

At a glance

In its draft environmental impact statement and technical review, the Department of Natural Resources found in the city of Waukesha's proposed Lake Michigan diversion application that:

- Diverted water would be used solely for public water supply purposes.
- The city is without adequate supplies of potable water because of the presence of radium in the groundwater and drawdown in the deep sandstone aquifer.
- The proposal for a diversion from Lake Michigan would not endanger the integrity of the **Great Lakes Basin** ecosystem.
- The city does not have a reasonable water supply alternative within the Mississippi River Basin. Further analysis shows the city cannot meet water supply needs through conservation of existing supplies.
- The city has demonstrated “a commitment to implementing water conservation and efficiency measures” as required by state code, which are both environmentally sound and economically feasible.
- The requested annual average of 10.1 million gallons of water per day and a daily maximum of 16.7 MGD are reasonable quantities to provide public water services to the service area.
- The return flow management scenario that proposes to return the previous year's average daily withdrawal amount is acceptable.
- The city has proposed to return treated effluent to the Root River, a tributary of Lake Michigan.
- The proposed diversion is in compliance with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 because any water lost from the basin due to consumptive use would “not affect the flows or levels of the boundary waters on either side of the border so it is not subject to regulation by the International Joint Commission.”

— Matt Masterson, Freeman Staff