

Water Quality in Restored Wetlands and the Valparaiso Chain of Lakes Watershed

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Over the past decade, The Great Marsh has been undergoing a restoration process. In conjunction with the National Park Service and LAC, Valparaiso has taken an active role in monitoring the restoration effort. Previously, 18 different sites entering, within, and exiting The Great Marsh had been established. Over the past few years, 16 water quality parameters were monitored at those sites. These parameters included total and reactive phosphorus testing, temperature, chloride, nitrate, and dissolved oxygen levels. Previously the data has shown a decrease in all values from entering to exiting the marsh. This decrease indicates that the wetland has been absorbing a significant amount of the phosphorus and other chemicals before the water flows into Lake Michigan. This trend is still being monitored as the restoration process continues. In addition to the study of The Great Marsh the Valparaiso Chain of Lakes Watershed is also being monitored. These specific series of wetlands and watersheds provide an excellent source of data that exemplifies the effect of landscape modification on water quality (WQ).

Information about the Author:

Diandra Obermeyer is a junior at VU and this is her second year working on the water quality project. She is majoring in chemistry with a minor in theology.

John Stewart is a sophomore at VU. He is majoring in biology with a chemistry and GIS minor. Both students are interested in environmental issues and how the community can aide in the protection of our national parks and resources.

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