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## Official fights lake withdrawal

### Decision for Genesee County to take millions of gallons per day appealed

By STEPHEN TAIT  
Times Herald

A drain commissioner from northern Michigan said he filed an appeal with the state Thursday against a decision that permits Genesee County to withdraw up to 85 million gallons of water per day from Lake Huron.

Dennis Lennox, the Cheboygan County drain commissioner, has fought against the plan since its inception.

"State regulators failed to exercise dull diligence and proper scrutiny when they approved Genesee County's proposal on a Friday afternoon in August," he said in a news release. "This troubling pipeline will have untold environmental consequences if it is allowed to continue."

Jeffrey Wright, Genesee County's drain commissioner, said he had not heard of the appeal and therefore would not comment.

Bob McCann, the spokesman for the DEQ, said he wasn't sure whether Lennox had filed the appeal but said Lennox had "indicated it was on the way."

McCann said an appeal would force an administrative law judge to hear the case and decide whether the DEQ made the proper decision.

He said such a hearing will be scheduled.

"It usually happens pretty quickly," McCann said.

If Genesee's plan comes to fruition, it would pump water from a 230-acre piece of land with 700 feet of Lake Huron frontage -- the old Detroit Edison site just north of Fisher Road in Sanilac County -- which will include the construction of a shore well and pumping station.

The water would serve as the public water supply for Genesee County, Flint and portions of Lapeer, Sanilac, Saginaw and Shiawassee counties.

According to DEQ documents, 85 million gallons per day is about 59,000 gallons a minute.

The area is now served by the Detroit Water System, which gets water from Lake Huron at a site about four miles from Genesee's proposed site.

Genesee County also would build a \$600 million pipeline.

DEQ approved the permit in August. The project was opposed by some, including Sarnia officials and Lennox, citing environmental reasons.

At the time, McCann said Genesee's application and request met all state laws and regulations.

"We took a very detailed look at what they submitted ... and determined the application met all of the guidelines of Michigan laws," McCann said then.

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