

# Great Lakes Hill Happenings

MAY 2015



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Council of Great  
Lakes Governors  
and Premiers Annual  
Meeting  
Quebec City, Quebec  
June 12-14

Great Lakes-St.  
Lawrence Cities  
Initiative Annual  
Meeting  
Sarnia-Lamberton,  
Ontario  
June 17-19

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## Great Lakes Bipartisan Leaders Support Region

Great Lakes leaders came together to support policy efforts throughout the May, showcasing the bipartisan nature of the region's issues. Passage of the House's Energy and Water bill highlighted the leadership role Great Lakes delegation members, like Reps. Bill Huizenga (MI-02), Marcy Kaptur (OH-09), and Sean Duffy (WI-07), play in national issues like maritime transportation. Great Lakes members supported programs, like the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Community Development Block Grants, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in deliberations over spending. Further, the Great Lakes Task Force Co-Chairs in the House and Senate, supported resolutions opposing citing of a nuclear waste disposal site within the basin, an issue supported by states and localities throughout the region. The Great Lakes Delegation, lead by the Great Lakes Task Force, continues to provide an example of how to move forward in a bipartisan and productive fashion.

# Legislative Updates

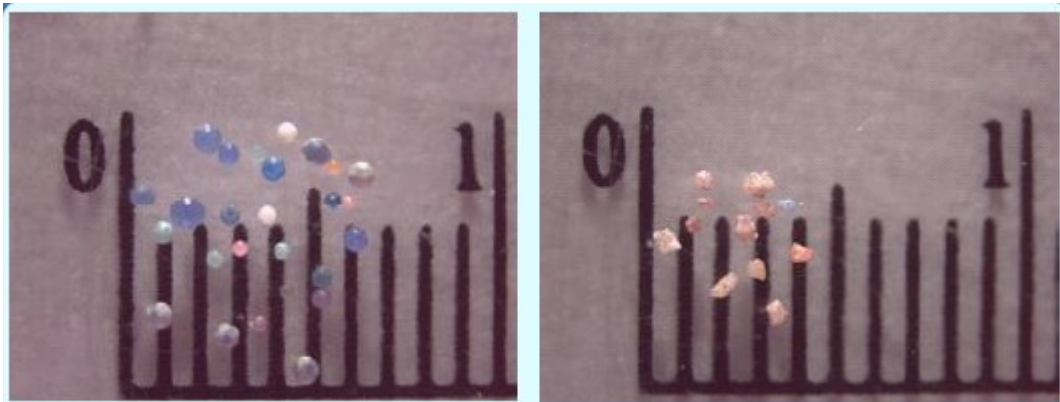


Harmful Algal Bloom near Toledo, Ohio, August, 2014. Photo courtesy of NOAA

**U.S. Coast Guard Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1987):** Co-sponsors include Rep. Duncan Hunter (CA-50). Provides for construction of a new icebreaker in the Great Lakes. **PASSED by VOICE**

**Microbead-Free Waters Act (H.R. 1321; S. 1424):** Led by Rep. Fred Upton (MI-06) in the House and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (NY), along with Great Lakes Task Force Co-Chairs Sens. Mark Kirk (IL), Debbie Stabenow (MI), and Rob Portman (OH) in the Senate. Prohibits the sale or distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic microbeads, beginning in 2018. House Energy and Commerce Committee, led by Rep. Upton, [held a hearing](#) on the bill on May 1, where Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Alliance for the Great Lakes testified.

**Nuclear Waste Storage Resolution (H.Res. 194; S. Res. 134):** Lead Co-sponsors include Reps. Dan Kildee (MI-05), David Joyce (OH-14), and Great Lakes Task Force Co-Chairs Reps. Candice Miller (MI-10), Marcy Kaptur (OH-09), Sean Duffy (WI-07) and Louise Slaughter (NY-25), and Sens. Debbie Stabenow (MI) and Mark Kirk (IL). Expresses the sense of Congress opposing a permanent nuclear waste repository within the Great Lakes Basin; supporting action to work with the Canadian Government to prevent citing of permanent nuclear waste repository in the Great Lakes Basin; and supporting a safe and responsible solution for the long-term storage of nuclear waste.



Microbeads from treatment plants.

Photo credit: New York Office of the Attorney General, [Discharging Microbeads to Our Waters: An Examination of Wastewater Treatment Plants in New York](#)

## FY2016 Appropriations

The House and Senate continued reviewing and planning the federal government's spending for FY2016. Active funding bills through the end of May are linked below, along with an NEMWI-produced summary, with some notable policy provisions highlighted.

### Energy and Water

Funds: Department of Energy and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Regional Significance: Supports maritime navigation and trade, as well as ecosystem restoration efforts and energy research and development

Status in House: PASSED full House

Status in Senate: Passed out of Committee

Policy Provisions: Open-lake disposal restrictions for Lake Erie (House) or in general (Senate); increased funding for Operations and Maintenance of Harbors and waterways; House provided \$10 million for Army Corps' Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration program (Rep. Sean Duffy (WI-07) floor amendment)

### Commerce, Justice, Science

Funds: Department of Commerce, including National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Regional Significance: Supports manufacturing programs and NOAA's observation and research efforts, including on algal blooms

Status in House: Passed out of Committee

Status in Senate: no language yet

Policy Provisions: Increased funding for NOAA's satellite program; includes funding for the Advanced Manufacturing Initiative and implementation of the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act; funding also provided for coal-mining communities

### Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

Funds: Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development

Regional Significance: Supports transportation infrastructure, including TIGER, as well as community development programs like Community Development Block Grants; St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp.

Status in House: Passed out of Committee

Status in Senate: no language yet

Policy Provisions: Decreases in many programs including Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Tenant-Based Rental Assistance, and Federal Railroad Administration; encourages a study on marine highway infrastructure and its impact on performance of national transportation

# Great Lakes Note

The region will be represented in Canada in the coming month—and not just because the Council of Great Lakes Governors and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative are hosting their meetings across the border. As part of the World Cup 2015, members of the U.S. Women’s National Team will be competing for a World Cup trophy, the last one won by the U.S. in 1999. Members of the team who hail from the region include [Lauren Holiday](#) (Indiana), [Meghan Klingenberg](#) (Pennsylvania), and [Abby Wambach](#) (New York). It will be a busy month in the nation to the north!



**The Great Lakes Washington Program advances Great Lakes Protection and Restoration objectives by creating a strong interface between activities of Great Lakes leadership in the region and federal leaders in Washington – particularly Great Lakes Congressional delegation members. The program follows in the goals of the Northeast-Midwest, The a Washington-based nonprofit and nonpartisan research, education, and policy organization dedicated to economic vitality, environmental quality, and regional equity for Northeast and Midwest states.**

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*Strengthening the Region that Sustains the Nation*