



**From:** Michigan Environmental Council  
**To:** House DEQ and DNR Appropriations Subcommittee Members  
**Date:** April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
**Re:** Environmental and Public Health Budget Recommendations

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## **Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and the Environment (EGLE)**

### *Energy*

- Michigan should look for ways to encourage solar development on brownfields. A first step in that process is to determine which brownfields would be most suitable for solar. To that end the Legislature should appropriate \$150,000 for the Department of Energy, Great Lakes and the Environment to conduct a study to identify brownfields suitable to host solar installations with a focus on large open areas like sites of retired or retiring coal plants and closed landfills.
  - Suggested boilerplate: "The Michigan Agency for Energy, in coordination with the Department of Environmental Quality, shall conduct, or contract to conduct, a study to assess the potential for solar energy development on Michigan brownfields, in particular brownfield sites hosting closed or retiring coal plants and landfills. A final report on the study shall be transmitted to legislative committees with primacy over energy and brownfield remediation and development, and made available to the public, not later than June 1, 2020. At a minimum the study should do all the following: (A) overlay solar resource maps with brownfield sites, (B) estimate the solar energy potential and nameplate capacity available on brownfield sites, and (C) identify and prioritize the optimal brownfields for hosting solar energy development. The Agency should produce an estimate of the impact renewable energy development on brownfields would have on job creation, tax base, and economic growth."
- Dedicate the ~\$5 million Fiat/Bosch settlement funding to assist local governments and schools purchase electric buses. Unlike the VW settlement funding, this settlement went to the general fund and we would ask the legislature to put that general fund towards programs that reduce the harmful emissions that were the basis of the emissions cheating scandal in the first place.

### *Water*

- Support the FY 2019 \$120 million drinking water supplemental. This supplemental would go towards:
  - Minimum of \$37,500,000.00 for implementation of the lead and copper rule, including but not limited to, lead service line replacement and support of local education efforts by the Water Supply Advisory Councils established in R 325.10410(7).
  - Minimum of \$30,000,000.00 to abate and cleanup emerging contaminants as well as invest in technologies to address contaminants in public water systems

- Minimum of \$40,000,000.00 to provide grant funding to eligible applicants applying for Drinking Water Revolving Loan Funds.
- Up to \$7,500,000.00 for grants to communities to enhance asset management plans and/or for the development of sustainable water rate plans, and/or for watershed plans.
- Up to \$5,000,000.00 to support research and innovation, including but not limited to optimizing corrosion control treatment, optimizing distribution systems, and enhancing data building capacity of water systems.
- The legislature should support full allocation of Renew Michigan funding for contaminated site clean-up program, waste management, and recycling. At the end of 2019 the legislature approved the allocation of \$69 million to fund the Renew Michigan Fund. We request that the full amount of that funding be appropriated to the specific programs outlined in the authorizing legislation.
- In addition to the Renew Michigan funding we would ask for a continuation of the approximately \$15 million GF that has been going to the DEQ for PFAS work to be included in the FY 20 budget. We continue to see the need for this additional GF to tackle widespread PFAS contamination. MEC does not believe that the \$45 million from the Renew Michigan fund for contaminated site clean-up is sufficient in and of itself to tackle both orphaned contaminated sites and new PFAS sites.
- The legislature should continue funding mapping of contaminated groundwater. In the supplemental approved at the end of 2018 the legislature allocated \$4.3 million to the DEQ to support work to map plumes of contaminated groundwater. We request that \$8.6 million be allocated to provide a full fiscal year of funding to continue this project.
  - Additionally, going forward the legislature should identify federal funding for groundwater mapping. There is some federal matching funds available through the USGS, but the state match would have to be appropriated to MSU since only accredited academic institutions are eligible: [https://water.usgs.gov/wrri/FY\\_2019\\_RFP\\_104g.pdf](https://water.usgs.gov/wrri/FY_2019_RFP_104g.pdf)

#### Department of Natural Resources

- Prioritize State Park funding to help address the backlog of capital projects. We have ~\$100 million in emergency repairs needed for state parks based on recent project logs. More money needs to be dedicated to continue to cut into this backlog to ensure our state parks are properly maintained.
- Identify needs at state hatcheries in order to put in water treatment and lead to net zero discharge of pollutants like phosphorus. The state should set an example on how aquaculture can be done with minimal impact on water quality. Currently the facilities, outside of Platte River have not been modernized to use the best treatment technologies available. We have boilerplate drafted.
  - Using existing funds, the Department shall produce a report on the amount of capital investment needed for improvements on energy efficiency and water treatment at all state fish hatcheries, with a focus on bringing the hatcheries in line with modern effluent and energy efficiency standards. This report shall be transmitted to the Appropriations and Natural Resources committees in both chambers of the legislature prior to October 1st, 2020.