

Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie

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CITY'S "EXPERT" ON LAKE ERIE HAS A POLLUTED PAST

Environmentalists are asking, "Who brought LimnoTech, Inc. to Toledo as the final word on whether to support an 'impaired' designation for Lake Erie...and more importantly, why?" A company representative was scheduled to be an expert witness at a City Council hearing scheduled for May 16 that is now indefinitely postponed.

Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie (ACLE) discovered a Limno-Tech, Inc. [report](#) on the Chesapeake Bay cleanup that was judged by an [independent review panel](#) to have "poor scientific merit and promote a false set of criteria." LimnoTech's report was also used as the basis of a lawsuit brought by agribusiness corporations to halt the cleanup altogether; used by the PA Farm Bureau to [send a false alarm to thousands of farmers](#) that the EPA might forcibly retire 600,000 acres of farmland as part of the cleanup; and used by Congressional foes to try and cut cleanup funding.

"This is very serious business," said Mike Ferner, a coordinator for the lake advocates group. "Our lake and our drinking water are under chemical assault from over [700,000,000 gallons](#) of animal waste dumped untreated, annually, on fields above Lake Erie -- more than the combined sewage of Los Angeles and Chicago. And now we think it's a fair question to ask, is the lake cleanup also under political assault?"

"We know how to hold polluters accountable and start cleaning up the lake. But there are plenty of corporations willing to pay pliable 'scientific experts' to muddy the waters and make it seem too complicated to proceed. That tactic is right out of the corporate playbook and we fear Toledo officials are walking into an instant replay."

"Reputable environmentalists, including those involved for decades with Chesapeake Bay, have told Toledo's mayor and city council repeatedly -- and at no cost -- that the best way to bring our lake back to health is to get the U.S. EPA impaired watershed designation that mandates a thorough inventory of who's responsible for the pollution and then an action plan," Ferner added.

"But mysteriously, Toledo's elected officials refuse to follow the lead of the County Commissioners and the City of Oregon on this, and now they bring in an Ann Arbor consulting firm to provide what's being considered as the final word on the subject."

"That seemed strange enough. And then we learned about Limno-Tech's discredited 2011 report that recommended [to halt](#) the Chesapeake cleanup. The report was paid for by the American Farm Bureau, the Fertilizer Institute, National Pork Producers Council, National Corn Growers Association and the Agribusiness Retailers Association."

"Again we ask: 'Who brought LimnoTech, Inc. to Toledo as the final word on whether to support an impaired designation for Lake Erie...and more importantly, why?'"

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