



HOW **GREEN** IS YOUR GOVERNOR?

GOVERNOR RICK SNYDER
MIDTERM REPORT CARD
2011-2012



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Director and Board President.....	1
How Did We Get Our Grades?.....	2
Grades At A Glance.....	3
Overall Grade.....	4
Great Lakes & Michigan Waters.....	5
Land Conservation.....	6
Clean Air and Energy.....	7
Transportation.....	8
Agriculture.....	9
Toxics & Hazardous Chemicals.....	10
Budget.....	10
Appointments & Administrative Decisions.....	11
Michigan's Future.....	12
Appendices.....	13

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Dear Conservation Voter:

Two years ago, we all watched as Governor Rick Snyder was sworn into office after campaigning on a strong conservation platform. He included environmental protection in his “10-point plan to reinvent Michigan” and reiterated countless times that it is imperative we work harder to protect the Great Lakes and Michigan’s natural resources. Two years later—and following his special message on energy and environment in late November—we have seen both positive and negative work come out of his office and, of course, many of his stated goals still unaddressed.

The Governor always promises relentless positive action; this *Midterm Report Card* is the result of our own relentless tracking. The Governor is also consistently seeking metrics to determine progress—a practice we rely on, ourselves—so we are happy to share our metrics of his performance with him now.

Prior to the Governor’s inauguration, and even before he received his party’s nomination, we made a decision to endorse the Governor in his primary election due to his commitments to Michigan’s Great Lakes, lands, air, and waters. We were in attendance at the Republican Party Convention in which he declared that the Great Lakes would be a pillar of his work to reinvent Michigan. In our mission to return conservation and environment to their rightful place as truly non-partisan issues, these were welcome words.

Once elected, though, we finished tracking his words and began tracking his actions. At this point in his time in office, the Governor is receiving a passing, though not impressive, grade of C.

Governor Snyder is now in the middle of his first term and has spent two years in office—enough time to impact Michigan’s environment substantially, for better or worse. Throughout these first two years, Michigan LCV kept track of the Governor’s actions through our online tool, *How Green is your Governor?* We have held Governor Snyder accountable for each action he’s taken that has impacted our land, air and water.

We believe the halfway-point in Governor Snyder’s tenure is the perfect time to compile all of these actions into a comprehensive, *Midterm Report Card*. This *Report Card* offers Michigan citizens an entirely new mechanism for holding our Governor accountable. By summing up and weighting all the actions included in *How Green is Your Governor?* since January 2011, it is now possible to get a quick and clear picture of the Governor’s grade in regard to protecting Michigan’s natural resources and how he has chosen to lead, to this point.

In the pages of the *How Green is Your Governor? Midterm Report Card*, you will find out exactly what the Governor has (or has not) been up to over the past two years. We’ve given Governor Snyder an overall letter grade, as well as grades for eight individual issue areas.

It is our mission to hold elected officials accountable for the decisions they make and the impact those decisions have on our invaluable natural resources. As the leader of our state—the Governor of *the* Great Lakes State—Rick Snyder has a unique responsibility. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the Governor uses his next two years in office to build further on his successes and improve upon on his failings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Wozniak".

Lisa Wozniak
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Welch Lykins".

Elizabeth Welch Lykins
President, Board of Directors

How did we get our Grades?



Since day one of Governor Snyder's term, Michigan LCV has held the Governor accountable for the actions he makes that impact the environment. We've been able to do this through our online accountability tool, *How Green is your Governor?*, by following all of the actions of the Snyder Administration—bill signings, vetoes, appointments, executive orders, permit approvals and denials—and giving each one a score of either positive, neutral, or negative. Summaries of each action with the accompanying score are displayed on the webpage, as is a running total of every decision.

How Green is your Governor? is a non-partisan, honest and fair assessment of the Governor's actions over the past two years. To create the *How Green is your Governor? Midterm Report Card*, we reviewed every action that was scored on *How Green is your Governor?*, categorized the actions by issue, and gave each a weight—from 1 to 4—based on its environmental impact. Some actions were counted in more than one category if they were relevant to several issues. From this, we were able to calculate a score for each action, multiplying the weight by +1, 0, or -1 for a positive, neutral, or negative action, respectively. From there, we converted the weighted average into a Grade Point Average, the same standard GPA system we all remember from high school. We also calculated the weighted average of every action for our overall grade, which led to the final grade for the Governor of C.

We've also included Appendices at the end with every categorized action, and a table explaining how the actions were weighted. The descriptions in the Appendices explain each action, but they are not the full summaries included on the website. To find complete summaries, and to find out more about the Governor's actions during the past years, visit the *How Green is your Governor?* page on the Michigan LCV website (michiganlcv.org/how-green-governor). ■



GOVERNOR RICK SNYDER

GRADES AT A GLANCE

OVERALL GRADE

C

GREAT LAKES
& MICHIGAN WATERS

C+

LAND CONSERVATION

C-

CLEAN AIR
AND ENERGY

D

TRANSPORTATION

A

AGRICULTURE

B

TOXICS AND
HAZARDOUS
CHEMICALS

F

BUDGET

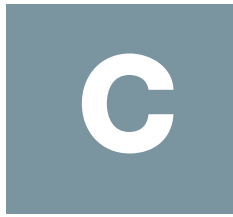
C+

APPOINTMENTS
AND ADMINISTRATIVE
DECISIONS

C+



OVERALL GRADE



Moving Michigan Forward. This well-known slogan of Governor Snyder's, meant to signal his drive for progress in Michigan, has been achieved only in part when it comes to Michigan's natural resources.

When Michigan LCV endorsed Governor Snyder in the 2010 primary election, we had high hopes that his intention to “move Michigan forward” would carry over into the environmental arena. What we've seen, however, is steady improvement in certain areas, like transportation; halting progress in areas such as Great Lakes protection; and backward movement in regard to subjects like air quality.

In too many instances, Governor Snyder let the anti-conservation Legislature lead on environmental issues regardless of significant public opposition. We acknowledge that the Governor was dealt a tough hand in the current Legislature; many, many environmentally-destructive bills were placed on his desk with the expectation of a signature. Despite the fervor of the Legislature, though, the Governor always has the opportunity to veto. In all cases, a veto was viable but, for the most part, the Governor was publicly silent in the face of the hostile Legislature when our valuable environment was threatened, and signed the misguided bills placed on his desk. These are cases where Michigan LCV expected a leader, but Governor Snyder fell short.

Governor Snyder did take a critical stand to protect Michigan's natural resources when he vetoed House Bill 4326, a bill that would have prevented his office from putting in place protections for the Great Lakes that are stricter than those at the federal level. As Michiganders, it is our responsibility to ensure their continued health and, with this veto, Governor Snyder lived up to that obligation. We loudly commended him for this decision, which both illustrated a strong desire to protect our resources, and the **kind of leadership we wish we had seen more often.**

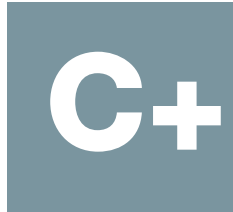
The Governor and Michigan LCV agree: We need “relentless positive action” in order to “move Michigan forward.” At times we agreed with his means by which to do so, but more often than not we found ourselves forced to assign him negative marks for his **passivity in the face of devastating**

legislation. His energy and environment address in November 2012 gave him a last minute boost to his overall grade; we hope it is just the beginning of a renewed effort to take more proactive leadership.

We would love nothing more than to assign Governor Snyder an A+ on the next *Report Card* and have him proudly take it home and pin it to the refrigerator. For now, though, if we were to scrawl a quick note at the bottom of this one it would simply say that “the Governor shows remarkable potential, but he has yet to really apply himself. As a bit of a nerd, he must better stand up for himself when confronted by bullies in the Legislature.” ■



GREAT LAKES & MICHIGAN WATERS



In December 2011, Governor Snyder made a landmark decision to veto a bill that would have restricted the Governor and his agencies from taking any action to protect the Great Lakes that is stricter than federal standards.

This veto keeps the doors open for Governor Snyder and future governors to take the necessary steps to protect our Great Lakes, especially when the State Legislature and the Federal Government do not act strongly enough. While we commend the Governor for this decision, **the veto set him up to make some bolder moves to protect Michigan's water resources and he didn't deliver.** On the other hand, the "Beach Grooming Bill" that he did sign deregulates an efficient administrative process to protect fragile shoreline habitats and another package of bills he signed weakened DEQ oversight for leaking underground storage tanks, thus increasing the risk of water pollution.

Additionally, a misguided decision made by the Snyder Administration was to **approve a permit to a large mining company, Orvana, for a sulfide mine in the Upper Peninsula** within 200 feet of the Lake Superior shoreline.

In November 2012, the Governor announced that he would **assume the role of co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors.** This role sets him up to be the responsible steward of the Great Lakes that Michigan needs. He has already called for a summit of Great Lakes governors, an ideal opportunity to exhibit regional leadership and improve his "Great Lakes" grade in the future. ■

Earning the grade

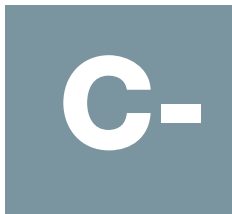
- **Thursday, December 1, 2011** Issuing his first veto since taking office, Governor Snyder halts the passage of House Bill 4326. This bill would have prevented the Governor and the agencies he directs from establishing protections for the Great Lakes that are stricter than those at the federal level.
- **Monday, April 30, 2012** The DEQ approves a permit to Orvana Copperwood Resources US Corp. for a sulfide mine in Gogebic County.
- **Wednesday, November 28, 2012** During his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder announces that he will assume the role of co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors.

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.A.





LAND CONSERVATION



The Legislature forged some strong attacks on Michigan’s public lands during Governor Snyder’s first two years that, unfortunately, the Governor ended up signing into law.

The most publicized bills by far were Senate Bill 248 and Senate Bill 1130 that were signed into law and, consequently, will jeopardize Michigan’s most treasured forests and beaches. SB 248—which limits the amount of land the state can own and manage—was signed despite vehement opposition from several organizations, land conservancies, and sportsmen. We saw very much the same picture with SB 1130; Michigan citizens fought the Legislature on this bill all the way through both chambers, but they could not stop the Governor from giving it his approval. This bill promotes development on critical sand dune areas along Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. Although the Legislature was the main culprit for introducing these high-profile, destructive bills, we had hoped that the Governor would take a cue from thousands of Michigan’s citizens who will miss out on some irreplaceable recreational and economic opportunities because of these bills.

The legislative drive to weaken public land management and preservation did not end with the land cap and dunes bill. Several other bills, such as **a bill to allow mining roads through state land, a bill to weaken protections for shoreline habitats, and several bills that threaten the admin-**

istrative procedures for managing the Natural Resources Trust Fund have also been passed through the legislature and ultimately signed by Governor Snyder. The anti-conservation Legislature is clearly the root of the problem, but we were disappointed to see that Governor Snyder did not put the misbehaving Legislature back in its place and stand up for our public lands. ■

Earning the grade

- **Monday, July 2, 2012** Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1052, the “Beach Grooming Bill.”
- **Monday, July 2, 2012** Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 248, the Land Cap Bill. This legislation, now Public Act 240 of 2012, caps the amount of land the state can own and manage for conservation and recreational purposes.
- **Tuesday, August 7, 2012** Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1130, which makes it harder for the DEQ to protect sand dunes from irresponsible construction, undoing decades of responsible development.

For a full list of the Governor’s actions in this category, see Table 1.B.

CLEAN AIR AND ENERGY



Over the past two years, Governor Snyder's actions have indicated that clean air in Michigan just hasn't been high on his list of priorities. Should he follow through on all of his stated goals in his energy and environment speech in November 2012, however, we may see welcome improvement.

The coal plant approvals and permit extensions made on his watch have been the most discouraging. Emissions (**including the neurotoxin, Mercury**) from coal plants increase air pollution, which causes severe and widespread health problems such as asthma and heart attacks. The solution to decreasing incidences of these dangerous health problems is to transition away from our reliance on coal plants to long-term investment in clean, renewable energy. The Governor did not get on board with renewable energy when presented with an unparalleled opportunity during the 2012 elections; he released a public statement and went on a statewide tour **opposing Proposal 3, a proposal that would have required Michigan to get 25% of its energy from renewable sources by 2025.** This proposal was projected to vastly improve Michigan's air quality. As the Governor inferred in his energy and environment speech, however, he **says he supports renewable energy, and actually wants to see it grow in the coming years.** That is yet to be fully seen. During that speech, he designated 2013 as a year for planning and conversation about where our energy policy will go next. Michigan currently has a law that mandates we get 10% of our energy from renewable sources by 2015. By initiating conversation about this topic now, Governor Snyder can ensure that we are

prepared once we reach 2015, and are not falling off an energy cliff without a plan. Today, the connection between clean air, renewable energy and the health of Michigan citizens is undeniable. We hope the Governor lives up to his statements about our future energy policy and that 2013-14 brings much needed improvements with Michigan's air quality. ■

Earning the grade

- **Tuesday, February 15, 2011** The Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) approves an installation permit for a new coal-fired generator at the James DeYoung power plant in Holland.
- **Tuesday, March 1, 2011** Governor Snyder lends his support to maintaining coal-fired power generation in the Upper Peninsula.
- **Wednesday, November 28, 2012** During his Energy And Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder shows his support for increasing renewable energy in Michigan and calls for open dialogue and several meetings during 2013 to plan out our next steps for renewable energy.

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.C.





TRANSPORTATION



Thus far, Governor Snyder has shown a strong commitment to revitalizing Michigan's transportation infrastructure by expanding on cleaner, more efficient mass transit, with his main focus being high-speed rail and regional transit.

The Governor has acted on various opportunities to increase funding for high-speed rail and has consistently kept smart growth, responsible land use, and reduction of carbon emissions as priorities in his transportation centered decision-making. From our perspective, efficient transit is a necessary step toward both reducing tailpipe emissions and encouraging denser development in cities, rather than urban sprawl which leads to negative environmental impacts.

In May 2011, when the Obama Administration announced available federal funding for high-speed rail projects, **Governor Snyder jumped at the opportunity for funds** rejected by other states. The **almost \$200 million** in funds will be used for a rail system running between Kalamazoo and Dearborn. Since this money could not be used unless the state came up with matching funds, Lt. Governor Calley* **signed Senate Bill 237**, a bill that allocated the **necessary funds to secure the project** and get it underway. Although Snyder's efforts have been most prominent in high-speed rail, he's recognized the need for other mass transit reforms as well, such as the **creation of regional transit authorities** to allow for more efficient inter- and intra-city travel. Governor Snyder is off to a good start with revamping Michigan's transit, and he continues to push for high-speed rail improvements and coordinated mass transit. ■

Earning the grade

- **Monday, May 9, 2011** Governor Snyder joins U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary, Ray LaHood, in announcing that Michigan will receive nearly \$200 million in federal funding for high-speed rail upgrades.
- **Friday, September 30, 2011** Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 237, which provides the funding to support high speed rail improvements.
- **Tuesday, October 16, 2012** Governor Snyder joins US Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, and Detroit Mayor, Dave Bing, in a public statement to urge the legislature to pass a bill to create a regional transit authority in Southeast Michigan.

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.D.

AGRICULTURE

B

Governor Snyder has shown promise in recognizing the importance that agriculture has to Michigan's economy, and has acted accordingly. His first agricultural action was signing the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program into law.

There has been dispute about the effectiveness of this program, but the intent is to encourage thousands of farmers to lessen their negative impact on the environment. The Governor also made an important decision by signing **House Bill 5717, a bill that provides loans to farmers who have suffered devastating crop losses due to drought.** These loans helped sustain farmers in a difficult time, allowing them to preserve their farmland and reduce the likelihood of low-cost sales for irresponsible development. Here, Governor Snyder showed his commitment to the agricultural economy, and acknowledged the devastating impacts that climate change can have on crops. This was a landmark decision, and in the future we'd like to see more preventative measures being taken to control climate change and ensure a longer-term solution to mass-scale crop loss. ■

Earning the grade

- **Wednesday, March 8, 2011** Governor Snyder signs his first two bills as Governor, thus codifying into law the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP). Thousands of farms will now participate in a program designed to lower their negative impact on the environment. The ultimate effect of this program will rest in its implementation and oversight.
- **Tuesday, July 12, 2011** Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4666, which helps the state collect \$5 million that will go to support the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund, a fund that assists local governments in implementing programs to preserve farmland and open space.
- **Tuesday, June 26, 2012** Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5717, a bill that provides loans to farmers who have suffered devastating crop losses due to unpredictable and abnormal weather this spring. This bill will help to keep their land in production which will both fuel Michigan's agricultural economy and prevent other types of more destructive land use.

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.E.



TOXICS & HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS



Governor Snyder started his term making only disappointing decisions regarding hazardous chemicals that will threaten both the environment and public health, despite a strong campaign plank on the issues in his 2010

white papers. He has signed a bill to **divert money away from programs designed to reduce our use of hazardous chemicals**, and the DEQ also issued a permit for the Romulus deep-injection well, a well that has a long track record of spills and poor management. While Governor Snyder has not been presented with enough opportunities to truly clarify his position on hazardous chemicals and toxics—a failure of the legislature certainly—we hope that he reverses this trend quickly. ■

Earning the grade

- **Wednesday, September 21, 2011** Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 450, which diverts money from DEQ programs designed to reduce our use of hazardous chemicals and, instead, uses those funds to staff the Air Quality Division's Permit-to-Install Program.
- **Monday, September 26, 2011** The DEQ issues a permit to the Romulus deep-injection well, clearing the way for it to begin accepting hazardous materials. This well has a long track record of spills and poor management. It is heavily opposed by the local community.

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.F.

BUDGET



In 2011, Governor Snyder put Michigan's environment and recreation opportunities at risk by **slashing the budgets of the DEQ and the DNR by 15.1% and 13.5%, respectively**. These

cuts left both departments heavily underfunded and understaffed, putting a huge strain on them to properly manage and preserve Michigan's environment. This decision continued a decade long trend of budget cuts that started with the Granholm Administration. In 2012, however, **the Governor partially redeemed himself by approving funding increases for both departments**. This was a necessary choice to get Michigan back on track, but it doesn't make up for the extreme cuts the previous year. Fortunately, we do not anticipate further cuts in the coming budget year to be proposed, either.

Despite the controversial 2011 budget cuts, Governor Snyder showed that he recognizes the connection between a healthy environment and a robust economy to some extent—in early 2011, he signed a bill **to increase funding for the all-important Pure Michigan Campaign**, a campaign that

has brought approximately \$1 billion into Michigan's economy by showcasing Michigan's natural beauty and enticing visitors from around the nation to our great state to appreciate the same incredible outdoor opportunities we all know and love. ■

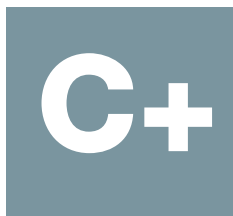
Earning the grade

- **Wednesday, March 16, 2011** Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4160 which increases funding for Pure Michigan® and supports tourism.
- **Tuesday, June 21, 2011** Governor Snyder signs the budget recently passed through the State House and Senate that includes deep cuts to the Department of Environmental Quality by 15.1% and to the Department of Natural Resources by 13.5%.
- **Tuesday, June 26, 2012** Governor Snyder signs the Fiscal Year 2013 budget, which includes funding increases for both the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.G.



APPOINTMENTS & ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS



Most of the Governor's appointments during the first two years were given neutral marks and deemed "wait and see" decisions. At the time of each appointment, it was simply too soon to tell whether the particular appointee would turn out to be an advocate for the protection of our land, air and water.

Two examples of this scenario were **the appointment of Keith Creagh as director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**, and, with Patty Birkholz's resignation, the appointment of Jon W. Allan to Director of the Office of the Great Lakes. **The appointment of Birkholz, herself, at the start of the Governor's term was an exceptionally positive move**, as she has a long history advocacy for

Great Lakes protection. On the other hand, the Governor's **appointment of Justice Brian Zahra to the Michigan Supreme Court was a short-sighted appointment that puts Michigan's land, air and water at risk**. Zahra has a record of environmentally-detrimental decisions, and voted against public disclosure of chemical waste disposal from industrial animal operations. ■

Earning the grade

- **Monday, Jan. 10, 2011** Governor Snyder names Judge Brian Zahra of the First District Court of Appeals to the Michigan Supreme Court to fill the seat vacated by Justice Corrigan.
- **Thursday, December 1, 2011** Governor Snyder vetoes House Bill 4326. This bill would have prevented the Governor and the agencies he directs from establishing protections for the Great Lakes that are stricter than those at the federal level.
- **Tuesday, October 2, 2012** With Patty Birkholz's resignation, Governor Snyder appoints Jon W. Allan as the new Director of the Office of the Great Lakes.

For a full list of the Governor's actions in this category, see Table 1.H.

MICHIGAN'S FUTURE

Governor Snyder still has at least two years left in office. In that remaining time, it is our sincere hope that the Governor makes environmental protections a greater priority throughout his Administration and in his dealings with the Legislature. Very frankly, without Governor Snyder's leadership, the Legislature is unlikely to improve its own unimpressive score.

To assist the Governor and the Legislature in prioritizing their work on environmental issues in the coming session, Michigan LCV's Education Fund convened over 30 environmental and conservation groups to unanimously agree upon the top three priorities to focus on. This process—known as the Great Michigan agenda-setting process, and detailed at www.greatmichigan.org—gives the Governor the opportunity to work in partnership with the hundreds of thousands of Michiganders' represented by these organizations toward a healthier, cleaner, and more vibrant Great Lakes State. Specifically, the priorities for Governor Snyder in regard to conservation and environment in the coming two years should be the following:

- ✓ Take a stand against the current legislative assault on public land. Our public spaces define Michigan as a state and offer exceptional opportunities for all Michigan citizens and visitors to hunt, fish, hike, and camp. **The Governor must signal early on that the Legislature cannot continue their assault on Michiganders' public lands, as was witnessed over the past two years.** If presented with harmful legislation, the Governor must back his statements with a veto.
- ✓ **Seize the opportunity for a stronger economy and healthier air by advocating for increased renewable energy and energy efficiency in Michigan.**

The majority of Michigan citizens continue to support increased renewable energy, and the investments, jobs, and health improvements it will bring to our state. Similarly, Governor Snyder has called increasing energy efficiency a "no regrets" policy; we couldn't agree more and urge him to advocate strongly for improvements throughout the state.

- ✓ Advocate for safer practices for hydraulic fracturing and natural gas extraction to ensure it does not compromise our lakes and land. Natural gas will be a part of Michigan's energy future and, as such, citizens deserve to feel secure that it is not contaminating their water or draining their fresh water. **Fracking must be done both safely and transparently through chemical disclosure and closing the oil and gas loophole in reporting water withdrawals.** Michigan families deserve nothing less.

The first two years of the Governor Snyder's term have been marked by legislative bullying, resulting in weakened environmental protections and a lack of a stated direction of his vision for Michigan's natural resources. His November 2012 energy and environment speech has the potential to be either a turning point or simply another speech. As was the case with his bold promises in his 2010 campaign, however, those significant words must be met with significant actions.

As ever, Michigan LCV stands ready to hold the Governor accountable for every decision he makes while serving as the Executive for the Great Lakes State. This *Report Card* is only the halfway point. Ultimately, it is your hands—as a Conservation Voter—to ensure that the Governor hears your voice in the coming years. Together, we can push the Governor to improve his grades! ■

APPENDICES

HOW GREEN IS YOUR GOVERNOR? ACTIONS

Key of Weighted Actions

1 = Little Impact

Unlikely to affect Michigan's environment to a great extent. The impact that it has will probably be localized.

2 = Moderate Impact

Will affect certain facets of Michigan's environment, but impacts will probably be minimal.

3 = Extensive Impact

Will affect several facets of Michigan's environment and will change the status quo. Will create visible changes in Michigan's environment.

4 = Highest Impact

Will affect most, if not all, facets of Michigan's environment. These decisions have such a great impact that they could alter the environment, and the role it plays in Michigan's economy, on a statewide scale.

Table 1.A: Great Lakes & Michigan Waters—All Actions

Date	Description of Action	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
January 3, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Patty Birkholz as New Director of Michigan Office of Great Lakes.	3	●
March 16, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Patty Birkholz to both the Council of Great Lakes Governors and the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee.	1	●
May 6, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Rich Baird, CEO of MI Partners, to the Great Lakes Protection Fund Board of Directors.	1	●
July 13, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 422 which allows the DEQ to generate approximately \$7.3 million more from fee collection for certain water quality protections.	1	●
November 10, 2011	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4875, which removes the requirement of a secondary liner on experimental landfill projects.	2	●
December 1, 2011	Issuing his first veto since taking office, Governor Snyder halts the passage of House Bill 4326. This bill would have prevented the Governor and the agencies he directs from establishing protections for the Great Lakes that are stricter than those at the federal level.	4	●
December 21, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bills 508-510, a package of bills that creates the Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Council.	2	●
March 22, 2012	Lt. Governor Calley signs Senate Bill 778, a bill to protect public access to Michigan's lakes, rivers, and streams.	1	●
April 27, 2012	The DEQ issues a final denial to nine gas well permits for Antrim Shale gas on the Song of the Morning Ranch yoga retreat within the Pigeon River Country boundaries.	1	●
April 30, 2012	The DEQ approves a permit to Orvana Copperwood Resources US Corp. for a sulfide mine in Gogebic County.	3	●
May 3, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bills 528-533, which weaken DEQ oversight for leaking underground storage tanks.	3	●
July 2, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1052, the "Beach Grooming Bill."	3	●
September 13, 2012	The Snyder Administration gives a statement opposing Senate Bill 1235 at a Natural Resources Commission (NRC) meeting. This bill removes the authority of the NRC to prohibit invasive species from being brought into Michigan by taking away its ability to add or remove organisms to the prohibited species list.	2	●
September 13, 2012	The Snyder Administration gives a statement opposing Senate Bill 1212 at a meeting of the Committee on Natural Resources, Environment, and Great Lakes. This bill weakens current ballast water requirements for ships entering the Great Lakes.	2	●
October 2, 2012	With Patty Birkholz's resignation, Governor Snyder appoints Jon W. Allan as the new Director of the Office of the Great Lakes.	3	●
October 17, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5292, a bill that amends NREPA to allow disabled military veterans to obtain hunting and fishing licenses free of charge.	1	●
November 8, 2012	Department of Natural Resources Director Keith Creagh has adjusted plans to change regulations to increase the brook trout bag limit in the Upper Peninsula. Previously, Creagh planned to increase the bag limit from five trout to 10.	1	●
November 28, 2012	In a special address supplementing his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder announces that, with the Attorney General, he will send a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to remind them of their obligation to take actions to protect Michigan's aquatic, endangered species from the harm that invasive species will inflict if they enter and inhabit our Great Lakes.	1	●

Table 1.A: Great Lakes & Michigan Waters—All Actions (continued)

Date	Description of Action	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
November 28, 2012	During his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder announces that he will assume the role of co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors.	2	●
November 28, 2012	During his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder calls on the Department of Environmental Quality to reestablish a water use advisory council.	1	●
December, 27, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bills 6007-6012. This package of bills changes the ad valorem tax structure currently in place for nonferrous minerals to a severance tax structure.	3	●
December 31, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bills 5673-5676. This package of bills expand the Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund.	2	●

Table 1.B: Land Conservation—All Actions

Date	Description of Action	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
March 8, 2011	Governor Snyder signs his first two bills as Governor, codifying into law the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP).	1	●
April 1, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 140, approving over \$100 million in grants for recreation projects and land acquisitions, showing support for Michigan's parks and recreation.	2	●
June 28, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Bill 4111, which will expand volunteer opportunities in Michigan's state lands and wildlife conservation areas.	1	●
July 12, 2011	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4666, which will help the state collect \$5 million that will go to support the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund, a fund that assists local governments in implementing programs to preserve farmland and open space.	1	●
July 21, 2011	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4746. The bill changes zoning regulations for mining operations and it weakens the state's ability to protect our valuable natural resources.	3	●
September 21, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 449, which increases the solid waste surcharge fee (a separate fee in addition to the usual payments and taxes) on landfills within Michigan from \$0.07 to \$0.12 per cubic yard.	1	●
September 23, 2011	Governor Snyder forms a blue ribbon committee on state parks and outdoor recreation.	1	●
December 27, 2011	Lt. Governor Calley signs House Bill 4298. This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to grant land to private citizens for building roads on state-owned property if certain conditions are met.	3	●
January 10, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints Rex Schlaybaugh Jr. and Annoesjka Steinman to the Natural Resources Commission, an advisory council to the DNR that works to conserve, protect, and manage Michigan's natural resources.	1	●
March 6, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4754, which allows the state to sell a portion of a former railroad in Petoskey for conversion into a recreational trail.	1	●
April 27, 2012	The DEQ issues a final denial to nine gas well permits for Antrim Shale gas on the Song of the Morning Ranch yoga retreat within the Pigeon River Country boundaries.	1	●
April 30, 2012	The DEQ approves a permit to Orvana Copperwood Resources US Corp. for a sulfide mine in Gogebic County.	3	●
May 23, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 499, a bill that allows telecommunication facilities to be built along trails on state land.	1	●
June 25, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints former Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) director, Keith Creagh as the new director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). To fill Creagh's spot, the Governor has also appointed former Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Legislative Affairs Director, Jamie Clover Adams as the new MDARD director.	2	●

Table 1.B: Land Conservation—All Actions (continued)

Date	Description of Action	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
June 27, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5660, a bill that exempts frozen pouch drinks from Michigan's Bottle Bill.	3	●
July 2, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5414, a bill that expands the amount of state land that is designated as dark sky preserves.	1	●
July 2, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1052, the "Beach Grooming Bill."	3	●
July 2, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 248, the Land Cap Bill. This legislation, now Public Act 240 of 2012, caps the amount of land the state can own and manage for conservation and recreational purposes.	4	●
August 1, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5364, which allocates \$38 million from the Natural Resources Trust Fund to almost 100 land and conservation projects.	2	●
August 7, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1130, which makes it harder for the DEQ to protect sand dunes from irresponsible construction, undoing decades of responsible development.	4	●
September 13, 2012	The Snyder Administration gives a statement opposing Senate Bill 1235 at a Natural Resources Commission (NRC) meeting. This bill removes the authority of the NRC to prohibit invasive species from being brought into Michigan by taking away its ability to add or remove organisms to the prohibited species list.	2	●
September 13, 2012	The Snyder Administration gives a statement opposing Senate Bill 1238 at a Natural Resources Commission (NRC) meeting. This bill imposes term limits on the Natural Resources Trust Fund Board, allowing just two four year terms.	1	●
October 17, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5292, a bill that amends NREPA to allow disabled military veterans to obtain hunting and fishing licenses free of charge.	1	●
October 18, 2012	The Department of Natural Resources releases its draft 2013—2018 Statewide Outdoor Recreation plan for public review.	1	●
November 28, 2012	Governor Snyder calls on the legislature to support legislation to facilitate management of urban and rural public land in a special address supplementing his Energy and Environment Special Message.	1	●
November 28, 2012	In a special address supplementing his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder directs the Department of Natural Resources to convene a summit of the Timber Industry in early 2013.	1	●
November 28, 2012	During his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder emphasizes the importance of Michigan's trails and proposes to increase the amount of miles that we have. More specifically, he proposes to connect a series of trails throughout the Lower and Upper Peninsula so that it would be possible to hike all the way from Belle Isle near Detroit, through the Upper Peninsula and into Wisconsin.	1	●
November 28, 2012	During his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder designates 2013 as a year for planning and developing a new recycling program to move Michigan toward more comprehensive recycling efforts.	2	●
December 13, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints Michigan Natural Resources Commissions (NRC) member, J.R. Richardson as chair of the Commission.	1	●
December 31, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1280, which severely limits the NRC's role within the DNR.	3	●
December 31, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1238, which imposes term limits on the Natural Resources Trust Fund Board.	2	●
December 27, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1328, which weakens and rescinds regulations for the cleanup of contaminated property.	2	●
December 28, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 1031, which allows a municipality to use land that it has acquired from the state for recreational purposes.	1	●
January 2, 2013	Lt. Governor Calley signs Senate Bills 1261-1266, which revives the Michigan Civilian Conservation Corps.	2	●

Table 1.C: Clean Air and Energy—All Actions

Date	Description	Environmental Impact	Our Rating
January 5, 2011	Unexpectedly, the Snyder Administration appeals the lower court ruling which would have helped clear the way for the unnecessary construction of the Holland coal plant.	3	●
February 15, 2011	The Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) approves an installation permit for a new coal-fired generator at the James DeYoung power plant in Holland.	3	●
March 1, 2011	Governor Snyder lends his support to maintaining coal-fired power generation in the Upper Peninsula.	3	●
May 13, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Bill Hughes and Bill Stough to the Small Business Clean Air Compliance Advisory Panel. The goal of the panel is to help small businesses thrive through improved environmental performance.	1	●
June 29, 2011	The Department of Environmental Quality announces that it approved a permit to install a coal-fired power plant in Rogers City.	3	●
July 26, 2011	The Department of Environmental Quality gives Consumers Energy an 18-month extension on a permit for a proposed new coal plant in Bay City.	3	●
September 2, 2011	Governor Snyder issues a statement explicitly supporting President Obama's decision directing the U.S. EPA to suspend implementation of a proposed, updated rule for ozone standards.	3	●
December 20, 2011	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5190 into law, a bill that solidifies the elimination of the Low Income and Energy Efficiency Fund (LIEEF) that a court decision had previously struck down. HB 5190 removes energy efficiency as a priority in ratepayer protection.	2	●
March 30, 2012	Governor Snyder signs an agreement with four other Great Lakes states and the Obama Administration regarding offshore wind energy that requires the states and agencies to share their existing regulations on offshore wind energy in order to increase collaboration and streamline efficient development.	2	●
April 19, 2012	Lt. Governor Calley signs House Bill 4207, which prohibits residential burning of certain waste materials, but also prevents the DEQ from enforcing rules to prohibit open burning of waste materials not listed in the bill.	1	●
November 28, 2012	During his Energy And Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder shows his support for increasing renewable energy in Michigan and calls for open dialogue and several meetings during 2013 to plan out our next steps for renewable energy.	1	●
November 28, 2012	In a special address supplementing his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder commends the Michigan Senate for passing a bill package to deliver low-income heating assistance to those in need that includes provisions emphasizing energy efficiency. He has also called on the House to join this effort and pass the package of bills, as well.	1	●
November 28, 2012	In a special address supplementing his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Snyder calls upon the legislature to pass a bill in 2013 to require information about energy efficiency in home inspection reports.	1	●
November 28, 2012	During his Energy and Environment Special Message, Governor Synder proposes that the state creates a strategic reserve of natural gas so that it can become a resource for long term investment.	1	●
December 28, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4561, which doubles the span of time between reviews of Michigan's construction codes from every three years to every six years.	2	●
December 31, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5727, which requires government units to implement energy efficiency measures.	2	●
January 2, 2013	Lt. Governor Calley signs Senate Bills 939-942, which creates the Environmental Leaders program	2	●

Table 1.D: Transportation—All Actions

Date	Description	Environmental Impact Level	
April 8, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Joe Schwarz to the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission.	2	●
May 9, 2011	Governor Snyder joins U.S Department of Transportation Secretary, Ray LaHood, in announcing that Michigan will receive nearly \$200 million in federal funding for high-speed rail upgrades.	3	●
July 21, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bills 4366 & 4367, which allow certain counties reorganize their public transportation systems to develop a regional, and therefore more efficient approach to public transit.	2	●
September 30, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 237, which provides the funding to support high speed rail improvements.	3	●
October 26, 2011	Governor Snyder reveals his plan to revitalize Michigan's transportation infrastructure. In his special message, Snyder offers well-defined requests of the legislature and is seeking action in this legislative session on his proposals.	3	●
October 16, 2012	Governor Snyder joins US Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, and Detroit Mayor, Dave Bing, in a public statement to urge the legislature to pass a bill to create a regional transit authority in Southeast Michigan.	3	●
December 19, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 967 and Senate Bill 445, legislation that authorizes MDOT to enter into a contract with a regional transit authority to designate certain lanes of streets or highways exclusively for public transit.	1	●
December 19, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bills 909-912, which create a regional transit authority in Southeast Michigan.	2	●

Table I.E: Agriculture

Date	Description	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
March 8, 2011	Governor Snyder signs his first two bills as Governor, thus codifying into law the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)	2	●
July 12, 2011	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4666, which helps the state collect \$5 million that will go to support the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund, a fund that assists local governments in implementing programs to preserve farmland and open space.	2	●
July 19, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 46, which allows ethanol production on land currently zoned for agriculture.	1	●
June 25, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints former Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) director, Keith Creagh as the new director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). To fill Creagh's spot, the Governor has also appointed former Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Legislative Affairs Director, Jamie Clover Adams as the new MDARD director.	2	●
June 26, 2012	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 5717, which provides loans to farmers who have suffered devastating crop losses due to unpredictable and abnormal weather this spring.	3	●

Table 1.F: Toxics and Hazardous Chemicals

Date	Description	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
September 21, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 450, which diverts money from DEQ programs designed to reduce our use of hazardous chemicals and, instead, uses those funds to staff the Air Quality Division's Permit-to-Install Program.	2	●
September 26, 2011	The DEQ issues a permit to the Romulus deep-injection well, clearing the way for it to begin accepting hazardous materials.	3	●







Table 1.G: Budget

Date	Description	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
March 16, 2011	Governor Snyder signs House Bill 4160 which increases funding for Pure Michigan® and supports tourism.	1	●
June 21, 2011	Governor Snyder signs the budget recently passed through the State House and Senate that includes deep cuts to the Department of Environmental Quality by 15.1% and to the Department of Natural Resources by 13.5%.	3	●
June 26, 2012	Governor Snyder signs the Fiscal Year 2013 budget, which includes funding increases for both the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). For FY 2013, The DEQ will receive approximately \$15 million more than last year, and the DNR will receive approximately \$8 million more.	3	●

Table 1.H: Appointments & Administrative Decisions—All Actions

Date	Description	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
January 1, 2011	Governor Snyder takes the Oath of Office and becomes the 48th Governor of Michigan.	1	●
January 3, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Patty Birkholz as New Director of Michigan Office of Great Lakes	2	●
January 4, 2011	The Snyder Administration officially splits the DNRE into the old Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Natural Resources. Dan Wyant and Rodney Stokes to head them up, respectively.	2	●
January 10, 2011	Governor Snyder names Judge Brian Zahra of the First District Court of Appeals to the Michigan Supreme Court to fill the seat vacated by Justice Corrigan.	3	●
January 21, 2011	Governor Snyder delivers his first State of the State address focusing on measurable progress for Michigan.	1	●
February 18, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Steven Hilfinger as the new director of Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth.	2	●
March 16, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Patty Birkholz to both the Council of Great Lakes Governors and the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee.	2	●
April 8, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Joe Schwarz to the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC).	2	●
May 6, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Rich Baird, CEO of MI Partners, to the Great Lakes Protection Fund Board of Directors.	1	●
May 13, 2011	Bill Hughes and Bill Stough have been appointed by Governor Snyder to the Small Business Clean Air Compliance Advisory Panel. The goal of the panel is to help small businesses thrive through improved environmental performance.	1	●
August 5, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Grant Trigger to the Great Lakes Compact Council and Regional Body, a council that helps coordinate Great Lakes states and provinces.	1	●
August 19, 2011	Governor Snyder appoints Valerie Brader to lead the energy efforts of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).	2	●
December 1, 2011	Governor Snyder vetoes House Bill 4326. This bill would have prevented the Governor and the agencies he directs from establishing protections for the Great Lakes that are stricter than those at the federal level.	4	●
December 6, 2011	Governor Snyder signs a package of regulatory reform bills, HB 4017, HB 4042, and HB 4043. The added regulations in these bills will increase administrative costs to the DEQ without a corresponding improvement in enforcement.	2	●
December 8, 2011	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bills 276-277 which will hamper the ability of the DEQ to protect Michigan's natural resources by creating unnecessary roadblocks to crafting necessary environmental standards.	2	●
January 10, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints Rex Schlaybaugh Jr. and Annoesjka Steinman to the Natural Resources Commission, an advisory council to the DNR that works to conserve, protect, and manage Michigan's natural resources.	1	●

Table 1.H: Appointments & Administrative Decisions—All Actions (continued)

Date	Description	Environmental Impact	MLCV Rating
February 20, 2012	The Office of Regulatory Reinvention (ORR) releases its recommendations regarding changes to environmental regulations in Michigan.	2	
March 16, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints two new justices to the Court of Appeals, Michael Riordan and Mark Boonstra. Riordan, an Assistant U.S. Attorney, will fill Michigan Supreme Court Justice Brian Zahra's former seat on the First District Court of Appeals.	2	
June 14, 2012	Governor Snyder signs Senate Bill 744, which requires the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to extend permit processing deadlines by 120 days at the request of applicants.	2	
June 25, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints former Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) director, Keith Creagh as the new director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). To fill Creagh's spot, the Governor has also appointed former Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Legislative Affairs Director, Jamie Clover Adams as the new MDARD director.	2	
October 2, 2012	With Patty Birkholz's resignation, Governor Snyder appoints Jon W. Allan as the new Director of the Office of the Great Lakes.	2	
December 13, 2012	Governor Snyder appoints Michigan Natural Resources Commissions (NRC) member, J.R. Richardson as chair of the Commission.	1	

Photos: Leisa Thompson (cover, pages 2, 3, 5, 7) Brian Miller (cover and page 11), Harold Eyester (pages 6 and 12) and Pam Bierzynski (inside cover).



Our Mission

Michigan League of Conservation Voters is the leading non-partisan political voice for protecting Michigan's land, air, and water. We use our power to elect and hold accountable public officials to ensure the right policies are enacted to protect our families'—and future generations'—health, economic well-being, and ability to enjoy the pure beauty of our state.





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