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About the Commission

The Great Lakes Commission was established in 1955 via U.S. federal and state law to “promote the orderly, integrated and comprehensive development, use and conservation of the water resources of the Great Lakes basin.” With membership consisting of the eight Great Lakes states, and associate member status for the provinces of Ontario and Québec, the Commission pursues three primary functions: communications, policy research and analysis, and advocacy.

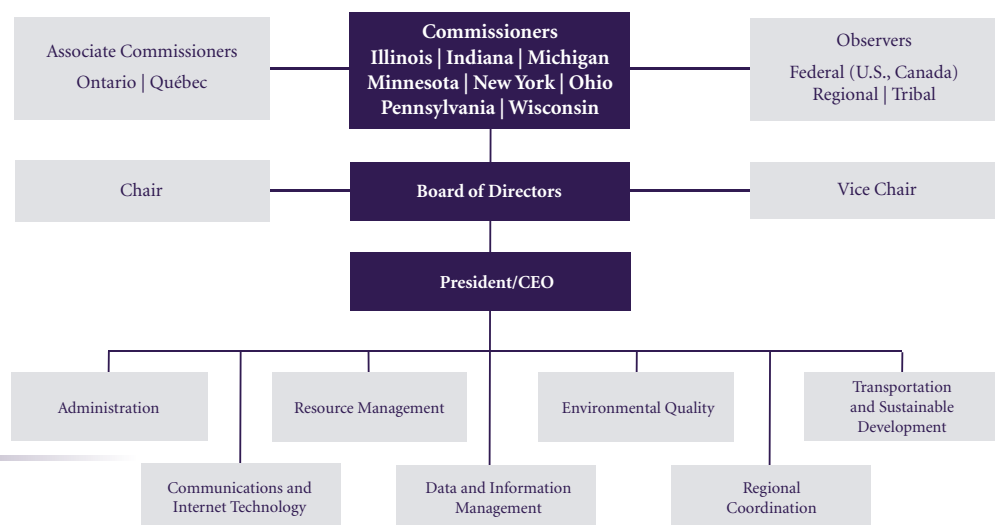
The Commission addresses a range of issues involving environmental protection, resource management, transportation and sustainable economic development. All activities are directed at realizing the vision of a prosperous economy, a healthy environment, and a high quality of life for citizens of the region.

Each member jurisdiction is represented by a delegation consisting of three to five members who are legislators, senior agency officials or appointees of the respective governor or premier. A board of directors, consisting of the chairs of each delegation, is the Commission’s executive body.

In carrying out its initiatives, the Commission 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 Commission activities through a formal Observer program.

The Commission is supported by a growing and experienced professional staff in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Understanding your Commission





Erin M. Crotty
New York



William J. Carr
Ontario



Cathleen Curran Myers
Pennsylvania



Yvan Bédard
Québec
(through 10/03)



Great Lakes, great challenges



Sam Speck is director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Contact him at sam.speck@dnr.state.oh.us

Samuel W. Speck, Chair, Great Lakes Commission

Progress. You're either moving forward, or falling back. Nothing stands still.

This year, there is no question that progress has been made in our efforts to restore, protect and manage our precious natural resources. And there is no question that the Great Lakes Commission has played a pivotal role on this region's path to environmental and economic prosperity. As I enter my second term as chair of the Commission, I look back on a productive year in which we did make a difference! However, I also look forward. Many challenges and opportunities await us, and we are well-positioned to meet them with conviction.

Mention any critical public policy issue this region faced in 2003, and you will find the Great Lakes Commission there: as a leader, a partner, a researcher, a facilitator and an advocate. Our long-standing plea to "Restore the Greatness!" has resonated throughout the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence community. The notion of a large-scale restoration and protection initiative is taking hold and a foundation is being laid. Our governors have formulated restoration priorities, our congressional delegation is shaping legislation, and many agencies and organizations are orienting their own planning processes around this common theme.

We will work diligently throughout 2004 – and beyond – to shape and advance these initiatives until our objectives are achieved. This annual report shows that our work is well under way: the Commission was "down in the trenches" all year with dozens of initiatives addressing the goals of its "Restore the Greatness!" campaign.

"Our long-standing plea to 'Restore the Greatness!' has resonated throughout the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence community."

Time is of the essence. We can't ask Asian carp and other invasive species to wait at the door while we tend to other matters. A thirsty world won't stand aside while we decide how we're going to safeguard our water resources. Our economic competitors won't cut us any slack while we summon the will to shore up the foundation of our regional economy.

Next year, the Great Lakes Commission will celebrate 50 years of outstanding service to its membership and to the people of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region. As we enter our next half-century, we need to set our goals at a level worthy of the resource we are responsible for. We need to think big. We need to secure a large-scale restoration program for the lakes. We need a strengthened legal regime to protect our water resources. We need legislation and action to control the biological pollution of invasive species. And, we need to remember that environmental and economic well-being must go hand in hand. In short, we need to move boldly forward to "Restore the Greatness!"

If we don't do it, who will?


Samuel W. Speck

2003 Commissioners and Alternates



Illinois

- **Frank Kudrna (Chair), Kudrna & Associates. Ltd.**
- Joel Brunsvold, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
- Ned Dikmen, Great Lakes Boating Magazine
- Anthony Ianello, Illinois Intl. Port District
- Lt. Gov. Patrick Quinn

Alternates

- Dan Injerd, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
- Donald Vonnahme, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources

Indiana

- **John Goss (Chair), Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources**
- Lori Kaplan, Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Peter McCarthy, Indiana's Intl. Port/Burns Harbor at Portage (*retired*)
- Gerry Nannenga, Gov. appointee
- Ray Sierra, Intl. Longshoremen's Assoc.

Alternate

- Stephen Lucas, Natural Resources Commission

Michigan

- **Ken DeBeussaert (Chair), Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality**
- Hon. Patricia Birkholz, State Senator
- Lieutenant Governor John D. Cherry, Jr.
- Hon. Mike Cox, Attorney General

Alternate

- Michael Leffler, Asst. Attorney General

Minnesota

- **Hon. Thomas Huntley (Chair), State Representative**
- Hon. Cal Larson, State Senator
- Hon. Peter Nelson, State Representative
- Ed Oliver, Oliver Financial
- Hon. Ann Rest, State Senator

Alternates

- Henry Hanka, National Scenic Byways Resource Center
- Hon. Sheila Kiscaden, State Senator

New York

- **Erin Crotty (Chair), New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation**
- Tom McAuslan, Port of Oswego Authority

- John Francis O'Mara, Gov. appointee

Alternates

- Gerald Mikol, New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation
- Donald Zelazny, New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Ohio

- **Samuel Speck (Chair), Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources**
- Hon. Robert Gardner, State Senator
- Christopher Jones, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Alternates

- James Weakley, Lake Carriers' Assoc.
- Jeffrey Busch, Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Ontario

- **William Carr (Chair), Ministry of Economic Development and Trade**
- David de Launay, Ministry of Natural Resources
- Elizabeth Janz, Ministry of the Environment
- Jim Whitestone, Ministry of Transportation

Alternates

- Paula Thompson, Ministry of Natural Resources
- Bill Raney, Ministry of Transportation

Pennsylvania

- **Cathleen Curran Myers (Chair), Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection**
- Sandy Smith, Erie Sand Steamship Co.

Alternates

- John Booser, Office for River Basin Cooperation
- Lori Boughton, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection

Québec

- **Yvan Bédard (Chair), Government of Québec (through 10/03)**
- Marcel Gaucher, Ministry of the Environment
- André Meloche, Ministry of Transportation

Alternates

- Louise Lapierre, Ministry of the Environment
- Chantal Ouellet, Ministry of Transportation

Wisconsin

- **Nathaniel E. Robinson (Chair), Wisconsin Technical College System**
- Todd Amb, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
- William Carey, Gov. appointee

Observers

- Stephen Brandt, Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Kevin Brown, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
- Leon Carl, Great Lakes Science Center, U.S. Geological Survey
- Charles Ehler, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, NOAA
- Christopher Goddard, Great Lakes Fishery Commission
- Gary Gulezian, Great Lakes National Program Office, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Scott Hoese, Great Lakes Committee, National Assoc. of Conservation Districts
- Gerry Jackson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Albert Jacques, St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp.

- Gail Krantzberg, International Joint Commission
- Tony MacDonald, Coastal States Organization
- Jan Miller, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- David Naftzger, Council of Great Lakes Governors
- Jim Nicholas, U.S. Geological Survey
- Carl Richards, Great Lakes Sea Grant Network
- Mike Ripley, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority
- Radm. Ronald Silva, Ninth District, U.S. Coast Guard
- Sheila Tooze, Canadian Embassy
- Gary Vequist, National Park Service
- Patrick Wilkey, U.S. Dept. of Energy

A quick look back, a long look forward



Mike Donahue is President/CEO of the Great Lakes Commission and ex-officio member of its Board of Directors. Contact him at mdonahue@glc.org

Michael J. Donahue, President/CEO

Great Lakes governance is a patchwork quilt of agencies and organizations that come in all shapes, sizes and textures. Mention a specific issue or management function and, chances are, some component of this rich institutional fabric will have it covered. Start talking holistically, though, and the fabric threatens to unravel.

That's where the Great Lakes Commission comes in. For almost 50 years it has been a common thread that helps its member jurisdictions – and the larger Great Lakes-St. Lawrence community – harmonize their respective efforts to achieve a shared vision of environmental and economic prosperity.

The Commission's enabling legislation, the Great Lakes Basin Compact, is a remarkable law that established an equally remarkable organization. Just imagine how "revolutionary" our founders were a half century ago! They created an agency where hydrologic boundaries take precedence over geopolitical ones ... where the interconnectedness of environmental and economic goals is recognized and celebrated ... where partnerships are the rule, not the exception ... and where sound science, objective analysis and aggressive advocacy are pursued hand-in-hand to effect change.

That's precisely what we did in 2003. Our research, policy analysis, communications and advocacy efforts centered around our call to "Restore the Greatness!" In concert with our partners, we worked relentlessly to advance cleanup efforts at toxic hot spots. We developed programs – and lobbied for laws – to shut the door on invasive species. We disbursed millions of dollars in grants to address nonpoint source pollution problems on land, in the air and in the water. We formed a binational coalition to restore and conserve wetlands and critical coastal habitat. We laid the groundwork for a science-based approach to water resource management. We employed our technical capabilities to develop decision support systems for the leading issues of the day. We took the notion of sustainability and gave it real-world applications by advancing environmentally sound recreational and commercial maritime transportation. Finally, we packaged it all together by reaffirming our long-standing call for a large-scale ecosystem restoration and protection program.

"Restoring the Great Lakes and securing their environmental and economic prosperity is a work in progress."

The pages of this annual report are a testament to the vision and leadership of our Commissioners, the commitment of our many partners, and the professionalism of our outstanding staff.

As we approach our 50-year milestone, we can look back with satisfaction, but only briefly. Restoring the Great Lakes and securing their environmental and economic prosperity is a work in progress. Much has been accomplished, but much more needs to be done.

The next half century? We're ready!

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Michael J. Donahue". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Michael J. Donahue, Ph.D.