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*Note To Members - Nation's Best Inland Water Biology Laboratory is Being Abandoned*

*By: Herman S. Forest  
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THE ROCHESTER COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION  
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Note to Members: Nations Best Inland Water Biology Laboratory is Being Abandoned!

This is an incredible piece of news. The story was told ably by the Ann Arbor News on February 25, 1970.

"While the President has called for an all-out battle against pollution of the Great Lakes, his Department of Interior is in the process of drastically reducing or possibly eliminating the laboratory where a major share of this anti-pollution effort is taking place.

"What's more, this department seems intent upon ditching the Great Lakes in favor of the oceans through undercover shifting of funds from its reduced budget, reliable sources report.

"This week, termination of employment notices went out to 26 U.S. Bureau of Commercial Fisheries workers, including 20 in Ann Arbor where a major battle against Great Lakes pollution is being waged in the world's largest and best equipped fresh water biological research laboratory.

"But this is only the beginning. Starting July 1, dismemberment of this laboratory on Green Rd., which first brought to public attention the seriousness of pollution in Lake Erie and later in Lake Michigan, will begin in earnest, according to informed sources.

"Researchers with the longest record of biological work on the Great Lakes will be discharged outright or shifted to posts in other parts of the country. The Ann Arbor Regional Office in Huron View Research Park of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, which directs all fresh-water research in the United States for the federal government, will be abolished.

"If plans not yet made public remain in effect, by next year the laboratory would have a staff of four plus 11 persons working in and out of the facility on a proposed Lake Michigan program. A total of 76 persons out of the staff of 170 employed by the regional office now work in the laboratory which was built in 1965 at a cost of \$1,450,000.

"Eventually, after the research programs at the laboratory have died out or moved elsewhere, the Ann Arbor facility will be turned over to the U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. That agency will then have to recruit a new staff and try to get an appropriation to support its work.

"As one biologist put it, if they want to change administration why don't they turn over the experienced staff intact to the other federal agency?

"Reduction and elimination of the Great Lakes programs is blamed on budget reductions in line with the federal government's move to economize and fight inflation. The termination of 26 jobs this week is the result of a first round budget cut of \$400,000.

"In the second round of cuts, beginning July 1, the Ann Arbor regional office would be wiped out, according to plans, with certain units, particularly those involved with Great Lakes Commercial fisheries, being moved on a reduced scale to Gloucester, Mass., Seattle, Wash., and other places remote from the Great Lakes.

"This dismemberment would continue through July 1, 1971, with some people losing their jobs and others being transferred. The work on pesticides in fish and aquatic life, one of the most critical problems in the Great Lakes and one which the Ann Arbor laboratory is most able to handle in the country in terms of equipment and personnel, would be transferred to Columbia, Mo.

"What one fisheries expert who declined to be identified called "a real slap in the face of the people of the Great Lakes region," is the the shifting of \$376,000 in funds from the Great Lakes program for work on the oceans."

On February 24 this resolution was issued:

"ENACT (Environmental Action for Survival), the new student environmental action group at the University of Michigan, condemns this hasty action. We strongly condemn those in the Department of the Interior and the Nixon Administration, who, for whatever reason, spout great rhetoric from one side of their mouths, while simultaneously ordering the devastation of crucial research programs. Research of this kind is the essential base for action to improve environmental quality and the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries has an outstanding record of vital service.

"We call upon the citizens of this region to demand of all public officials that this action be reversed. Some Bureau of Commercial Fishery scientists have predicted that we have only 20 more years before irreversible damage is done to Lake Michigan. To disrupt the continuous monitoring of information which has been carried out by the Ann Arbor laboratory, is an insensitive and absurd decision, whether viewed from a biological, political or economic viewpoint."

Herman S. Forest  
Chairman,  
Water Pollution Sub-Committee