

## Challenging Fresh Water

-Claude Zanetti

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"Humans are cancer on the planet...and the microbes will bring it into equilibrium!" The sixth mass extinction is already upon us and we see it happening everywhere!! We have invasive Asian carp and zebra mussels ruining the Great Lakes, Gambian rats and gator eating boas in Florida, Africanized bees, even traces of Bactrim in our streams impairing microbes ability to break down nitrates polluting the Great Lakes as well as phosphorus all giving rise to a stinking rotting anaerobic mess of algae killing off all the endemic species adapted to the environment for thousands of years! And there is only a finite amount of phosphorous on the planet which we continue to send down the Mississippi to the huge Gulf Basin Dead Zone! As Isaac Asimov wrote in 1970 "Life will continue to multiply until all the phosphorus is gone, then it will come to a complete halt and there will be no recourse."

We have twenty percent of the world's fresh water supply in the Great Lakes and we damn better get religious about protecting it because by 2025 most of the rest of the world will be experiencing, because of climate change, a global water shortage of unprecedented proportions. Desalination is a non-sustainable technical solution to a problem that requires a "cultural solution". The cities of the "Rust Belt" in the next decade will become the cities of the "Water Belt". As Debra Shore our brilliant Chicago Water Reclamation District President said at the Northwestern seminar "Making Waves" on November 1st 2015 overlooking Lake Michigan "People will come to the water."



*Lake Michigan Winter, photograph by Robert Eovaldi*