



## **Great Lakes Coalition Objects to Incomplete Environmental Review of Waukesha Diversion DNR Urged to Provide Opportunity for Meaningful Public Participation**

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MADISON, WI— The Compact Implementation Coalition and several partner organizations have submitted a letter to Wisconsin’s Department of Natural Resources (DNR) outlining concerns about the recently released Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) DNR prepared for the City of Waukesha’s planned diversion of Great Lakes water.

The EIS was the subject of a public informational hearing held by DNR last month at Carroll University in Waukesha. Among the coalition’s concerns are DNR’s failure to consider all reasonable alternatives to the project and inadequate opportunity for public participation in the environmental review process.

There have been significant changes to the Waukesha Diversion project since the public was allowed to comment on the draft EIS, which was released in June 2015. Those changes include a change in water suppliers from the City of Oak Creek to the City of Milwaukee. The most recent EIS also identifies and analyzes three alternatives to the Milwaukee supply route that were not previously considered.

According to Midwest Environmental Advocates Attorney Rob Lee, “Each alternative follows a different route than identified in earlier versions of the EIS and would have unique impacts on the environment and on property owners. Although DNR has accepted public comments on the most recent EIS, DNR has not committed to responding to or making necessary changes to the EIS based on those comments, effectively denying the level of public participation the law requires.”

When it comes to identifying and analyzing possible routes for returning Waukesha’s treated wastewater to Lake Michigan, the EIS released in August is equally problematic. It fails to analyze any alternatives that would send return flow to Lake Michigan via the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) and is instead limited to alternatives that send return flow to Lake Michigan via the Root River. Without including an analysis of MMSD return flow alternatives, DNR not only lacks all the information relevant to its decision-making, it also deprives the public and stakeholders of the opportunity to analyze and supplement that information during the public review process.

Read the [letter containing the CIC's full comments here](#).

[The Compact Implementation Coalition \(CIC\)](#) advocates for strong protections for the Great Lakes and monitors the implementation of the Great Lakes Compact. CIC groups signing on to the letter include Waukesha County Environmental Action League, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, River Alliance of Wisconsin, and Midwest Environmental Advocates. The letter was also signed by Alliance for the Great Lakes and Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a non-profit environmental law center working to defend public rights, protect natural resources, and ensure transparency and accountability in government. Learn more about Midwest Environmental Advocates on the web at [midwestadvocates.org](http://midwestadvocates.org), like MEA on [Facebook](#) or follow @MidwestAdvocate on [Twitter](#).

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