

Resolution

Support for the U.S. Federal-State Areas of Concern Coordinating Committee and Expedited Restoration Efforts for Great Lakes Areas of Concern

Whereas, The United States-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1978, as amended, provides for the designation of Areas of Concern (AOC) in need of remedial actions to address documented pollution problems; and

Whereas, 31 U.S. and binational Areas of Concern have been designated, each with a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) process that coordinates and focuses the efforts of multiple levels of government and other stakeholders; and

Whereas, programs, funding, technical assistance and related resources needed to restore beneficial uses in the Areas of Concern are dispersed among a variety of federal and state agencies, most are not specifically directed toward Area of Concern restoration, and no single agency at any level of government has adequate resources to fully restore the areas; and

Whereas, Area of Concern restoration efforts are administered largely at the state and local level with oversight from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and support from a broad array of federal agencies; and

Whereas, improved federal-state coordination is needed to optimize resources available from federal agencies and to direct them in a proactive and strategic manner toward restoration priorities in the Areas of Concern; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Restoration Strategy recommends that the existing U.S. EPA-State RAP Work Group be expanded to a Federal-State AOC Coordinating Committee to better coordinate efforts and optimize existing programs and authorities to advance restoration of the Areas of Concern; and

Whereas, U.S. EPA is establishing a Federal-State AOC Coordinating Committee and has called for participation from federal agencies, the Great Lakes states and other RAP participants; and

Whereas, restoration of the Great Lakes AOCs is a long-standing priority of the Great Lakes Commission.

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission applauds U.S. EPA for establishing the Federal-State AOC Coordinating Committee and endorses it as a mechanism for coordinating regional efforts to restore the Areas of Concern; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission calls on members of the Federal Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, the Great Lakes states and other partners involved in AOC restoration efforts to participate actively on the new Federal-State AOC Coordinating Committee and to optimize its value in consolidating and applying resources needed to restore the Areas of Concern; and



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Be it Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages the Federal-State AOC Coordinating Committee to communicate regularly with, and include participation from, local advisory groups in the Areas of Concern, and to report periodically to the Commission, Congress, the International Joint Commission and other appropriate bodies on the Committee=s accomplishments, contributions from individual agencies, and resources and policy changes needed to complete restoration efforts in the Areas of Concern.

Adopted by the Great Lakes Commission at its Semiannual Meeting, May 04, 2006, in Sheboygan, Wis.

The Great Lakes Commission is a binational public agency dedicated to the use, management and protection of the water, land and other natural resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system.