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The Wisconsin Christian Alliance for Progress calls for citizen action to counter a Bush Administration recommendation to refuse funding for a Great Lakes restoration plan.

The AP reported that a memo obtained by the Chicago Tribune expresses "serious concerns" about a plan to invest \$20 billion over 15 years to restore and sustain the Great Lakes. The memo recommends allocating no new money and creating no new programs to address invasive species, toxic pollution, and sewage overflows into the world's largest supply of surface fresh water.

The Alliance is concerned that the Administration will use budget fallout from the hurricanes as an excuse to deny funding for this specific, creative, long-term plan. Developed through thousands of hours of study and consultation, it is consistent with the Biblical call to responsible stewardship of God's creation. The Alliance urges citizens to contact federal legislators and to hold the President accountable to Great Lakes ecosystem rehabilitation, similar to the Florida Everglades project.

In May '04 Bush created the cabinet-level Great Lakes Inter-Agency Task Force, led by the EPA, to "ensure that the greatness of the lakes endures for generations." That task force established the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, a state, federal, local, and tribal partnership. The Collaboration's plan affirms the importance of the lakes, identifies major problems, and recommends corrective actions.

More than 35 million Americans look to the Great Lakes for drinking water, food, livelihood, recreational opportunities and transportation. Recommended actions include:

1. Addressing the serious ecological and economic damage from over 160 aquatic invasive species (AIS), which arrive at the rate of **one every eight months**, with **comprehensive Federal legislation**.
2. Cleaning up the most contaminated Great Lakes locations. Although these 31 areas were identified 15 years ago, not one has yet been fully restored.
3. Taking action to protect and restore habitats, address nonpoint pollution (runoff), and reduce/prevent toxic substances from entering the Lakes.
4. Establishing a sound information base to understand what is happening in the large and complex Great Lakes system.
5. Promoting "long term sustainability of the Great Lakes resource" through changes in programs, governance, and outreach.

The Collaboration's plan for Great Lakes restoration could be accomplished, despite hurricane relief and deficit reduction, if tax cuts for the country's wealthiest individuals were reversed. The Alliance urges President Bush to embrace the Christian value of environmental stewardship and support the Collaboration's plan.

The Christian Alliance for Progress is a national organization, founded in 2005, of more than 10,000 people embracing such Biblical values as compassion and care for "the least of these," justice for all, equality and inclusiveness, right use of power, and faithful stewardship. The movement seeks to "reclaim Christianity and transform American politics." See www.christianalliance.org. The Wisconsin chapter has approximately 300 members throughout the state. To contact the Wisconsin Christian Alliance for Progress, email wicafp@yahoo.com.