



Great Lakes
Commission
des Grands Lacs

2008 Annual Report



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The importance of stewardship: Now more than ever

For the states and provinces of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region, 2008 will be remembered as a year of both great accomplishments and significant challenges. Accomplishments came in the form of strengthened legislation to protect the water resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River and the promise of a new U.S. federal commitment to support Great Lakes restoration with significant funding. Challenge emerged in the form of economic crisis on a scale not experienced since the Great Depression.

Great Lakes states and provinces, historically reliant on a strong manufacturing base, found themselves particularly vulnerable to the tectonic changes affecting that sector, and looked with a renewed sense of urgency to the economic importance of protecting their most valuable natural asset: the waters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin.

Within this dichotomy of environmental hope and economic turbulence, the Great Lakes Commission is uniquely positioned for leadership. In 2008 the Commission rose to the occasion guided by a new work plan linking the Commission's core strengths to its strategic objectives. We extend our gratitude to all the Commissioners and staff who worked hard to develop this guidance, which will define our activities for the next two years.

One of the strong themes in Great Lakes policy discussions in 2008, and one that will resonate even more in years to come, is the connection in the Great Lakes region between environmental health and economic growth. Findings in the widely distributed Brookings Institution 2007 report "Healthy Waters, Strong Economy" confirmed what many of us have long believed: investment in Great Lakes restoration

will generate significant long term economic benefits. Given the economic challenges facing the region, this message rings loud and clear with all our member states and provinces.

As we move forward under this theme, the Great Lakes Commission will continue to focus on many of our historic priorities: cleaning up toxic hot spots, closing the door on aquatic invasive species, reducing nonpoint source pollution, including air deposition, and providing a well-maintained navigation infrastructure for both commercial and recreational users. We will also

step out more aggressively into emerging policy areas including heightened attention on habitat revitalization, water conservation efforts among the states and provinces, and sustainable development of energy resources.

Commission activity will reflect the states' and provinces' shared commitment to developing alternative energy sources, particularly from wind, which offers the advantages of environmental cleanliness and economic investment opportunities in the form of manufacturing and transporting turbine components. The overarching impact of

climate change to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin is also of key interest to our members and will continue to be addressed in many Commission programs.

To a great extent, this region faces some uncharted territory ahead in the form of major economic and social change. It can be difficult in such times to stay a steady course but the fact remains that we are guardians of the most precious freshwater resource on the planet. This is the time to renew and strengthen our commitment to its stewardship. We owe nothing less to the generations to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Quinn".

Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Eder".

Tim A. Eder
Executive Director

With success comes responsibility

2008 will be remembered as a turning point for the region, one in which long-planned protection and restoration efforts took major steps forward.

Among the year's noteworthy events were enactment by all eight Great Lakes states and Congress of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact restricting interbasin water diversion; reauthorization of the Great Lakes Legacy Act to clean up the lakes' most polluted point-source sites; and renewed appropriations for the Great Lakes Basin Program for control of soil and sediment erosion. Perhaps the most energizing of the year's highlights, however, was the election of a Great Lakes president, Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois, on a platform which included strong federal support for Great Lakes restoration.

To the Great Lakes Commission and its partners, the successes of the year brought the satisfaction of accomplishment, but also a realization that with long-sought tools and resources now in hand or on the horizon, the responsibility to use them wisely and effectively rests squarely on the Commission, its member states and associate provinces. Much of the Commission's activity in 2008 reflected a sense of that responsibility as the Commission continued to provide leadership in a wide breadth of issues facing the binational Great Lakes water resource.

Important guidance for this action agenda in 2008 was provided by a newly adopted two-year work plan, based on the Commission's strategic plan adopted the previous year. The new work plan identifies five programmatic priorities for the Commission's work, and four core strengths of the organization to be employed in carrying out those priorities.

Program priority areas include: aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity, which includes the sources of and responses to invasive species threatening the Great Lakes; economy and society, which addresses issues involving ports and navigation, energy, coastal development, and tourism and recreation; water supply to focus on water use, planning and conservation, and climate change; coastal and terrestrial habitat dealing with habitat protection and restoration; and water quality which includes watershed management, and pollution sources, both point and nonpoint.

The Commission's core strengths as identified in the work plan came under the headings of: communication and education; information integration and reporting; facilitation and consensus building; and policy coordination and advocacy. Details of the work plan are available at www.glc.org/about/strategy.

Advocacy on behalf of its member states and associate provinces has long been a Commission priority. A high point of the Great Lakes Commission's annual cycle occurs each year in late February when Commissioners, Observers, and other partners

gather in Washington, D.C., for the Commission's semiannual meeting and the Great Lakes Day rally on Capitol Hill.

One of the highlights of the 2008 Great Lakes Day events was the release of a report by the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative on investments made by cities and municipalities in Great Lakes-St. Lawrence protection and restoration. The report, funded by the Joyce Foundation, found that local governments in the United States and Canada invest an estimated \$15 billion annu-



The snaking banks of the Big Carp River wind through the Porcupine Mountains of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

ally in such activities as wastewater systems operation, maintenance and infrastructure, greenspace protection and recycling/reuse programs.


“This report clearly demonstrates that our cities and other communities are ready and willing partners in the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence ecosystem,” said Michigan Lt. Gov. John Cherry, then-chair of the Great Lakes Commission. “Their contributions at the local level play a key role in the environmental health and well-being of the entire system, and they need and deserve federal support in those efforts.”

Generating increased federal support for Great Lakes protection and restoration was a key motivation for the cities investment study. To help track this and other legislative advocacy efforts, the Commission developed in 2008 a web-based tool to provide up-to-date information on Great Lakes legislative priorities. The site – part of the Great Lakes Information Network (GLIN) – helps to increase support for Great Lakes protection and restoration by providing easy access to the status of federal legislation and appropriations through a single web site: www.glin.net/legislativepriorities.

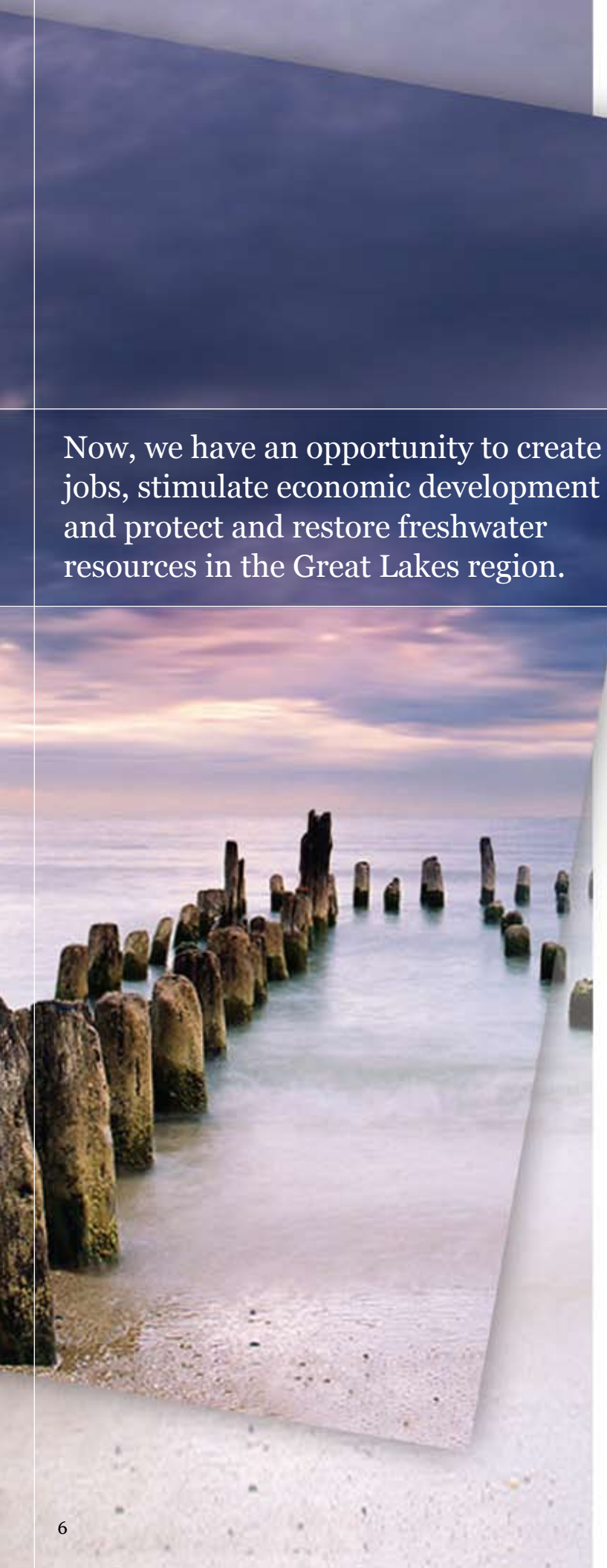
The site offers a searchable database of current legislative priorities, news updates, announcements of hearings and briefings, and information about members of the Great Lakes congressional delegation, including bills they’ve sponsored, maps of congressional districts and much more. Funded by the Wege Foundation, this project is helping to engage a wide array of audiences in the legislative process through information and education, and promotion of Great Lakes stewardship.

Combating the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the Great Lakes continued to be a high priority for the Great Lakes Commission in 2008. The Commission joined with the Great Lakes governors, the mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, Great Lakes-St. Lawrence shipping interests and many other partners to support federal ballast water legislation to protect the Great Lakes from the most prominent AIS vector.

The collective effort came tantalizingly close to success. During the 110th Congress, several bills were introduced to mandate treatment of ballast water from oceangoing vessels. Most significantly, such provisions were included in the House-passed Coast Guard reauthorization bill (H.R.2830), but a



With long-sought resources now at hand, we share the responsibility to use them wisely and effectively.



Now, we have an opportunity to create jobs, stimulate economic development and protect and restore freshwater resources in the Great Lakes region.

companion bill was not approved in the Senate. Also in 2008, the EPA released its Vessel General Permit (VGP) covering discharges from U.S.- and foreign-flagged ships over 79 feet long, including ballast water. Great Lakes states, however, did not believe that the requirements under the VGP adequately protected their waters from ballast-borne invasive species, and thus added more stringent conditions to the EPA permit through the Clean Water Act Section 401 certification process. The Commission continued to maintain that a strong federal approach is critically needed to establish a uniform regulatory program for ballast water discharges.

Progress was made, however, on other AIS fronts; the Commission received a planning grant from the Great Lakes Protection Fund to focus on non-ballast AIS vectors. The project sought to identify and evaluate high-risk commercial and recreation activities and pathways contributing to AIS introduction and spread, including the role of aquaculture, live bait, aquarium and water garden industries, and other high-risk commercial activities. These are generally referred to as “organisms in trade.”

Information gained from the project will be used to guide the development of initiatives to reduce the likelihood that invasive species will be introduced or spread through organisms in trade. An advisory committee drawn from representatives of state and federal agencies, commercial interests, researchers, academia and other specialists provided overall project guidance.

In the first joint meeting of its kind, the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, coordinated by the Commission, held a combined session in 2008 with the Mississippi River Basin Panel. A key objective of the meeting, held in Milwaukee, was to provide a forum for communication and collaboration among members of both panels on the shared concerns of these interconnected watersheds.

The meeting focused on common priority issues, such as the transfer of AIS between basins, the recently discovered lethal fish virus viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) and ballast water. Sessions included a 20-year retrospective on lessons learned from the zebra mussel infestation in the Great Lakes, and discussions on the AIS risk presented by commercial and recreational activities other than vessel ballast water.

With demand growing in the Great Lakes region for increased reliance on alternative energy sources, the Great Lakes Commission took a leadership role in one of the most promising candidates: wind. More than 120 Great Lakes policymakers and business leaders interested in development of wind energy attended the first annual meeting of the Great Lakes Wind Collaborative, convened by the Commission in May 2008 in Buffalo, N.Y.

The Wind Collaborative was created to address issues affecting the planning, development and operation of wind power facilities in the Great Lakes region. According to recent U.S. Dept. of Energy research, the region's wind capacity has the potential to produce \$79 billion in economic activity and 765,000 lifetime jobs for the Great Lakes states, based on the construction period and 20 years of operations. Participants took part in a field trip to "Steel Winds" on the former site of the Bethlehem steel plant on the Buffalo waterfront, the largest urban wind farm in the United States. The meeting included breakout sessions on both the benefits and challenges of a responsible wind future, and discussed the Wind Collaborative's near-term agenda and long-term priorities.

Québec City's 400th anniversary celebration was the backdrop for the Great Lakes Commission's 2008 annual meeting in October. Welcoming attendees, Québec Premier Jean Charest renewed his government's commitment to wise use and management of the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence water resource as defined by the Great Lakes Basin Compact recently enacted in the United States. Charest also emphasized Québec's efforts in developing renewable energy sources while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and urged both U.S. and Canadian federal governments to be more aggressive in

these efforts. "If the U.S. and Canada put their minds together," said Charest, "we can accomplish what we want to."

Then- Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn of Illinois assumed the chairmanship of the Great Lakes Commission following elections held at the Québec City meeting, succeeding Michigan Lt. Gov. John D. Cherry, Jr. who completed a two-year term as chair. Elected vice chair was Wisconsin Commissioner Todd Ambs, administrator of the Division of Water for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.



The Canadian Coast Guard Icebreaker CCGS Samuel Risley plows through the ice on Lake Huron.

2008 came to a close on a high note for the Great Lakes, with newly elected President Barack Obama and Congress weighing significant monetary infusions to the region via both the FY 2009 federal budget, and a one-time economic stimulus legislation promising billions of dollars in infrastructure improvement and job generation.

The Commission identified four specific needs in the Great Lakes for stimulus assistance: 1) repair of failing wastewater infrastructure through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund; 2) clean up of toxic sediment through the Great Lakes Legacy Act; 3) construction of a long-needed new navigation lock at Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., and 4) elimination of a dredging backlog restricting access to Great Lakes ports, navigation channels and recreational harbors.

GLC Chair Pat Quinn, in a letter to the Great Lakes congressional delegation, summed up the optimism of the moment, saying, "Now, more than ever, we have an opportunity to create jobs, stimulate economic development and protect and restore fresh water resources in the eight-state Great Lakes region."

Revenues and expenses

The Great Lakes Commission concluded FY 2008 in sound financial condition, with operating revenues of \$4.98 million. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$130,260, less than 2.7 percent. Overall, the Commission continues to effectively manage its general and restricted funds to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.

These figures were confirmed by an independent audit, which is conducted each year to examine the Commission's financial operations. The FY 2008 fiscal year ended June 30, 2008.

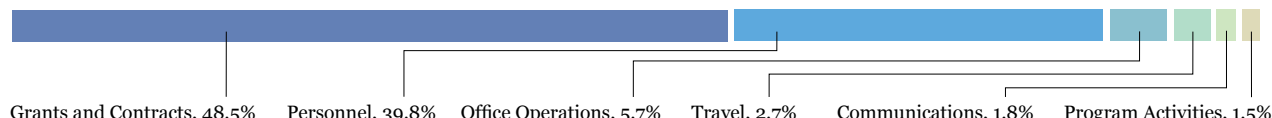
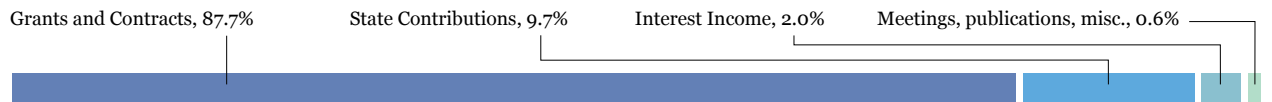
Revenues

Grants and Contracts	4,366,044
State Contributions	480,000
Interest Income	98,526
Meetings, publications, misc.	31,213
Total	4,975,783

Expenses

Grants and Contracts	2,350,847
Personnel	1,926,720
Office Operations	274,173
Travel	133,003
Communications	86,390
Program Activities	74,390
Total	4,845,523

Revenues




Expenses

2008 Funders

The great majority of Commission programs and projects are pursued in partnership with other agencies and organizations, and benefit from their funding support. A listing of 2008 funders is provided below. Thanks to all for their assistance!

The Brookings Institution
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc.
Government of Québec
Great Lakes Fishery Commission
Great Lakes Protection Fund
Great Lakes Observing System
Healing Our Waters - Great Lakes Coalition
Industrial Economics, Inc.
Joyce Foundation
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
National Ocean Service, Center for Operational
Oceanographic Products and Services
NOAA Coastal Services Center
NOAA National Ocean Service/National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA National Sea Grant College Program
Northeast-Midwest Institute
Public Sector Consultants Inc.
State of Illinois
State of Indiana
State of Michigan
State of Minnesota
State of New York
State of Ohio
State of Wisconsin
University of Minnesota
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Great Lakes
National Program Office
U.S. EPA, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response
U.S. EPA, Region 5, Air and Radiological Division
U.S. EPA, Region 5, Superfund Division
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey, Federal Geographic Data Committee:
National Spatial Data Infrastructure Cooperative Agreements Program
We Energies
Wege Foundation



The Great Lakes provide endless opportunities to recreate and explore, no matter the season. Here, Lake Superior creates the stunning setting for an exuberant summer dive, a spring kayak excursion and an icy winter walk at sunrise.

Commissioners and Alternates

Delegation chairs are in bold.

Illinois

Gov. Patrick Quinn

Joe Deal, City of Chicago
Clifford S. (Sam) Flood, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
Jack Lavin, Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Marc Miller, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
Douglas P. Scott, Gov. Appointee

Alternates

Pat Carey, City of Chicago
Gary Clark, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
Dan Injerd, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources

Indiana

David Phippen, Office of the Governor

Robert E. Carter, Jr., Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources
Thomas W. Easterly, Indiana
Dept. of Environmental Management
Ron McAhron, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources
Jody W. Peacock, Ports of Indiana

Michigan

Ken DeBeaussiaert,

Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality

Hon. Patricia Birkholz, State Senator
Lt. Gov. John D. Cherry, Jr. (Immediate Past Chair)
Hon. Mike Cox, Attorney General
Curtis Hertel, Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority

Alternates

Rudy Hobbs, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Michael Leffler, Asst. Attorney General
Peter Manning, Dept. of Attorney General

Minnesota

Hon. Thomas Huntley, State Representative

Hon. Bill G. Ingebrigtsen, State Senator
Hon. Morrie Lanning, State Representative
Ed Oliver, Gov. Appointee
Hon. Yvonne Prettner Solon, State Senator

Alternates

Henry Hanka, National Scenic Byways Resource Center
Dick Lambert, Minnesota Dept. of Transportation
Cal Larson, Gov. Appointee

New York

Alexander B. Grannis,

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Michael Elmendorf, Gov. Appointee
John Francis O'Mara, Gov. Appointee
Philip Reed, Gov. Appointee

Alternate

Donald Zelazny,
New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Ohio

Sean D. Logan, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources

Hon. Timothy J. Grendell, State Senator
Christopher Korleski, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Hon. Chris Redfern, State Representative
James Weakley, Lake Carriers' Association

Alternates

John Baker, International Longshoremens' Association
Ed Hammett, Ohio Lake Erie Commission
Cathryn Loucas, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources

Ontario

William Carr, Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs

John Lieou, Ministry of the Environment
David O'Toole, Ministry of Transportation
Kevin J. Wilson, Ministry of Natural Resources

Alternates

Sharon Bailey, Ministry of the Environment
Linda McAusland, Ministry of Transportation
Ranissah Samah, Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs
Robert P. Taylor, Ministry of Natural Resources

Pennsylvania

Cathy Curran Myers, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection (through 2008)

Kelly Burch, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection (appointed Feb. 2009)

Robert W. Light, Pennsylvania Sea Grant
Pat Lupo, Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force

Alternates

John Booser, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection
Lori Boughton, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection
John Hines, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection

Québec

Marc T. Boucher, Government of Québec

Pierre Bertrand,

Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks
André Meloche, Ministry of Transportation

Alternates

Pierre Brochu, Ministry of Transportation
Louise Lapierre,

Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks

Wisconsin

Todd Ambts, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources

Hon. Dave Hansen, State Senator
Fred Schnook, Foth & Van Dyke and Assoc., Inc.

Alternate

Nancy Larson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



Staff and Observers

Staff

Back row (from left): Tim Eder, Dave Knight, Tom Crane, Matt Doss, Laura Kaminski, Roger Gauthier, Ron Hasselbring, Stuart Eddy, Hugh Brennan, Kristina Donnelly, Guan Wang. Front row (from left): Becky Pearson, Gary Overmier, Sarah Gagnon-Turcotte, Maité Chavez, Christine Manninen, Rita Straith, Erika Jensen, Pat Gable, Hao Zhuang, Victoria Pebbles, Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, Laura Andrews. *Not pictured: Richard Garcia, John Hummer, Michael Schneider.*

Observers

Alliance for the Great Lakes, Cameron Davis
 Canadian Embassy, Christina Jutzi
 Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority, Mike Ripley
 Coastal States Organization, Kristen Fletcher
 Council of Great Lakes Governors, David Naftzger
 Council of Great Lakes Industries, George Kuper
 John G. Shedd Aquarium, Melanie Napoleon
 Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Christopher Goddard
 Great Lakes Sea Grant Network, Steve Bortone
 Great Lakes United, Jennifer Nalbhone
 Helsinki Commission, Anne Christine Brusendorff
 International Joint Commission, Karen Vigmostad
 Maritime Administration, Great Lakes Region, Doris Bautch
 National Association of Conservation Districts, Tom Middleton
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, Stephen Brandt
 NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, David Kennedy
 National Park Service, Gary Vequist
 Ninth Coast Guard District, Radm. Peter Neffenger
 St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp., Terry Johnson, Jr.
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jan Miller
 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Garry Lee
 U.S. Department of Energy, Patrick L. Wilkey
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes National Program Office, Gary Gulezian
 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Craig Czarnecki
 U.S. Geological Survey, Jim Nicholas
 U.S. Geological Survey, Leon Carl

Credits

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The Great Lakes Commission was established in 1955 with a mandate to “promote the orderly, integrated and comprehensive development, use and conservation of the water resources of the Great Lakes basin.” Founded in state law with U.S. federal consent, with membership consisting of the eight Great Lakes states and associate member status for the provinces of Ontario and Québec, the Commission pursues four primary functions: communication and education, information integration and reporting, facilitation and consensus building, and policy coordination and advocacy.

Each Member jurisdiction is represented by a delegation consisting of three to five members who are appointees of the respective governor or premier, legislators or senior agency officials. A board of directors, consisting of the chair of each delegation, is the Commission’s executive body.

In carrying out its initiatives, the Commission works in close cooperation with many partner organizations, including U.S. and Canadian federal agencies, binational institutions, tribal/First Nation governments and other regional interests. Representatives appointed by partner entities participate extensively in Commission activities through a formal Observer program. The Commission is supported by a professional staff in Ann Arbor, Mich.



About the Commission