

Minerals. The sugar, fishery products, and other uses are more concerning complications that can be caused by it. While drinking water serves a purpose dehydration and its resulting negative effects, if the water is contaminated, a different source of implications can occur.

Here in the United States, we are fortunate enough in most places to have access to clean water, but in many other countries, obtaining water, much less clean water, is a strenuous task. For example, in Ethiopia, a country with a population of over 100 million people, 80 percent lack basic access to clean water. Contaminated water is linked to diseases like cholera and dysentery, causing over a million deaths globally every year. Therefore, it is crucial that we protect our water sources such as in the form of lakes to reduce the risk of exposure to contamination.

In Georgia, where I live, Lake Lanier provides drinking water to over half of the state's residents. Additionally, Lake Lanier, like many other bodies of water, is critical to hydroelectricity, recreation, commercial industry (tourism, fishing), and other recreation (water parks, beaches). It is fundamental to the lives of millions of Georgians, and if we fail to protect it accordingly, many things we take for granted like water and electricity will be put in jeopardy. In Minnesota, the "Land of 10,000 Lakes", its lakes and water sources are the backbone of both its landscape and economy. With even more importance, the Great Lakes along America's northern border hold nearly 20 percent of the world's freshwater and serve as a significant source of economy for both the United States and Canada, generating billions of dollars and supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs.

However, lakes, rivers, and other bodies of water are far more crucial to wildlife than to humans. Like us, animals and plants require water for life, animals, too, need clean drinking water, and plants need water for photosynthesis to generate energy. Even desert plants require water for survival. Furthermore, aquatic ecosystems have a much larger percentage of life and animal biomass than the percentage of area they take up on Earth. As humans, we often take actions without considering the consequences of other species, but it is our duty to protect the fauna and habitat of those that coexist with us. When we build dams and construct irrigation projects, we naturally change the flow of water and therefore local ecosystems in the process, sometimes destroying them.

We are also the greatest source of the exponentially increasing amount of pollution that