Ground water is a source of drinking water for many people and is the primary source for irrigation and livestock watering in the Great Lakes region. The use of ground water in the Great Lakes Basin has substantially increased in the past few decades due to population growth, technological innovation, agricultural development and inefficient water use. Despite the increase in demand, there have been no significant changes in the ground water allocation policies in either Canada or the United States since the nineteenth century. Six of the ten jurisdictions of the Great Lakes Basin still rely on archaic common law principles to determine the allocation of ground water, while Ontario’s water taking permit program has shown that centralized government regulation can be equally ineffective. Therefore, the courts and governments of the Great Lakes Basin are effectively encouraging unrestricted withdrawals of ground water, and as a result, water tables are declining, well interference incidents are increasing and ground water divides are shifting. These physical effects are giving rise to economic costs, social conflicts and environmental degradation. To mitigate the impacts of antiquated ground water allocation policies in the Great Lakes Basin, the authors suggest institutional change and a range of legal tools to better protect this critically important resource.
You do not currently have access to this content.

Sign in

Don't already have an account? Register

Client Account

Email address / Username

Password

Sign in

Reset password
Register

Buy This Article

Impact Factor 1.093
CiteScore 1.9

View Metrics

Cited by

Web Of Science (3)
Google Scholar
CrossRef
Simply put, environmental degradation is a decline in the quality of our environment. This can be a result of pollutants that spoil the air, water or food supply, the over-extraction of resources so that little remains for future use, or the destruction of habitats so that the resources they once contained are no longer available. It has also led to air, water and soil pollution that has direct affects on human and animal health. China's explosive industrialization since the 1980s has led to some of the worst air pollution in the world. Armed conflict does irreparable damage to the environment in addition to its costs on human life. The Iraqi food supply, for example, is still contaminated with depleted uranium from a nuclear reactor bombed in 1991. Effects of Environmental Degradation. Water Policy 1U (2008) 459^79 Conflicts, costs and environmental degradation - impacts of antiquated ground water allocation policies in the Great Lakes Basin Timothy J. Morris^» Satya P. Mohapatra** and Anne Mitchell^* *Faculty of Law. University of British Columbia. 1822 East Mall. Six of the ten jurisdictions of the Great Lakes Basin still rely on archaic common law principles to determine the allocation of ground water, while Ontario's water taking permit program has shown that centralized government regulation can be equally ineffective. To mitigate the impacts of antiquated ground water allocation policies in the Great Lakes Basin, the authors suggest institutional change and a range of legal tools to better protect this critically important resource.