



Great Lakes
Commission
des Grands Lacs

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



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Board of Directors list is as of December 2016.

Photos, top to bottom: Sunset on Lake Michigan at Indiana
Dunes National Lakeshore, Michigan City, Indiana, ©Tom Gill.

Looking out on the St. Lawrence River from Québec City,
Québec, ©flickr/Dennis Jarvis.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Mackinaw* breaks ice in Whitefish Bay
on Lake Superior, ©U.S. Coast Guard.

Cover photo: The bulk carrier *Alpena* in the Soo Locks,
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, © Doug Herdman.





Jon W. Allan

Tim A. Eder

A unified voice for the Great Lakes states and provinces

JULY 2017

For more than sixty years, the Great Lakes Commission has worked closely with its member states and provinces to address issues of common concern, develop shared solutions and collectively advance an agenda to protect and enhance the region's economic prosperity and environmental health. Our work on behalf of one of the nation's greatest environmental treasures and economic assets has always been binational and non-partisan, and has carefully balanced development and conservation interests.

We are proud that 2016 was one of the GLC's strongest years ever. We completed work on a new strategic plan, which was voted into effect by our Board this winter. We added new staff, launched a new website, newsletter and projects, and continued work on innovative partnerships like our groundbreaking Blue Accounting initiative. We are restoring toxic hotspots, testing software to find invasive species for sale online, and advocating for the bipartisan Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which was authorized into law by Congress in December with overwhelming support.

The past year was exciting and challenging and marks the turning of a new page for our organization and the nation as a whole. Below we share a few of our most exciting developments from 2016 and look forward to 2017 and beyond.

Coordinating regional work on complex issues

One of the GLC's core services is bringing people together to share common problems in the region and collaborate on solutions to those problems. In 2016, the GLC brought stakeholders together to review the status of preventing aquatic invasive

species introduction and spread through ballast water discharge. This workshop provided an opportunity for representatives of federal, state and provincial agencies, industry, ports, researchers, and environmental groups to share information and develop a common base of understanding of current conditions – and associated challenges and opportunities.

In 2016, we also continued work on our exciting Blue Accounting initiative, which provides decision-makers with a big picture view of complex issues and relevant information so they can set priorities and allocate resources most efficiently. Through a partnership between the GLC and The Nature Conservancy, Blue Accounting brings the right information to the right people at the right time to support collaborative efforts to sustain and enhance the Great Lakes. This effort has received strong funding support from across the basin, including grants from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation and the Joyce Foundation.

Launching ErieStat to track progress toward a healthy Western Lake Erie Basin

Excess phosphorus entering Lake Erie contributes to the formation of harmful algal blooms and dead zones, which can be dangerous for fish, wildlife and people.

In 2015, the governors of Michigan and Ohio and the premier of Ontario agreed to work together toward a 40 percent reduction in the amount of phosphorus entering Lake Erie's Western Basin. In June 2016, the GLC launched ErieStat, an information platform that will track progress toward meeting this shared goal. ErieStat is bringing together water quality

experts to measure progress toward the 40 percent goal by transforming existing data into useful information for the states, provinces and stakeholders. ErieStat is a pilot of our Blue Accounting initiative.

Growing the Great Lakes maritime transportation system

In 2016, the Great Lakes governors and premiers announced a strategy to grow the \$30 billion Great Lakes-St. Lawrence maritime transportation system. At the 2016 GLC Annual Meeting in Toronto, we committed ourselves to using the GLC's leadership role in the region to support this important effort.

To that end, we have created a Blue Accounting pilot that will establish metrics and collect and present data and information to track progress toward achieving the goals set in the strategy and assess the impact of policies and investments. Initial products will include an updated and expanded inventory of maritime assets and tracking cargo volumes moving in the system. Future elements of the maritime pilot will track environmental impacts, investments, economic indicators, and other measures of the system's performance.

Sparking the adoption of green infrastructure across the Great Lakes

Studies have increasingly shown the many economic, environmental and health benefits of green infrastructure and in 2016, we launched two projects that will help spark its adoption across the Great Lakes region.

The Great Lakes Stormwater Technology Transfer project will bring together public and private sector experts to



identify specific barriers to green infrastructure implementation, with a goal of bringing innovative technologies to smaller and less affluent communities.

A sister project, the Green Infrastructure Champions Pilot Program, will create a peer-to-peer mentoring network that will connect experienced practitioners with individuals that would like to bring green infrastructure to their communities, and establish a small grant program to assist those individuals.

Both efforts are supported by the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation and will work in tandem to reduce physical and institutional barriers to the adoption of green infrastructure.

Preventing the sale of aquatic invasive species on the internet

E-commerce is recognized as a growing way that species can be transferred into areas where they might be invasive. Both a patchwork of regulations on species and the growing global online marketplace can make it difficult to find and prevent sales of restricted species.

To address this threat, the GLC has developed software that searches the web for sites where aquatic invasive species can be purchased and shipped to the Great Lakes region. The Great Lakes Detector of Invasive Aquatics in Trade – or GLDIATR – uses advanced technologies including natural language processing and machine intelligence to scrape, sort and collect thousands of pages across the internet.

In 2016, this innovative project's success was recognized when the GLC received additional Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to expand GLDIATR. In 2017, GLC staff will be conducting workshops across the region to teach communities how to use GLDIATR to prevent the introduction of invasive species.

Leading work to restore several Great Lakes toxic hotspots

Alongside local and state partners and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the GLC has coordinated efforts to restore several of the worst “toxic hotspots” in the Great Lakes. Our regional partnership includes 14 on the ground projects in three Great Lakes Areas of Concern – Muskegon Lake, St. Marys River, and Buffalo River. These projects have immense environmental and economic benefits, and are helping to enhance quality of life for citizens across the basin.

Under this partnership in late 2016, our local partner completed work on a bridge to replace a deteriorating causeway crossing the St. Marys river. The project reconnected the river and is expected to lead to improved habitat for native fish populations, revitalized tourism and sport fishing opportunities, and better community access via a new pedestrian walkway. Planning for this project was initiated over two decades ago with input from local stakeholders continually guiding restoration efforts.

Also in 2016, the GLC received an additional \$7.9 million in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to coordinate the restoration of Muskegon Lake, as part of a new \$40 million regional partnership. This is the third regional partnership we have been awarded since 2008, with over \$70 million being directed to key sites across the basin. When completed, the Muskegon projects are expected to increase property values by nearly \$12 million, attract 65,000 new visitors annually, and enhance the Muskegon Lake fishery, which contributes more than \$1 million to the local economy each year.

Looking ahead to 2017 and beyond

In 2016, we continued advocating for the comprehensive Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) which has generated unprecedented progress in restoring the largest system of fresh surface water in the world. We were thrilled to see our efforts and the efforts of our many state and local partners rewarded when Congress passed legislation authorizing the GLRI at \$300 million for the next five years.

While President Donald Trump recently zeroed out the GLRI in his FY 2018 budget proposal, we have been heartened to see incredible support for this critical funding from elected officials and organizations from across the basin and every political background. They know the Great Lakes form the backbone of the culture and economy of our eight-state, two-province region and are a national treasure. In fact, the President attempted to cut \$50 million from GLRI in the current year's budget, but we were happy to see that Congress restored this funding in the final budget approved for the remainder of FY 2017. In the years to come, the GLC will continue working with Congress and state and regional leaders to advance the GLRI and restore and protect the Great Lakes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon W. Allan'.

Jon W. Allan, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim A. Eder'.

Tim A. Eder, Executive Director

Funders and Supporters

The funders listed below provided support to the Great Lakes Commission in calendar year 2016.

The great majority of GLC programs and projects are pursued in partnership with other agencies and organizations, and benefit from their funding support. A listing of 2016 funders and supporters is provided below. Thanks to all for their assistance!

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 Council of Great Lakes Governors
 C.S. Mott Foundation
 Ecology & Environment Inc.
 Erb Foundation
 Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance
 Government of Ontario
 Government of Québec
 Great Lakes Fishery Commission
 Great Lakes Fishery Trust
 Great Lakes Protection Fund
 Herrick Foundation
 Illinois Department of Natural Resources
 International Joint Commission
 Joyce Foundation
 LimnoTech, Inc.
 Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
 NOAA National Sea Grant College Program
 Ohio State University
 State of Illinois
 State of Indiana
 State of Michigan
 State of Minnesota
 State of New York
 State of Ohio
 State of Wisconsin
 The Nature Conservancy
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Great Lakes National Program Office
 U.S. EPA, Region 5, Air and Radiological Division
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 U.S. Geological Survey
 University of Wisconsin-Madison

Revenues and Expenses

The financial report covers the Great Lakes Commission's 2016 fiscal year, which concluded June 30, 2016.

The GLC concluded FY 2016 in sound financial condition, with operating revenues of \$11.5 million. Total expenses exceeded revenues by 2.07 percent.

Overall, the GLC continues to effectively manage its general, restricted and cash reserve 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 GLC's financial operations.

Revenues

Grants and contracts	\$ 10,948,499	95.07%
State contributions	480,000	4.17%
Meetings, publications, misc.	71,501	0.62%
Interest income	12,640	0.11%
Change in fair value of investments	3,533	0.03%
TOTAL	\$ 11,516,173	

Expenses

Grants and contracts	\$ 8,830,398	75.12%
Personnel	2,318,871	19.73%
Office operations	285,706	2.43%
Program activities	152,930	1.30%
Travel	115,052	0.98%
Communications	51,730	0.44%
TOTAL	\$ 11,754,687	
Change in net position	(\$ 238,514)	-2.07%



The tug Kurt R. Luedtke passes the bulk carrier Herbert C. Jackson on the Buffalo River in Buffalo, New York, ©Bill Flannery.

Commissioners, Alternates and Observers

As of **December 2016**. Delegation chairs are in bold.

Illinois

Wayne A. Rosenthal, *Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources*

Benjamin J. Brockschmidt, *Illinois Chamber of Commerce*

Stephanie Comer, *Comer Family Foundation*

Dan Injerd, *Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources*

Indiana

Dan Schmidt, *Energy, Environment and Transport, State of Indiana*

Jody W. Peacock, *Ports of Indiana*

Carol S. Comer, *Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management*

Steve Fisher, *American Great Lakes Ports Association*

Kay L. Nelson, *Northwest Indiana Forum*

Indiana Alternates

Chris Smith, *Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources*

John Davis, *Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources*

Bruno Pigott, *Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management*

Michigan

Jon W. Allen, *Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality*

Ian R. Davison, Ph.D., *Central Michigan University*

Hon. Bill Schuette, *Attorney General*

Helen Taylor, *The Nature Conservancy*

Hon. Rebekah Warren, *State Senator*

Michigan Alternates

Emily Finnell, *Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality*

S. Peter Manning, *Dept. of the Attorney General*

Minnesota

John Linc Stine, *Minnesota Pollution Control Agency*

Hon. Ann Rest, *State Senator*

Hon. Carrie Ruud, *State Senator*

Hon. Paul Torkelson, *State Representative*

Hon. Jennifer Schultz, *State Representative*

New York

Basil Seggos, *New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation*

James M. Tierney, *New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation*

Donald E. Zelazny, *New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation*

Ohio

James Zehringer, *Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources*

Hon. John Eklund, *State Senator*

Craig W. Butler, *Ohio Environmental Protection Agency*

James H. I. Weakley, *Lake Carriers' Association*

Ohio Alternates

Michael Bailey, *Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources*

John D. Baker, *International Longshoremen's Association*

Karl Gebhardt, *Ohio Environmental Protection Agency*

Thomas Rayburn, *Lake Carriers' Association*

Andy Ware, *Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources*

Ontario

Bill Carr, *Office of International Relations and Policy*

Robert Fleming, *Ministry of the Environment*

Rosalyn Lawrence, *Ministry of Natural Resources*

John Lieou, *Ministry of Transportation*

Debra Sikora, *Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs*

Ontario Alternates

Jill Hughes, *Ministry of Transportation*

Mark Ling, *Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change*

Ranissah Samah, *Office of International Relations and Protocol*

Jason Travers, *Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry*

Pennsylvania

Timothy J. Bruno, *Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection*

Robert W. Light, *Penn State Erie, The Behrend College*

Pat Lupo, *Benedictine Sisters*

Pennsylvania Alternates

Lori A. Boughton, *Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection*

Kelly Heffner, *Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection*

Québec

Eric Marquis, *Québec Government Representative in Chicago*

Julie Bissonnette, *Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques*

Julie Grignon, *Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs*

Marc Gagnon, *Fednav Limited*

Josée Hallé, *Ministère des Transports du Québec*

Québec Alternates

Michel Dignard, *Ministère des Transports du Québec*

Jessy Dynes, *Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs*

Jérôme Faivre, *Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques*

Wisconsin

Patrick Stevens, *Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources*

Lynn Dufrane, *Nicolet National Bank*

Stephen G. Galarneau, *Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources*

Dean Haen, *Port of Green Bay*



Great Lakes Commission Staff

Front row (from left): Lisa Denys, Pat Gable, Karen Alexander, Dan Gold, Michael Polich, Marty Morrice, Victoria Pebbles, Tim Eder, Heather Braun, Ceci Weibert, Beth Wanamaker, Sarah Cook, Michèle Leduc-Lapierre, Kimmy Parker. Back row: Nicole Zacharda, Gary Overmier, Ken Gibbons, Laura Kaminski, Mark Yoders, Greg Parrish, Michael Schneider, Tom Crane, Matt Doss, Edo Jakupovic, Adam Heath, David Betcher, Joe Bertram, Laura Andrews. Not pictured: Steve Cole, Siyu Fan, Elaine Ferrier, Erika Jensen.

Observers

Alliance for the Great Lakes,
Joel Brammeier

Canadian Government (Federal),
Felicia Minotti

Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority,
Mike Ripley

Coastal States Organization,
Mary Munson

Conference of Great Lakes and
St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers,
David Naftzger

Council of Great Lakes Industries,
Kathryn Buckner

Ducks Unlimited, Gildo M. Tori
John G. Shedd Aquarium,
Michelle Parker

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities
Initiative, David Ullrich

Great Lakes Environmental Law Center,
Nick Schroeck

Great Lakes Fishery Commission,
Bob Lambe

Great Lakes Observing System,
Kelli Paige

Helsinki Commission,
Monika Stankiewicz

International Joint Commission,
Trish Morris

Maritime Administration, Great Lakes
Gateway, Floyd Miras

National Association of Conservation
Districts (vacant)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration (NOAA), Great Lakes
Environmental Research Laboratory,
Deborah Lee

NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal
Resource Management, Jeffrey L. Payne

NOAA Sea Grant, Christopher Winslow
National Park Service, Martin Sterkel

National Wildlife Federation,
Mike Shriberg

Sierra Club Great Lakes Program,
Allison Horton

St. Lawrence Seaway Development
Corp., Craig H. Middlebrook

The Nature Conservancy (Michigan
Chapter), Richard Bowman

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Carl Platz

U.S. Coast Guard, Ninth Coast Guard
District, Rear Admiral June Ryan

U.S. Department of Agriculture,
Natural Resources Conservation
Service, Terry Cosby

U.S. Department of Energy,
John Krummel

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,
Great Lakes National Program Office,
Chris Korleski

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
Craig A. Czarnecki

U.S. Geological Survey, Russell M. Strach

About the GLC

The Great Lakes Commission (GLC) 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 GLC 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 GLC’s executive body.

In carrying out its initiatives, the GLC 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 GLC activities through a formal Observer program. The GLC is supported by a professional staff in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



The Ludington North Pierhead Lighthouse on Lake Michigan in Ludington, Michigan, ©flickr/Tom Gill.