

## **Action Item for Consideration by the Great Lakes Commission**

### **Establishing a Task Force to Develop a Great Lakes Commission Position on Reauthorization of the Great Lakes Legacy Act**

*Presented to the Great Lakes Commission  
October 2007*

#### **Background**

The Great Lakes Legacy Act, signed into law in 2002, authorizes \$270 million over five years to remediate contaminated sediments in Great Lakes Areas of Concern. The law needs to be reauthorized in 2008. The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration called for the Act's reauthorization and recommended that the authorized funding level be raised to \$150 million annually and that changes be made to improve the Act's effectiveness. Informal discussions are underway among several regional organizations (Sierra Club, Alliance for the Great Lakes, and Council of Great Lakes Industries) on issues to address in the reauthorization process. Reauthorizing the Legacy Act was among the "tier 1" priorities in the Commission's FY 2008 legislative priorities. It is anticipated that legislation reauthorizing the Act will be introduced in the next session of Congress.

#### **Staff Recommendation**

Commission staff recommends that a task force be formed to develop the Commission's position on reauthorization of the Legacy Act, including specific changes that will benefit the Great Lakes states and expedite progress in implementing sediment remediation projects under the Act. Each member of the Board can be invited to designate a representative from their state to sit on the task force and the Chair can charge them with developing a policy statement for the Board's review and approval. It is advisable that the task force include state agency staff who have been actively involved in developing and implementing projects funded under the Legacy Act. Because legislation likely will be introduced in early 2008, a policy statement should be completed by the end of 2007. Therefore, staff recommends that a task force be convened following the October 2007 Annual Meeting with a draft policy statement submitted for Board approval at its December meeting. The task force can meet via conference calls, with background materials and the policy statement prepared by Commission staff.