

Water WoRDs

Updates from the Water Resources Division

We're with the government and we're here to help... by writing yet another report?

Our fingers are crossed. We hope that this weekly update on what we're up to proves to be an informative and refreshing break from the technical jargon and acronyms that are so prevalent in state government. We really do want to help and recognize that in order to do that, we need to share more about ourselves and what we do; while also listening to what Michigan's citizens have to say about our work.

The Water Resources Division (aka The WRD... sorry, we just can't help ourselves with the acronyms) is charged with keeping tabs on most things water-related in the state of Michigan. We are pretty proud of what we do and thought we'd introduce ourselves. We get up every day to work for you by protecting the water all around you, whether it is groundwater you drink, the lake where you go fishing, a wetland where the kids catch frogs, or the Great Lakes. Our employees do this because we love Michigan's water wonderland and we believe most Michiganders do too.

The Great Lakes are big. Really big. If you've never had a chance to take someone from outside Michigan to the shores of Lake Michigan/Huron/Superior/Erie, it's kind of a hoot. Stand on the beach at Muskegon State Park with someone from say, Kansas (sorry Kansas), and they'll inevitably say something about not being able to see Wisconsin. They're called the Great Lakes for a reason. No, you cannot see Wisconsin from Muskegon (it's nearly 90 miles away). But you can see Michigan from the Space Station.



Michigan is literally defined by water and those of us who work within the WRD suggest that not only does water define Michigan geographically, but it also defines us as people. Whether you are Michigan born and raised or were drawn to our 3,300 miles of coastline later in life, this water that surrounds us --

defines us. Water powers our economy and drives us outside to play. We think that balance strikes a pretty sweet deal.

Our goal for this page is to post every week or so and discuss "hot topics" within the WRD or programs that we think people might want to know more about. We'll use this space to let you know of any opportunities to get involved in water resource issues, whether directly with us or through various stakeholder organizations, and we will also introduce you to WRD staff involved in the topics or programs being discussed. Finally, we will be posting a 'Question of the Week' in an effort to solicit input from our readers on all sorts of issues that affect our Division.

What do you do in the WRD?

Meet Bill & Kim

We're not sure whether having a water resource-related surname was a consideration in landing their jobs, but aptly-named WRD Chief Bill Creal and Assistant Chief Kim Fish know their stuff when it comes to the breadth of water resource issues facing the Great Lakes State. Bill started working for the Department way back in 1978. Bill's 34 years of experience implementing the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) and Michigan's wastewater programs is supplemented by Kim's 26 years of experience with the federal CWA from the resource side (i.e. wetlands, inland lakes and streams). Bill also serves on the Board of Directors of the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA), the national representative for state, interstate, and territorial officials responsible for CWA implementation. They both traveled to Washington D.C. recently to testify on Michigan's experiences as one of only two states in the nation to run its own wetland protection program that also meets federal law requirements. You can watch Bill's testimony [here](#).

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Bill Creal, far left and Kim Fish, far right with ACWA colleagues Melanie Davenport (Virginia) and George Elmaraghy (Ohio) in Washington, D.C.

WRD Question of the Week

What matters most when you think about Michigan's abundant water resources?

Send a message to Nicole Zacharda at zachardan@michigan.gov and tell us what you think. We will compile reader ideas and comments to share with WRD staff and inform future posts.
