## Rouge pollution needs regional solution, judge says

BY TIM RICHARD STATE WRITER

SYATE WATER.

A federal judge wants Wayne,
Oakland and Washenaw county
officials to consider a regional approach to stopping non-point poliution of the Rouge River.
Judge John Felkens said they
should look at Chapter 21 of the
state Drain Code in setting up a
watershed authority. The approvate of federal funds "favor the development of a regional approach
to the remediat efforts in
southeastern Michigan," Felkens
said in a letter to area officials
and iswyers.

and lawyers.

He said a regional approach

"takes a risk reduction/mass bal-"Tages a risk reduction/mass bat-ance approach to pollution con-trol as opposed to independently negotiated permits governing only end of pipe-type controls." So far Feikens has met once with top officials in his Detroit

courtroom and has another hearing set for May 7.

"A lot of people feared a Chapter 21 (consortium) would be imposed, but the court can't impose it," James Murray, Wayne County public works director, told the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments April 28. "(County Executive Ed) McNamara and (Detroit Mayor Dennis) Archer asy the communities must support it," Murray said.

He added that communities favor the watershed approach only or planning and monitoring water management. Communities would have to petition for a Chapter 21 consortium, he added.

Murray said the consensus is that management practices. "how you keep collutants out of "how you keep collutants" out of "how you keep collutants out of "how you keep collutants" out of "how you keep collutants out of "how you keep collutants" out of "how you keep collutants out of "how you keep collutants" out of "how you ke

Murray said the consensus is that management practices -"how you keep pollutants out of the system" is a better approach than trying to clean up pollu-tants.

Gullty forces are such nonpoint runoffs as herbicides, pesticides and algicides.
Felkens advocates a regional
approach bocause: "The Rouge
River basin alone consists of 427
miles of watershed and 125 miles
of river channel. It is the home of
more than 1.5 million people located in 47 different municipal
corporations. The price tag for
CSO (combined sewer overflow)
and storm water control in the
Rouge Basin alone is estimated at
up to \$2.6 billion," he wrote.
Felkens also quoted federal law
to show the U.S. Congress favora
a regional approach to correcting
CSO problems. Combined sewers
mix sanitary sewage with storm
water.

In heavy rains, they become

In heavy rains, they become flooded and discharge their over-flow into the Rouge. To study the Chapter 21 watershed idea, Foik-

ens has called in McNamara, Murray and counsel Thomas Neenan from Wayne County, Cakland Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Drain Commissioner George Kuhn; Washenaw Drain Commissioner Janels Bottoni; Dr. Jonathan Bulkley, the court-appointed master in the Detroits sewage treatment plant case and representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Murray outded state San P.

Murray quoted state Sen. R. Robert Geake, R-Northville, as asking Felkens during the first hearing. "How clean is clean?" Felkens didn't have an immediate

The Rouge case has been tacked onto an old, familiar case the U.S. EPN's 1977 sult against Detroit's sowerage department. In

the Detroit portion of the suit, Peikens appointed then-Mayor Coleman Young as a virtual exar over the system. The Result was billions of fed-eral aid to expand and improve

the Detroit sewage treatment plant, which serves more than 100 suburban communities. Members of SEMCOG's executive commit-tee received Murray's report with-out question or comment.



Sunday, May 5, 1996 12:00-3:30 p.m. AMERICAN POUSH CULTURAL CENTER - Troy

Sunday, May 19, 1996 12:00-3:30 p.m. HYATT REGENCY Dearborn

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tion.
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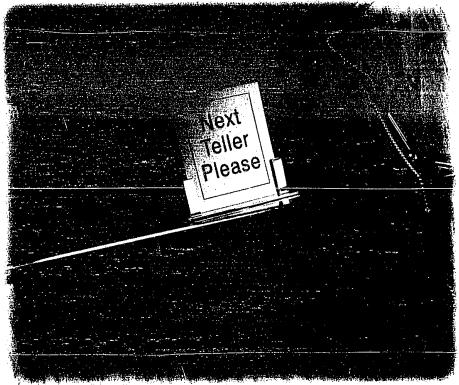
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