County. One needs only to look at Atlanta's water crises to see Waukesha County's future. And tapping into Lake Michigan must not be the solution.

I will never be convinced that allowing Lake Michigan water to flow over the divide will be returned in the same quantity and quality. Also, if Lake Michigan water is allowed to flow to Waukesha County, it will only be a matter of time until other communities and states apply pressure for their cut.

If there's not enough groundwater for continued expansion, restrict expansion, implement a highly restrictive water conservation policy and install the necessary radium filtration system. If the county wants to continue unchecked expansion, it should build a water distribution system from the Mississippi River and pump water east. That water then would be returned to its source by way of the Fox River system.

Yes, both solutions are expensive. But it's time to stop looking toward Lake Michigan for the easy bailout. Lake Michigan is struggling as it is.

Phil Totten
Waukesha

Communities' water should be returned

The Nov. 12 editorial regarding lake water for the suburbs has seen the usual suspects send in letters. The "not our water, you suburban undertaxed people" will rise and defend the shoreline to the last drop.

Little do they realize there are millions of gallons of clean, processed water the suburbs return to the lake - water not taken from the lake through the Milwaukee water district originally. Water that the suburbs paid a healthy charge to have the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District process to reasonable potable water.

This gift should be returned to the suburbs it was taken from using the theory that the suburbs paid to have the water cleaned up and it is theirs. There is considerable case law and contract covenants in the west to back this theory up. A few hours by a good legal researcher studying the minutes of the Colorado River Commission's meetings would give a wealth of information for redistribution of cleaned water once it has been processed.

So, Milwaukee, give us our water back, and you can keep your lake water. Or maybe you would prefer we do our own processing and let you eat the total cost of operating MMSD at a considerably reduced capacity.

Warren S. Clark
Muskego

Nov 15, 2007

GREAT LAKES: Protect resource from potential hazard

Regarding the Nov. 13 letter "Candidates must commit to resource," don't be fooled by our politicians about restoring the Great Lakes.

The boundary waters of the Menominee River in northeastern Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula are being threatened by a sulfide mine. The Aquila mining group is drilling core samples adjacent to and on the banks of the beautiful Menominee River in the hopes of getting full permits within two years.

This beautiful, clean, sturgeon-rich river flows into Green Bay and Lake Michigan, and the governor of Michigan and her political allies are in support of this potential hazard on the banks of this pristine and wild area. The legacy of sulfide mining is acid rock drainage. It poisons water forever.

Is this what our Great Lakes governors call a commitment to our Great Lakes?

Robin Bender
Muskego

Nov 14, 2007

Waukesha County can't keep expanding

One of the things I like about having been transferred to work in Milwaukee County is enjoying a drink from the office bubbler. Having had to drink the iron-red waters of wells while on vacation up north and now drinking the liquid rocks of Waukesha, I appreciate the Journal Sentinel's Nov. 12 editorial encouraging Milwaukee to sell water to us ("Being neighborly"). Thanks, but no thanks.

For good reason, the Great Lakes covenant limits water to those within its watershed. While it may be decided that even areas over the continental divide are actually draining back to Lake Michigan and may someday qualify for its water, we should abide by the law and live with what nature has given us. The cities of Waukesha County have been drunk with expansion in the name of expanding the tax base. It now finds that the bottle is running dry.

The handwriting on the wall says, "Enough!" Waukesha has been forced to implement conservation measures to sustain growth. We can only conserve so much until the lifestyle of current residents begins to suffer. Stuart Carlson's editorial cartoon alongside the editorial might well be a water carboy and the recipient the nearsighted leaders of the county and its cities.

Steven Bukosky
Waukesha

Nov 12, 2007

Great Lakes: Candidates must commit to resource

I was thrilled to read that Gov. Jim Doyle and the other Great Lakes governors are calling on 2008 presidential candidates to commit to restoring the health of the Great Lakes ("Great Lakes states woo presidential candidates," Nov. 9).



Much is made of the many swing states in the region, Wisconsin among them. I want to ask all the presidential candidates trolling for my vote: "Will you use your leadership as president to help restore the Great Lakes?" That's a question that I am sure the millions of people who depend on the lakes for drinking water, public health, economy and quality of life would like to know.

We want to drink clean water, fish with our kids and swim safely off the shores of the lakes we all share - lakes that, without meaningful and comprehensive federal action, soon will be damaged beyond repair. Thankfully, we have a comprehensive

plan - the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy - that lays out manageable solutions to the problems facing the Great Lakes.

So as Wisconsin becomes increasingly inundated with presidential hopefuls over the next 12 months, Wisconsinites should demand that the candidates commit to restoring the Great Lakes by fully funding implementation of the strategy within five years.

Chris Honecker
Milwaukee

Milwaukee must not sell water rashly

The Milwaukee Common Council should absolutely refuse to sell water to any neighboring community until the Great Lakes compact has been approved by all of the Great Lakes states and Canada.

This is simply not Milwaukee's water to sell: It belongs to all bordering states, and decisions concerning it cannot be made unilaterally. Particularly at a time when the Great Lakes are near record low levels and other states are eyeing our resources, Milwaukee should be taking extra care to preserve Lake Michigan.

Right now, Waukesha County is asking for lake water, but where do we draw the line? This is not just about being a good neighbor. Selling water to one community could set a dangerous precedent that Lake Michigan cannot afford.

Carrie Ziegler
Cedarburg

Responsible use, conservation vital

I have a few friends in New Berlin and Brookfield. Some friends live in huge apartment complexes, and other friends live in opulent homes. They use a lot of water in one day - watering huge lawns, washing cars, filling pools and hot tubs indoors and out.

If they want water, let them haul it for themselves. Better yet, they can move back into the city of Milwaukee where I am not afraid to drink from the tap. But I live in three rooms, take short showers, wash my car every six months at Scrub-A-Dub and can only dream of hot tubs and pools - few Milwaukee County parks will have them anymore.

I do not aspire to suburban life and enjoy all the advantages this swell city has to offer. Money is not an issue; water is not for sale.

Mary Berndt
Milwaukee

Cooperation matters - within reason

I believe that cooperation between municipalities is very important and agree that it is shortsighted to not have a bus for commuters between Waukesha and Milwaukee.

The proposal to share Lake Michigan water outside the natural basin is completely different. The water in Lake Michigan belongs to everybody and is to be preserved, not sold off. There need to be precautions taken before Great Lakes waters are taken outside the basin.

What proof do people have that the sale of that water will not just help developers expand housing and growth in the Waukesha area, not just replace the ground water that has been contaminated? Will this just allow the mistakes to continue?

Mary Ann Churchill
Hayward

Nov 19, 2007 MJS letters

RIVERS

Environmental awareness is critical

Thank you for the Nov. 14 editorial "Protect the river." It was nice to see it written to highlight not only the value of wildlife but erosion prevention as well. It was also nice that it pointed out, once again, that it was business interests taking actions without considering the consequences, as was the case in Franklin not too long ago with a tragic wetland destruction. Living in Oak Creek, I get to see a city that has zero environmental awareness.

Whether cutting habitat of migratory birds or filling in or draining wetlands, it should be reported. Thank you again.

Rick Guerard

Oak Creek