

# The Muskegon: The Majesty and Tragedy of Michigan's Rarest River

*Jeff Alexander*

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**Jeff Alexander : The Muskegon: The Majesty and Tragedy of Michigan's Rarest River** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Muskegon: The Majesty and Tragedy of Michigan's Rarest River:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Michigan's Finest RiverBy Hal BallThis is the place to learn about the Muskegon River, one of Michigan's finest assets. I grew up on this river and made two canoe trips its full length as a youth. The Manistee National Forest gives it the perfect setting. Hal Ball0 of 0 people found the following review

helpful. Five StarsBy SueserGreat and interesting book. Especially if you are a "Michigander"0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Ellen StevensGives an easy to read history of the river right in front of my house.

Muskegon is a derivation of a Native American word meaning "river with marshes." Jeff Alexander examines the creation, uses of, devastation, and restoration of Michigan's historic and beautiful Muskegon River. Four of the five Great Lakes touch Michigan's shores; the state's shoreline spans more than 4,500 miles, not to mention more than 11,000 inland lakes and a multitude of rivers. The Muskegon River, the state's second longest river, runs 227 miles and has the most diverse features of any of Michigan's many rivers. The Muskegon rises from the center of the state, widens, and moves westward, passing through the Pere Marquette and AuSable State Forests. The river ultimately flows toward Lake Michigan, where it opens into Muskegon Lake, a 12 square-mile, broad harbor located between the Muskegon River and Lake Michigan. Formed several thousand years ago, when the glaciers that created the Great Lakes receded, and later inhabited by Ottawa and Potawatomi Indians, the Muskegon River was used by French fur trappers in the 1600s. Rich in white pine, the area was developed during the turn-of-the-century lumber boom, and at one time Muskegon Lake boasted more than 47 sawmills. The Muskegon was ravaged following settlement by Europeans, when rivers and streams were used to transport logs to the newly developing cities. Dams on rivers and larger streams provided power for sawmills and grain milling, and later provided energy for generating electricity as technology advanced. There is now an ambitious effort to restore and protect this mighty river's natural features in the face of encroaching urbanization and land development that threatens to turn this majestic waterway into a mirror image of the Grand River, Michigan's longest river and one of its most polluted.

"Alexander's research is impressive, his prose informative and entertaining, and his message is clear: conservation of the Muskegon River watershed--and the Great Lakes as a whole--is up to all of us. This book is both first-rate reporting and an implicit challenge to all of us to be better stewards of our precious waters." -- Dave Dempsey, author of *On The Brink and Ruin and Recovery* From the Publisher Winner of a 2007 "Michigan Notable Books" Award, which highlights the Library of Michigan's annual selection of books reflecting Michigan's rich cultural heritage. About the Author Jeff Alexander is an award-winning environmental journalist and author of *The Muskegon: The Majesty and Tragedy of Michigan's Rarest River*.