

# The Ecology Association of New Berlin



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November 17, 2006

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Maureen Connors  
Office of the Great Lakes  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53701

BUREAU OF WATERSHED MGNT

## **Re: Public Comments on New Berlin's Application for Great Lakes Water**

Dear Ms Connors:

The Ecology Association of New Berlin, a community based organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the environment of our community for the benefit of future generations, has served the community of New Berlin since 1971.

With that history in mind, we as an organization are submitting comments on New Berlin's diversion application to use Great Lakes water in the Mississippi River Basin.

We have followed this issue since August of 2005 and are concerned about the ripple effects of this application, the untimeliness of the request, the negative repercussions if the request is granted, and the incompleteness of New Berlin's application.

The points emphasized below represent a compilation of our respective organization's comments.

**I. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources ("DNR") should not consider applications for Great Lakes water diversions until Wisconsin has passed state legislation that includes standards for implementing the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact ("Compact"). Considering diversion applications prior to the implementation of the Compact legislation will lead to confusion and may undermine passage of the Compact in Wisconsin and in the other Great Lakes Basin states. Once in place, the Compact will offer a superior process and standards for protecting the Great Lakes, a world-class natural resource which is inextricably tied to our future prosperity and quality of life.**

**II. Until all the Great Lakes states adopt the Compact and Congress ratifies it, the existing federal Water Resource Development Act (WRDA), that covers Great Lakes diversions, is in full force. WRDA requires that any proposed Great Lakes diversion must be approved by all eight Great Lakes states. The Michigan Attorney General recently raised this issue regarding**

New Berlin, noting that his state would invoke WRDA if Wisconsin moved on the application.

III. It is imperative that the process for considering any diversion application, now and in the future, must be open and transparent to the public throughout the application process, including public notification of all applications for water diversions and any notice of intent to file such applications, as well as public access to all documents necessary for meaningful, well-informed public participation.

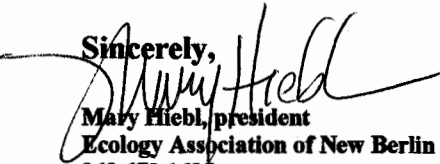
IV. The New Berlin application for water diversion has critical information and data gaps. It also lacks an analysis of viable water supply alternatives to meet the future community needs. This point is underscored by the fact that Illinois, New York, Ohio and the Province of Ontario have all raised significant questions and issues with the New Berlin application. This is an excellent example of why it is premature and potentially harmful to review this or any other application for diversion without clear standards or legislative authority in place.


It is our hope that comments from individual citizens as well as from groups of citizens are seriously considered and factored into the decision-making process. This application is crucial because it sets the standard for future applications. The outcome of this application will impact millions of people negatively or positively, thus it is crucial that this be done right instead of done quickly. .

We appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Mary Hiebl, president  
Ecology Association of New Berlin  
262.679.1635

  
Donna Goodrich, corresponding secretary  
Ecology Association of New Berlin  
262.547.7891

■ Ecology Website: [geocities.com/nbecology/index.htm](http://geocities.com/nbecology/index.htm)