

Resolution

Great Lakes Commission Support for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Sustainable Water Resources Agreement and Great Lakes- St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact

Whereas, on December 13, 2005 the Great Lakes Governors and Premiers signed the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Sustainable Water Resources Agreement (the "Agreement") and the Great Lakes –St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact (the "Compact") to help protect the region's ecosystem by ensuring the sustainable use and management of the waters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River; and

Whereas, the Agreement and the Compact reaffirm the commitment to the water management principles set forth in the Great Lakes Charter of 1985 and the Charter Annex of 2001, while recognizing that future diversions, withdrawals and consumptive uses have the potential to significantly impact the environment, the economy and the welfare of the region; and

Whereas, the Agreement and the Compact enable the States and Provinces to act together to protect, conserve, restore, improve and effectively manage the waters and water dependent resources of the region in a way that is durable, efficient and retains and respects state and provincial water management authority within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River region; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Charter of 1985, Annex 2001, the Agreement and the Compact exemplify the strong regional commitment to protect, conserve, restore and improve the waters and water-dependent natural resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin; and

Whereas, the Council of Great Lakes Governors is facilitating the implementation of the Agreement by assisting and supporting the states and provinces, including their efforts to adopt enabling legislation to meet the requirements of the accords; and

Whereas, the Agreement recognizes the importance of water management data and information and the value of developing a compatible base of water use information and commits the states and provinces to gather and annually share accurate and comparable information to better meet the water management needs of the region; and

Whereas, the Agreement and Compact outline procedures and potential benefits for water management data and information collection to assist in future decisionmaking regarding water withdrawals and uses; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Commission was directed by the Great Lakes states and provinces in 1987 to create and manage the Great Lakes Regional Water Use Database providing for a uniform, consistent base of water use data to support implementation of the Great Lakes Charter; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Regional Water Use Database, operational since 1988, is a valuable tool and an important resource to assist the states and provinces in water resources planning and decisionmaking under the Charter; and

Whereas, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, in its capacity as secretariat to the Great Lakes Regional Water Management Body created under the Agreement, and the Great Lakes Commission are working together to review the existing water use database and information support system to consider improvements that might be necessary to support regional water resources management requirements under the Agreement and Compact; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Commission has organizational resources and staff expertise that may be called upon to serve the states and provinces as various provisions of the Agreement and Compact are implemented, including provisions calling for development of a stronger scientific basis for sound water management decision-making.

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission endorses the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Sustainable Water Resources Agreement and its companion Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and calls on legislative bodies in the Great Lakes states and provinces, as well as the United States Congress, to take prompt action to implement these accords into law; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages and supports the work of the states and provinces through the Regional Water Management Body to implement the Agreement and encourages efforts to develop the programmatic, information, scientific and legislative tools necessary to help protect the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin ecosystem; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission supports initiatives to develop a compatible base of water use information to implement the Agreement and offers its assistance, expertise, resources and cooperation in building upon the current Great Lakes Regional Water Use Database; and

Be it Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission commits to managing and maintaining the Great Lakes Regional Water Use Database in the interim, and offers its expertise and resources to serve the states and provinces to meet the evolving needs of the region in the area of water use, science, conservation and sustainable management.

Adopted by the Great Lakes Commission at its Annual Meeting, October 4, 2006, in Duluth, Minn.