



Approval for Great Lakes Water Diversion Upheld Amid Controversy

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Madison, WI—In a ruling issued Friday, an administrative law judge upheld the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' approval of the City of Racine's plan to divert millions of gallons of water per day from Lake Michigan to serve a manufacturing complex proposed by Foxconn Technology Group.

In May 2018, six environmental organizations* represented by Midwest Environmental Advocates (MEA) challenged DNR's approval on the basis that DNR had misinterpreted a critical requirement of the Great Lakes Compact. The Compact, enacted into federal law in 2008, is meant to protect Great Lakes waters for future generations by prohibiting diversions outside the Great Lakes Basin unless those diversions satisfy specific legal exceptions.

At issue in this case is a requirement that all water transferred out of the basin must be used for "public water supply purposes", defined under the Great Lakes Compact as serving a group of "largely residential customers." MEA attorneys argued that Racine's proposed diversion fails to satisfy this requirement because not a single gallon of diverted water will be used to serve residential customers.

Jennifer Bolger Breceda, Executive Director of Milwaukee Riverkeeper, said, "We have an obligation to uphold the Great Lakes Compact and to protect and conserve this unmatched freshwater resource for the over 40 million people who rely on the Great Lakes for their drinking water. The Great Lakes Compact provides that diversions should be for largely residential purposes, which is not the case here."

Tressie Kamp, Staff Attorney for Midwest Environmental Advocates, added, "While this ruling is disappointing, we stand by our interpretation of the "public water supply purposes" requirement which prohibits the diversion of Great Lakes water for the benefit of a singular industrial user. We will be working with our clients to explore further legal options in this matter."

**The six clients include League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, League of Women Voters - Lake Michigan Region, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, River Alliance of Wisconsin, and National Resources Defense Council.*

For more information on the challenge against the Racine Diversion, visit [Midwest Environmental Advocates](http://MidwestEnvironmentalAdvocates.org) website.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a public interest organization that uses the power of the law to support communities fighting for environmental accountability. Learn more about the Midwest Environmental Advocates on the web at midwestadvocates.org, like MEA on [Facebook](#) or follow @MidwestAdvocate on [Twitter](#).

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