

## Grandmother Water Walk

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Lake Michigan 2008

- Ideology is a closely held belief system that guides an individual, social movement, or institution. It is a comprehensive view that society can be made better, and projects the vision of an individual or group's ideal concept of how to live in the world. When abstractions of ideology are combined with practical and realistic applications, very positive things can happen.
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- As we have followed since 2003 – our Midewin Grandmothers have circumvented all of the Great Lakes and honor them by praying, singing and offering semaa. During their walk, they carry a sacred copper vessel of water saying prayers and singing songs to every creek, river, and lake they encounter. The Grandmothers have provided a voice for their shared concerns for sacred life and acknowledge the true distress we have allowed and now threatens the existence of humanity. We, the Earth family need to commit ourselves to our Mother the Earth and her sacred life. We are committed to revitalize, preserve and protect the waters by raising awareness through self sacrifice. Women of all ages are encouraged to help them carry the water vessel and walk proudly with our Ogitchidaa Water Walk Eagle Staff. Men of all ages are encouraged to walk with them, assisting and protecting the path of our past, present, and future. Please join them for a mile or two....or more. They will welcome your company.
- They Walk for the Water. Mother Earth. Our Children. All Living Things. They Walk for the Anishinabek People. All People. For the Future Generations.

Half the waters in the United States are at risk of pollution or destructive development because of a Supreme Court decision in 2006 regarding the Clean Water Restoration Act. The decision narrowed the scope of the Clean Water Act of 1972. The 2006 ruling involved a Michigan landowner who had been barred from developing wetlands that had no visible connection to other bodies of water. Four conservative judges ruled that the Clean Water Act protected only navigable, permanent or continuous flowing waters and adjacent wetlands. Four liberal justices, reflecting the traditional view of the law, said it protected all waters, including isolated wetlands and small, intermittent streams. Justice Anthony Kennedy ruled that remote wetlands and isolated streams deserved protection only if regulators could show a “significant nexus” – a physical or biological connection – to a navigable body of water somewhere downstream. Other industries have used the Kennedy opinion as a legal shield, claiming that they are only polluting isolated waters by showing no connection between stream and navigable river downstream has not been established. Congress could cut through all this by removing ambiguities and restoring the law’s original scope to include all the waters of the United States – large or small, permanent or seasonal, navigable or not. That would restore order to an increasingly chaotic and ineffective regulatory system while protecting the physical and biological integrity of America’s waters.

Protecting All Waters – The New York Times – March 2008

Plan to Keep Virus out of Lake – Traverse City, Michigan – Grand Rapids Press 3/18/2008

The National Park Service’s four units on Lake Superior are joining with the Grand Portage Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa in an effort to keep a deadly fish virus out of the lake. Viral hemorrhagic septicemia, or VHS, has caused large fish kills in other Great Lakes but has not been detected in Lake Superior. The plan announced Monday includes educating the public, restricting use within park waters of fish bait that could carry the virus and prohibiting exchange of ballast water within park waters. – Press wire services

Mutated Fish Swimming in Tainted Water – Lake Mead, Nevada – AP 3/10/2008

A five month Associated Press investigation has determined that trace amounts of many of the pharmaceuticals we take to stay healthy are seeping into drinking water supplies, and a growing body of research indicates that this could harm humans.

Pharmaceuticals in the water are being blamed for severe reproductive problems in many types of fish resulting in lower sperm counts, damaged sperm, and a problem of male fish turning into female fish “feminized fish” producing egg yolk proteins typically made only by females. Meanwhile female fish have developed male genital organs. There are problems with other wildlife as well: kidney failure in vultures, impaired reproduction in mussels, inhibited growth in algae.

Elsewhere in the world – from icy streams of England to the wild games reserves of South Africa – snails, fish, even antelope are showing signs of pharmaceutical contamination. More than 100 different pharmaceuticals have been detected in surface waters throughout the world.

### WALK WITH THEM!!

- Raise awareness through your local media, tribal newsletters, mainstream newspapers, radio and television. Coordinate through press releases the meaning, vision, and goal of the Water Walk. Promote and join the spirit of awareness by participating in this historical event.
- Get your communities together and provide food, supplies, and accommodations for them. Plan and coordinate sharing and teaching sessions in your communities and nearby urban centers giving the Water Walkers an opportunity to share their teachings, visions, and concerns for the water and our future as a humanity.
- Contact your local Department of Resources and get them involved by sharing environmental information.
- Contact your councils, environmental advocacy groups, schools, universities, all levels of government representatives, courts, State, local and tribal law enforcement and invite them to attend planned sessions of teachings that will be hosted by local communities and tribal community centers.
- After they have finished their stay in your community, please do not stop there. Call ahead to the next town or community. Share with them how to prepare and what to do before the Water Walkers arrive.
- When we are born, we start with a beautiful empty mind ready to be given our beliefs, attitudes, habits, and expectations. Most of our true learning comes from watching the actions of others. As we watch our family or relatives, whatever their actions and values so will be the children's values and acts. If we see our families living a just and peaceful way of life, so then will the children. If we see our family arguing, shouting, and hateful, so will it be for the children. The cycle of life – baby, youth, adult and Elder are all connected. If the older ones have good values, it will be connected to the children.

## PARTICIPATION PROTOCOL

Health – Each participant is requested to consider their well-being.

Travel – Participants are requested to coordinate their own travel arrangements.

Food – Resources are shared when available.

Lodging – Be prepared to make self-arrangements.

Liability – Walk and participate at your own risk. The organizers and affiliations of the Water Walk do not accept any responsibility for damages and/or injuries to yourself and/or others as a result of your participation in the Water Walk.

THE MOTHER EARTH WATER WALK IS CONSIDERED A SPIRITUAL PETITION, THEREFORE; ACCORDING TO MIDEWIN-ANISHINABEK VALUES, WOMEN ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR LONG SKIRTS AND MEN ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR LONG PANTS AND RIBBON SHIRTS. WE MUST BE MINDFUL OF OUR BEAUTIFUL TEACHING WHEN WEARING OUR SACRED COLORS IN PROXIMITY TO OUR MEDICINES, SACRED ARTICLES AND BUNDLES.



Mother Earth Water Walkers would like to express our gratitude and many thanks to those who have supported us in our past walks through in-kind contributions, financial sponsors and special donations. We would like to acknowledge the following for their generous contributions



Three Fires Midewin Society



Volunteers



ALL WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE WALK



You and your community can support the Mother Earth Water Walk by:

- Be aware and raise awareness of the importance of the water
- Come out and walk with us
- In-kind donations
- Monetary gifts to help out with expenses
- Communities can show their support through Feasts and Gathering along the way
- Check out our website:
- [www.motherearthwaterwalk.com](http://www.motherearthwaterwalk.com)