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New Book Explores the Hidden History and Precarious Future of the Highly Controversial Great Lakes Water Diversion Issue

Former Newsweek Correspondent Provides Groundbreaking Insight into the Battle to Protect one of North America's Most Valuable Natural Resources

MADISON, Wis. – Island Press announces the September 14, 2006, release of *The Great Lakes Water Wars* (ISBN: 1-55963-087-6), the first authoritative examination of more than 100 years of Great Lakes water diversion controversies and the new *Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Basin Water Resources Compact* that hopes to lay them to rest.

Author Peter Annin, a former *Newsweek* correspondent, delves into the long history of political maneuvers and water diversion schemes that have proposed sending Great Lakes water everywhere from Akron to Arizona.

“This is the definitive book about the fight over Great Lakes water,” said Noah Hall, law professor at Wayne State University. “The book does for the Great Lakes what Ansel Adams’s photos did for Yosemite—it shows the world what a precious and irreplaceable resource the Great Lakes are, and why it is so important that they be protected.”

Through the prism of the past Annin analyzes the future of Great Lakes water diversion schemes, which now rests on a December 2005 Compact signed by the eight Great Lakes governors. The Compact, which lays out how much water can be taken and who can take it, is in the hands of the eight state legislatures in the Great Lakes region and must eventually be passed by the U.S. Congress. A similar agreement is moving through the political process in Ontario and Quebec.

“*The Great Lakes Water Wars* is a captivating account of past challenges as well as the social, economic, and ecological challenges we must overcome as our insatiable thirst exceeds nature’s ability to provide,” said Michael P. Dombeck, University of Wisconsin System Fellow of Global Conservation and former chief of the U.S. Forest Service. “It is a comprehensive and easy read, placing Great Lakes water woes in a global context.”

Annin logged thousands of miles during his three years of research for this definitive book. The author visited every major remaining inter-Basin Great Lakes diversion—from the massive Ogoki diversion in the bush country of Northwestern Ontario to the reversed waters of the Chicago River in the heart of the Windy City. He also traveled to Central Asia’s Aral Sea, which has lost 90 percent of its volume and 75 percent of its surface area and is often used as an anti-diversion poster child by environmental advocates in the Great Lakes region.

The book describes numerous behind-the-scenes controversies over Great Lakes water diversion policy. For instance, Annin reports that the Compact negotiations nearly broke down in 2004 over disagreements about the highly contentious Illinois diversion at the Chicago River. *Water Wars* also reveals that the negotiations nearly imploded again in late 2005 after Indiana balked at some of the Compact’s key provisions just as officials were finalizing the accord.

“Peter Annin has put his considerable skills as a journalist to good use,” says Robert Glennon, Morris K. Udall Professor of Law and Public Policy at the University of Arizona and author of *Water Follies: Groundwater Pumping and the Fate of America’s Fresh Waters*. “*The Great Lakes Water Wars* is elegantly written, clearly and logically organized, and anchored to a set of marvelous stories.”

A veteran conflict and environmental journalist, Peter Annin spent more than a decade reporting on a wide variety of issues for *Newsweek*. For many years he specialized in coverage of domestic terrorism. He also covered droughts in the Southwest, hurricanes in the Southeast, wind-power on the Great Plains, forest fires in the mountain West, as well as the “dead zone” in the Gulf of Mexico. Since January 2000 he has worked as Associate Director of the Institutes for Journalism and Natural Resources, a nonpartisan national nonprofit that organizes educational fellowships for mid-career environmental journalists.

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