

Michigan Water Table Survey Results: PFAS/PFOA

Background and Overview

On September 17, 2019, twenty-one representatives of nonprofit organizations with missions focused on water issues in Michigan, informally referred to as the Michigan Water Table and supported by the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation, met in Lansing to discuss potential future coordination. A key next step identified at that meeting was to document the current state of work being done in pursuit of access to affordable and sustainable clean water throughout Michigan. The objective of this survey exercise was to understand the issues and actions organizations are taking in order to identify gaps where organizations could better support and coordinate with one another.

The survey was administered by Bridgeport Consulting, facilitator of the Water Table, via Qualtrics. It was sent to thirty organizations, and fifteen responses were received, a 50% response rate. Twelve of the fifteen respondents reported that PFAS/PSOA is an issue their organization addresses. The results summarized below relate only to those twelve organizations' responses, homing in on the results specific to PFAS/PFOA, which is the topic of the Michigan Water Table's workshop on January 23, 2019. The full set of results will be distributed at a later date.

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Survey Results

Geographic Area

The geographic focus for a majority of the responding organizations is national, Michigan and Great Lakes Region focused. Three responding organizations are watershed-based and focus on a particular county.

	National	Michigan	Great Lakes Region	County
Organization	Geographic Focus			
Ecology Center	•	•		
Environmental Michigan	•	•		
Flint River Watershed Council				Genesee County
For the Love of Water			•	
Freshwater Future	•			
Great Lakes Environmental Law Center				Wayne County
Huron River Watershed Council				Washtenaw County
Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds				Barry County
Michigan League of Conservation Voters	•	•	•	
Natural Resources Defense Council		•		
Sierra Club	•	•	•	
West Michigan Environmental Action Council			•	

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Primary constituents

Survey respondents service a broad spectrum of constituents, with most organizations including residents, businesses, media and elected officials at various levels as primary constituents.

	Residents	Businesses	Media	Local elected	State elected	Federal elected	Other
Organization	Primary Constituents						
Ecology Center	•						
Environmental Michigan	•						
Flint River Watershed Council	•	•	•	•	•	•	
For the Love of Water	•		•	•	•	•	Tribal Entities
Freshwater Future	•						Grassroots Organizations
Huron River Watershed Council	•	•	•	•			
Great Lakes Environmental Law Center	•						
Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds	•	•	•				Municipal Staff
Michigan League of Conservation Voters	•	•	•	•	•	•	Impacted Community Groups; Research & Development Work; Community Organizing
Natural Resources Defense Council	•	•	•	•	•	•	Tribal Entities
Sierra Club	•		•	•	•	•	
West Michigan Environmental Action Council	•	•		•			K-12 Students

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Actions

Organizations were asked about actions taken on the PFAS/PSOA issue in the past six months or planned for the next six months. Organizations reported a similar array of actions, with most providing state and federal policy advocacy, media relations, and education and awareness. None of the responding organizations pursued ballot initiatives and a small number included legal work.

	Local policy advocacy	State policy advocacy	Federal policy advocacy	Mobilizing voters	Ballot initiative	Research	Legal work (e.g lawsuits)	Media	Education & awareness	Other
Organization	Actions									
Ecology Center	•	•	•			•		•	•	
Environmental Michigan		•	•	•				•	•	
Flint River Watershed Council	•	•						•	•	Monitoring
For the Love of Water	•	•				•	•	•	•	
Freshwater Future	•	•	•			•		•	•	
Great Lakes Environmental Law Center						•	•			
Huron River Watershed Council	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	
Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds						•			•	
Michigan League of Conservation Voters		•	•	•			•	•	•	
Natural Resources Defense Council		•	•	•		•		•	•	Policy development
Sierra Club	•	•	•	•				•	•	
West Michigan Environmental Action Council	•	•	•			•		•	•	

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Partners

Several organizations partner with others on PFAS/PFOA actions:

Organization	Partners
Environmental Michigan	MEC< HRWC, FRWC
Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds	GVSU
Michigan League of Conservation Voters	Tony Spaniola; Michigan Demands Action; Oscoda NOW; Tammy Cooper (Parchment); MEC; WMEAC; The Belmont Street 8; several leading scientists and PFAS experts; MEA union
Natural Resources Defense Council	Michigan Demands Action, Need Our Water, Sierra Club, Clean Water Action, MLCV, MEC, municipalities/associations, others