



# STATE OF THE STRAIT MONITORING FOR SOUND MANAGEMENT



## A BINATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE DETROIT RIVER ECOSYSTEM

Convened December 2004 by Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research, University of Windsor, The Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative of Metropolitan Affairs Coalition, The Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department, and other organizations.

**Cover photos:** photos left and center (upper and lower): Recreational fishing in the Huron-Erie Corridor (lower center photo by Kurt Byers, Michigan Sea Grant Extension, courtesy of United States Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes National Program Office; other photos courtesy of OMNR); upper right: Scientist sampling water, benthic invertebrates and sediment in Lake Erie (photo courtesy of Environment Canada and University of Windsor); lower right: Longear sunfish (*Lepomis megalotis*) (photo courtesy of Nicolas Lapointe)

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MONITORING FOR SOUND MANAGEMENT

2004 Conference Proceedings

Edited by:

Rachael Eedy, University of Windsor  
John Hartig, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Charlie Bristol, Bristol Technical Services, Inc.  
Melanie Coulter, Detroit River Canadian Cleanup  
Tracy Mabee, University of Windsor  
Jan Ciborowski, University of Windsor

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## APPENDIX III: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

At the conference, a short time period was given after each presentation for participants to ask questions and make comments. Participants were encouraged to write additional questions and comments on forms collected at the end of the day. The following compilation summarizes some of the most commonly addressed topics based on question periods and comment forms.

Conference participants asked some key questions about how to make better use of monitoring data, including:

- How can government further interagency cooperation in sharing data and setting common goals?
- Is there funding available for managing and communicating monitoring data?
- How can we promote the use of volunteer monitoring data by managers?
- What are the economic benefits of improved environmental health?

The conference was an excellent opportunity to increase awareness of regional monitoring programs. Participants told us about important programs that were not included in the conference presentations. For example, work by the Windsor Utilities Commission and its partners monitors the occurrence of pharmaceuticals in Detroit River source water and improves treatment methods for removal. Another example is the monitoring and stewardship by the Lotus Garden Club's rare American lotus beds in Monroe, Michigan. In addition, several audience members arranged to volunteer their time for monitoring programs featured at the conference. Ideas were discussed for future work to increase awareness of regional monitoring programs. For example, groups that do monitoring, especially volunteer-based organizations, could team up to share information with the public by providing links to related organizations on their websites.

Many participants emphasized that monitoring must lead to action. Once we have identified concerns, these concerns must be addressed. Steps should be taken to reduce pollution, protect wildlife, control exotic species, and remediate degraded areas. For example, many audience members were very concerned about combined sewer overflows into the Detroit River and the presence of pollutants such as PCBs and pharmaceuticals, particularly at water treatment plant intakes. The health and population levels of wildlife were another key concern, as shown by the many questions to presenters who talked about wildlife such as bald eagles, canvasbacks and sport fish (e.g., salmon and walleye). Although exotic species were not a focus of the conference, participants reminded us that there is an urgent need to work to prevent future invasions and control exotic species already established in the Great Lakes. Greater effort should be made to improve the condition of the Detroit River, lower Rouge River, Turkey Creek and the Detroit River's Grassy Island. Finally, one participant suggested compiling a "progress report" on remediation efforts.