

The lower Huron River because of its proximity to the Detroit metropolitan area can best serve as a source of pleasure and recreation for the people of the region if it is in an unpolluted condition. Water quality criteria should be established relative to the desired uses and effort must be made to achieve the chosen standards. Possibly the river could be safely used for swimming, boating, and water skiing, which uses are now prevented by Huron River Watershed Inter-governmental Committee's policy of 1960 enabling Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti to expand sewage treatment plants.

To illustrate this we quote the following:

Mr. Rehard, who is chairman of the Supervisor's Inter-County Committee pointed out that the National Sanitation Foundation study presents some long term alternatives for both water supply and waste water disposal. It may be that the lower Huron River is more valuable to the bulk of the population in the Detroit Metropolitan Area for the matter of recreation than for waste disposal.¹

The March 1966 report from the Fish and Wildlife Service concludes:

The high fish and wildlife values attributed to this project (The Mill Creek Reservoir) should not serve to minimize the importance of existing high values of fish and wildlife of the lower Huron River and western Lake Erie. The low-flow augmentation made possible with this project, unless combined with the abatement of pollution at its source (Ann Arbor) could very easily result in a large increase of ineffectively treated wastes being dumped into the Huron River. Should this occur the Mill Creek Reservoir project could result in a net loss to fish and wildlife downstream from the reservoir.

The Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority has obtained park sites on the banks of the Huron River between Ann Arbor and the river's mouth at Lake Erie. Obviously these sites would increase in value if the river could be used more intensively and the water quality improved.

The Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission complains in its recreation study, 1966, that the "disadvantage of the Mill Creek impoundment is its distance from the major center of population." Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority's lower Huron River properties are much nearer and surely would be more frequently used.

In view of the foregoing it's difficult to justify the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation figures.

Is it possible that your committee can devise more realistic methods of establishing values?

Would stricter pollution controls at the sources, tertiary treatment, or interception of effluents furnish greater total benefits than flow augmentation to dilute the wastes in the river?

Before the construction of this reservoir is approved a number of alternative solutions should be considered. How can local governments and citizens obtain sufficient accurate information to present the community with choices? For example:

1. Recommendation of the National Sanitation Foundation for long range greater metropolitan area water supply and sewage interceptor system under the management of the Detroit Water Board. These studies were directed by Abel Wolman, Lewis Ayres, Richard Hazen, George Hubbell, and Louis Howson and give the most completely documented and thorough analysis of the problems of the area, indi-

¹ Huron River Watershed Council, executive committee minutes, May 5, 1966.