



Foxconn's Decision to Scale Back Calls into Question Its Need for Great Lakes Water

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Madison, WI— Foxconn technology group announced today that its plans to significantly scale back its planned manufacturing campus in Racine County. The announcement is the latest and most significant change to the technology giant's planned industrial development, which now appears to bear little resemblance to the manufacturing facility that would have employed up to 13,000 blue-collar workers and consumed millions of gallons of Lake Michigan water per day.

In response to the announcement, environmental advocates across the state are questioning the City of Racine's plans to proceed with a historic and highly-controversial diversion of Great Lakes water. Last year, Racine received approval from Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources to divert 7 million gallons of Great Lakes water per day exclusively to Foxconn's industrial development.

In May 2018, Midwest Environmental Advocates filed a legal action under the Great Lakes Compact challenging DNR's approval of the City of Racine's request. The petitioners represented by MEA in this case include Milwaukee Riverkeeper, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. The petitioners have consistently advocated for the strongest protections possible for the waters of the Great Lakes, in keeping with the spirit and the letter of the Compact.

Sarah Geers, Staff Attorney for Midwest Environmental Advocates, says that Foxconn's latest announcement calls into question the need for the diversion of Great Lakes water, and it signals a need to reevaluate the entire project. "Plans for the site have changed in fundamental ways since this project was first pitched to the public. In light of these dramatic changes, we are carefully evaluating how Foxconn's new plans affect the City of Racine's planned diversion of Great Lakes water."

The six organizations challenging DNR's permit approval are still examining whether Foxconn's announcement will affect their current legal challenge. Jennifer Bolger Brededa, Executive Director of Milwaukee Riverkeeper, said that her organization will continue to work for the protection of the Great Lakes and the integrity of the Compact. "Granting permission to the City of Racine to divert Great Lakes water for use by a single industrial user was illegal under state law. DNR's decision will weaken protections for the Great Lakes by setting a dangerous precedent for more water-seeking industrial users to follow, and we will continue to work to see that it is overturned."

For more information on the Racine diversion case, visit [Midwest Environmental Advocates](#) 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 MEA on the web at midwestadvocates.org, like MEA on [Facebook](#) or follow @MidwestAdvocate on [Twitter](#).

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