Great Lakes Water: Commodity or Commons?
The Great Lakes Compact in the Context of Global Water Scarcity

Dave Dempsey, Great Lakes Policy Advisor for Clean Water Action

Wednesday, October 1, 2008
M&M U113   12:00-1:00 pm

The eight-state Great Lakes Compact has won praise as a giant step forward in managing Great Lakes water. But some critics charge it neglects the broader issue of public vs. private ownership of water and how best to protect the Great Lakes for all. Dave Dempsey, longtime Great Lakes advocate and author of the new *Great Lakes for Sale*, discusses the strengths and vulnerabilities of the Compact and the future of Great Lakes water management.

Biography: Dave Dempsey

Dave Dempsey currently serves as Great Lakes Policy Advisor for Clean Water Action, and as a consultant to numerous other environmental and conservation organizations, primarily in Minnesota and Michigan.

Dave has been active in environmental matters since 1982. He served as the Executive Director of the Michigan Environmental Council in 1982-83 and as environmental advisor to Michigan Governor James J. Blanchard from 1983-89. From 1991 to 1994, Dave was program director and acting Michigan director of Clean Water Action. President Clinton appointed him to serve on the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in 1994, where he served until 2001.

Dave is a resident of St. Paul, Minnesota. He is the author of three books *Ruin and Recovery: Michigan's Rise as a Conservation Leader*, an environmental history of Michigan since its statehood in 1837 published by the University of Michigan Press in 2001; *On the Brink: The Great Lakes in the 21st Century*, published by Michigan State University Press in 2004; and a biography of Michigan's longest-serving governor, *William G. Milliken: Michigan's Passionate Moderate*, published by University of Michigan Press in 2006. The *Grand Rapids Press* said this "excellent biography … reminds us that the original purpose of politics was to serve the people -- not the candidates, not the pollsters, not the political consultants and backroom ideologues, and certainly not the political parties themselves."

Dave has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Michigan University and a master's degree in resource development from Michigan State University, and served from 1999-2004 as an adjunct instructor at MSU in environmental policy through the Department of Resource Development (now Communities, Agriculture, Resources and Recreation Studies). He serves on the board of directors of the Coastal States Stewardship Foundation.