



NEWS RELEASE

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NO DAY AT THE BEACH: Sierra Club Report Details Bush Administration's Erosion of Coastal Protections in Wisconsin and around the Great Lakes

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Madison, WI– As Wisconsinites head out to the coasts this Labor Day weekend, the Sierra Club is releasing a report that documents how and where Bush administration policies are threatening America's coastal treasures and what we can do to save them. "No Day at the Beach: How the Bush Administration Is Eroding Coastal Protection" is a comprehensive look at the Bush administration policies that threaten America's four coasts: the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Gulf of Mexico, and America's Freshwater Coast, the Great Lakes.

The report is available at <http://www.sierraclub.org/coastalreport>.

“As we are stocking the coolers and packing the beach chairs and towels for the last beach weekend of the summer, we're asking everyone to consider the future of their favorite shores,” said Penny Bernard Shaber, Chair of Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter. “This Sierra Club report documents how America's shores are under siege by a host of Bush administration policies. Everyone should be asking, ‘Will my favorite beach spot or lake view look the same next year? Will the fish at our local restaurant be safe to eat?’”

Here in Wisconsin, residents are especially concerned about sewage overflows, closed beaches, mercury in Great Lakes fish and the protection of Great Lakes water.

The report details the administration policies and philosophies that threaten the safety of the fish we eat and the beaches where children learn to swim, and the beauty of the scenic backdrop along 95,000 miles of America's shores. The report details the following major threats to America's shorelines:

- Mercury contamination
- Unchecked sewage discharges
- Oil and gas development in sensitive coastal areas
- Destruction of coastal wild lands and wetlands

The report also uncovers several disturbing patterns of decision-making by the Bush administration when it comes to coastal policies. Among them are a steady erosion of general environmental protections, cuts in funding for coastal and environmental protection programs, subsidizing pollution and corporate welfare, and manipulation or suppression of science.

“In four short years, the Bush administration has led the greatest erosion of environmental protections America has ever seen, and our beaches, lakes, oceans, and coastal communities are no exception,” said Emily Green, Director of the Sierra Club's Great Lakes Program.

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To date, administration policies have given America outdated energy proposals, polluted runoff, mercury in our fish, burgeoning dead zones, and depleted fish and wildlife.

“If left unchecked, the Bush administration’s misguided policies and misplaced priorities could strangle our waters with mercury and other pollution, spoil our horizons with oil rigs, and cripple coastal economies that depend on tourism, fishing and other activities that depend on healthy shores and lakes,” said Bernard Shaber. “There is a better way. We can protect our coastal resources while preserving our coastal economy.”

Among the solutions outlined in the report are promoting cleaner, cheaper, and safer energy solutions that preserve America’s wild heritage, enforcing the laws that protect our health and safety, and renewing the commitment to stewardship of public trust lands and waters.

Recently, two major reports on the health of our coasts and oceans have revealed just how imperiled these resources are. Both the bipartisan Pew Oceans Commission report, *America’s Living Oceans, Charting a Course for Change* (www.pewoceans.org/oceans/index.asp), and the Preliminary Report of the American Oceans Commission (www.oceancommission.gov/documents/prelimreport) agree that our coasts and the oceans upon which much of humanity depends are in serious trouble. These reports together aggregate the many warnings that have been made by scientists and coastal managers for decades.

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