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Buffalo Niagara Region Positioned To Address Local Climate Change Impacts *Freshwater Future partners with EcoAdapt to provide local tools*

Great Lakes communities have a new resource to help them respond to the effects of climate change. Freshwater Future, a regional Great Lakes organization, has developed a Great Lakes Community Climate Program designed to help community-based organizations meet their climate change adaptation needs. Working with EcoAdapt, a national organization helping communities adapt to climate change, they are offering tools that any community can use to develop plans to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Local non-profit, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, has been working with both of these organizations to help position the Region to address and adapt to potential climate change impacts.

The Great Lakes Community Climate Program offers:

- Two symposia a year in different Great Lakes locations, where citizens have the opportunity to learn how to incorporate climate change elements into existing work, connect with resources for their work, and network with others;
- The Climate Adaptation Toolkit, comprised of a primer on climate change and adaptation, case studies, communications guidance, fact sheets on Great Lakes climate impacts and more; and
- A Climate Grants Program which provides grant awards ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 (USD) for projects that engage communities in preparing for and responding to climate change impacts, including engagement in decision-making that takes climate change impacts into account.

As part of the program, Freshwater Future held a climate symposium in Buffalo in May 2012, which was attended by representatives from community groups from New York, Pennsylvania and Ontario.

"Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper is involved in the planning and implementation of numerous restoration and green infrastructure projects that could be impacted by lower water levels, increased frequency of intense, high-volume rainfall events, and other unpredictable climate change impacts", said Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director. "With the leadership and guidance of Freshwater Future and EcoAdapt, Riverkeeper is able to utilize this program's tools through our existing projects and programs."

Freshwater Future Executive Director Jill Ryan said "The Great Lakes region is already seeing a number of impacts from climate change, including warmer air and water temperatures, less ice cover, changes in snowfall and rainfall, and extreme storm events like we experienced in many areas of the region this past summer."

“Climate change is everybody’s problem,” said Lara Hansen, Executive Director of EcoAdapt. “By putting tools into the hands of groups working on a wide range of issues, we can engage many more people in preparing our communities to meet the challenges of climate change.”

For more information about the program, and to download a free copy of the Great Lakes Climate Change Adaptation Toolkit, go to Freshwater Future’s website:

<http://www.freshwaterfuture.org/resources/great-lakes-community-climate-program.html>

The toolkit is also available on EcoAdapt’s website at: <http://ecoadapt.org/programs/awareness-to-action/freshwater-future-great-lakes-toolkit>

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Freshwater Future is a bi-national non-profit organization working to ensure the healthy future of our waters in the Great Lakes region. For more information, go to www.freshwaterfuture.org

EcoAdapt is a national organization helping communities adapt to climate change. For more information, go to www.ecoadapt.org

Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper is a regional non-profit working to protect and restore water quantity and quality while connecting people to water. For more information, go to www.bnriverkeeper.org