

No new federal funding for Great Lakes

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Great Lakes officials said they were stunned when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency put a roadblock for \$20 billion in lake improvements. President Bush had called the Great Lakes a "national treasure" and ordered a task force to develop plans to address sewage overflows, invader species and wetlands destruction.

Last July, more than 1,000 leaders and experts subsequently recommended up to \$20 billion in federal funding for the Great Lakes, but EPA administrator Stephen Johnson said the restoration won't get funding until an analysis of existing programs is undertaken, the Detroit Free Press reported Friday.

In fact, Johnson recommended Bush focus on "improving the efficiency and effectiveness of existing programs" instead of beginning expensive new efforts.

More than 40 members of Congress wrote a letter to Bush saying: "We are disappointed ... We were led to believe that the administration would consider some new budget initiatives."

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