

Midwest Environmental ADVOCATES

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Native and Non-Native Conservationists Organize “Joining the Waters: A Forum on Tribal Sovereignty and Water Quality in Wisconsin”

Lac du Flambeau, WI - Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc. is working with a diverse alliance of native and non-native conservationists to hold the first ever “Joining the Waters: A Forum on Tribal Sovereignty and Water Quality in Wisconsin.”

The Forum will be held on October 21-22, 2005 at Lake of the Torches Conference Center in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin. Early Registration is open online on Midwest Environmental Advocates’ website at <http://www.midwestadvocates.org/archive/northernrivers/forum/register.htm>. To reserve a room at Lake of the Torches Conference Center, call 1-800-258-6724.

The goal of the Forum is to bring together native and non-native conservationists to explore issues and threats to our collective right to clean water and to discuss Native American sovereignty and its implications for water quality protection in Wisconsin's lakes and rivers.

“This Forum recognizes the need for greater collaboration between native and non-native conservationists,” said Larry Wawronowicz, Manager of Lac du Flambeau Tribal Natural Resources Department.

“I’m excited about this opportunity to explore how we can all work together to both protect clean water and enhance tribal sovereignty,” said Ann McCammon-Soltis, a policy analyst for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

“Clean water is good for everyone, and this Forum is an opportunity to bring people around a common right – clean water,” said Lori Grant, Water Policy Program Director of the River Alliance of Wisconsin.

Midwest Environmental Advocates has organized a diverse steering committee to help guide the event. The list of Steering Committee members can be found on Midwest Environmental Advocates’ website at <http://www.midwestadvocates.org/archive/northernrivers/forum/index.htm>.

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FAST FACTS

- Midwest Environmental Advocates is Wisconsin's first and only non-profit environmental law center. Midwest Environmental Advocates provide technical assistance and legal representation to communities working for clean air, clean water and clean government.
- Early Registration for the Forum is available online on Midwest Environmental Advocates' website at <http://www.midwestadvocates.org/archive/northernrivers/forum/register.htm>.
- If you or your organization would like to become a formal sponsor of the Forum contact Andrew Hanson at 608-251-5047 ext. 2 or ahanson@midwestadvocates.org. Sponsorship of the Forum can include:
 - Making a cash or in-kind donation to help offset the costs of the Forum;
 - Advertising the Forum in your organization's newsletter;
 - Adding your name to the list of sponsors;
 - Volunteering at the Forum;
 - Offering paid media advertisements for the Forum.
- Just a few of the topics to be covered at the Forum include:

Tribal Sovereignty and the History of Indian Tribes in Wisconsin;

Cultural Uses of Water (spearfishing, wild harvesting, and the spiritual power of water in religious ceremonies);

Overview of Emerging Threats to Water Quality in Wisconsin (mining, mercury deposition, shoreland development, water privatization);

The Role of Community Groups in Supporting Tribal Sovereignty and Combating Racism;

The Role of Tribes in Acquiring Land to Preserve Watersheds;

Tribal and DNR Co-Management of Natural Resources;

Protecting Northern Rivers from New Sources of Water Pollution.