RESOLUTION

BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT FOR VESSELS DECLARING NO BALLAST ON BOARD

Whereas, the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species is an urgent issue posing a significant risk to the environmental and economic health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system; and

Whereas, ballast water from ocean-going commercial vessels is a known vector for aquatic invasive species introduction to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system; and

Whereas, there is sufficient scientific documentation that residual ballast water and sediment in the ballast tanks of vessels declaring no ballast on board (NOBOB) can host a variety of organisms that can be discharged into Great Lakes waters in the course of normal deballasting operations in the Lakes; and

Whereas, NOBOB vessels comprise the great majority of the oceangoing vessel traffic entering the Lakes via the Seaway, and are currently exempt from requirements for ballasted vessels to engage in an open ocean ballast water exchange before entering U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone waters; and

Whereas, recently announced research findings have documented the efficacy of open-ocean exchange of low salinity or fresh water ballast in killing organisms in the ballast tanks of NOBOB vessels;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Great Lakes Commission urges the United States Coast Guard develop a regulatory regime, that is consistent with the requirements of law, based on the ultimate goal of elimination of AIS introductions from NOBOB vessels, including open ocean ballast tank flush if that practice is found safe and manageable; and

Be It Further Resolved that ballast discharge standards for oceangoing NOBOB vessels be based on ballast water management standards made, consistent among all the Great Lakes states and provinces through regional collaboration.

Be It Finally Resolved that the Coast Guard explore an incentive program for vessel owners and operators and other maritime industry stakeholders to continue research and development on ballast management technologies, notably those effective in NOBOB situations.

Adopted at the 2005 Semiannual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, Buffalo, New York, May 13, 2005.