

OHIO IS CENTRAL BATTLEGROUND IN FIGHT TO CURB GLOBAL WARMING

By: **BEN WALSH, NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST**

Ohio is a central battleground for energy legislation moving through Congress this year, and Ohio Members of Congress could cast the decisive votes for proposals to curb global warming pollution from cars and electric utility plants. Grassroots organizers from the National Environmental Trust (NET) have been dispatched to Ohio, also a bellwether state for presidential elections, in order to communicate the broad and growing support in Ohio for investing in technology that lowers global warming emissions. Global warming legislation faces stiff opposition from industry groups entrenched in Washington and Columbus, and it will take the voices of Ohio citizens to overcome their influence.

Scientists say cuts in greenhouse gas emissions of 15 to 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 could help avoid the worst effects of global warming. The NET is working to build support among Ohio Members of Congress for passing legislation that includes these reductions as part of an economy-wide, mandatory "cap-and-trade" system, which establishes "clean credits" that can be traded with pollution. This system provides market flexibility for cost-effective reductions.

The National Academy of Sciences and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a body of over 2000 climate scientists put together by the United Nations, have both concluded that greenhouse gas emissions caused by humans are causing the planet to warm. IPCC further found greenhouse gases can be significantly reduced by using existing technology. In Ohio, global warming has already contributed to increasingly severe storms and floods, is moving the growing range of plants northward and may lead to the lowering of water levels in Lake Erie.

Globally, icecaps are melting, ocean levels are rising and hurricanes are increasing in strength and severity. Less than a month before Katrina hit, a peer-reviewed study published in *Nature* concluded that warmer ocean temperatures due to global warming are increasing the intensity of hurricanes. Eight of the thirty-one Category 5 hurricanes in recorded history (since 1886) have occurred in the last five seasons, and this year was the first in which two Category 5s have made landfall in the same year. This is also the first

year since record-keeping began in 1949 that a hurricane in the Atlantic and one in the Pacific hit on the same day.

The U.S., which has contributed far more greenhouse gas to the atmosphere than any other nation, has so far failed to take a leadership role in solving this crisis. Without major emissions cuts from the U.S., any effort made by other countries is severely diminished.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Send letters or emails to U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown and George Voinovich and to your U.S. Representative and let them know you support reducing global warming pollution by 80 percent by 2050. Make the letter personal. Tell them why this is so important to you. Please email us a copy of your letter (email addresses below) to help us keep track of how many letters have been sent. Thank you for taking action!

Mail letter to The Honorable Senator Sherrod Brown, 455 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510 and The Honorable Senator George V. Voinovich, 524 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510 or visit www.senate.gov to email your senators through their websites.

Members of Congress can be reached at their Washington, D.C. offices by addressing an envelope with their name and U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515 or visit www.house.gov/writerep to email your representative through their websites.

For more information or to get involved in the campaign contact Ben Walsh in Cleveland at ben@greencorps.org or Noelle Janka in Columbus at noelle@greencorps.org.

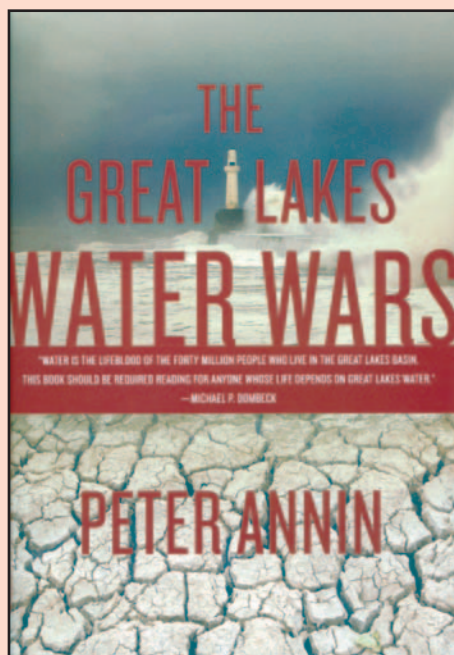
THE GREAT LAKES WATER WARS A Must Read For Every Great Lakes Resident

The Great Lakes Water Wars is a balanced comprehensive look behind the scenes at the conflicts and compromises that are the past and future of this globally significant resource. Peter Annin, a former correspondent with *Newsweek* magazine, writes a fast-paced account of the people and stories behind these water wars. The work is destined to be the definite story of these battles for the general public as well as the policymakers in both the U.S. and Canada.

The Great Lakes are the largest collection of fresh surface water on earth, and more than 40 million Americans and Canadians live in their basin. Will we divert water from the Great Lakes, causing them to end up like Central Asia's Aral Sea, which has lost 90 percent of its surface area and 75 percent of its volume since 1960? Or will we realize that unregulated water withdrawals are ultimately catastrophic?

A controversial compact to manage the waters of the Great Lakes through this century will be considered by eight state legislatures and Congress in the years ahead. Residents of the Great Lakes region need to become familiar with these issues and active participants in protecting this precious, life-supporting resource.

Peter Annin is associate director of the Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources (IJNR). For more information on the IJNR visit www.ijnr.org. For more information on the Great Lakes or to purchase the book, visit www.greatlakeswaterwars.com.



Step It Up Event Nov. 3

By: **RANDY CUNNINGHAM**

Step It Up 2007 is on the march again. The national campaign to launch a grass roots movement to combat climate change first drew national attention on April 14, when 1,400 rallies, marches and other events were held to demand an 80 percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2050. In Cleveland, Step It Up sponsored a press conference of local corporate, labor and political leaders who urged climate action, and on April 14 a rally was held at Edgewater Park, that was attended by more than a hundred people, including many young families with children.

On November 3, a year before elections, Step It Up is calling for a day of national action to find out, in the words of national leader Bill McKibben, "who is simply a politi-



More than 100 people gathered at Cleveland's Step It Up rally at Edgewater Park demanding an 80 percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2050.

cian, and who is ready to be a leader" on issues impacting climate change. There will be four demands put before our political leaders: (1) 80 percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2050; (2) Conserve 10 percent of our energy use in three years; (3) No new coal fired power plants and (4) Establish a Green Job Corps.

Local Step It Up organizers are planning a Cleveland event on the afternoon of November 3, probably in downtown Cleveland. Information on the local event will be kept up-to-date, on the local action page of **Step It Up's website at www.stepitup2007.org or contact Randy Cunningham at (216)-631-3337; randino@sbcglobal.net** to be put on the email list. Hope to see you on November 3!

Photo by Kim Yanoshik