Charter Township of
West Bloomfield
Environmental Department
and
Soil Erosion Inspections
(248) 451-4818

March 12, 2009

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
State of Michigan
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Subject: *Repeal of Michigan's Part 303 Wetland Protection Act*

Dear Governor Granholm:

As appointed Wetland Board members, we are strongly opposed to your plan to repeal Part 303 Wetlands Protection. It is our duty to uphold the Township's Wetland Ordinance that protects the wetlands of the Township of West Bloomfield. Our work on this Board supports and maintains West Bloomfield's valuable natural resources, protects property values, and ensures a high standard of living we have come to expect as citizens of this community. The protection and proper management of West Bloomfield's wetlands is critical to our community from both an economic and environmental standpoint. Urban wetlands provide flood protection, thus reducing property damage, financial burdens, and safety hazards associated with flood conditions that other communities in southeastern Michigan are currently experiencing this spring. In addition, wetlands provide water quality improvements, groundwater recharge, reduce erosion and siltation, provide wildlife habitat, and offer much needed green space to communities where the spread of development has adversely affected our natural features. Protection of wetland resources has made West Bloomfield and the State of Michigan a desirable place to live.

Repealing Part 303 (Wetlands Protection) reverses 30 years of wetland regulation by eliminating protection of isolated wetlands, and it would undermine local wetland ordinances adopted specifically to support our natural resources. Over 40 municipalities in Michigan have enacted local wetland ordinances, as allowed under Part 303, to further preserve and protect critical wetland areas within their community. It is estimated that over 930,000 acres of isolated wetland would be left unprotected if Part 303 is repealed as you have recommended. It is West Bloomfield's opinion that repealing Part 303 in an attempt to reduce the $1.6-billon dollar State deficit through allowing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to administer wetland regulations would not only be extremely detrimental to our States wetlands, but it would be economically crippling to our community and the State.

Economic development, as you are profoundly aware, is critical to Michigan during this recession. If administered by the Corps, the wetland permitting process would slow dramatically, severely delaying potential projects and further discouraging development that has already been severely damaged in this economy. Typically a permit from the MDEQ is obtained within 90 days (most within 60 days); it takes on average over one year to obtain a wetland permit from the Corps due to jurisdictional confusion, lack of staff directly involved with wetland permitting, backlog applications, and the need

Representative Gabe Leland, 10th District (gabeleland@house.mi.gov)
Representative Mark S. Meadows, 69th District (markmeadows@house.mi.gov)
Representative Sarah Roberts, 24th District (SarahRoberts@house.mi.gov)
Representative Dan Scripps, 101st District (DanScripps@house.mi.gov)
Representative Arlan B. Meekhof, 89th District (arlanbmeekhof@house.mi.gov)
Representative Kevin Daley, 82nd District (KevinDaley@house.mi.gov)
Representative Joseph Haveman, 90th District (JosephHaveman@house.mi.gov)
Representative Rick Jones, 71st District (rickjones@house.mi.gov)
Representative Phil Pavlov, 81st District (phillippavlov@house.mi.gov)
Representative Wayne Schmidt, 104th District (WayneSchmidt@house.mi.gov)

Appropriations Subcommittee on Environmental Quality
Representative Doug Bennett, 92nd District (dougbennett@house.mi.gov)
Representative John Espinoza, 83rd District (johnespinoza@house.mi.gov)
Representative Bill Rogers, 66th District (BillRogers@house.mi.gov)