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JON W. ALLAN, CHAIR  
Director, Office of the Great Lakes, Michigan  
Department of Environmental Quality

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Pennsylvania Department of Environmental  
Protection (Retired)

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Control Agency

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Natural Resources

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Vice President, Ports of Indiana

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Acting Commissioner, New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation

JAMES ZEHRRINGER  
Director, Ohio Department of  
Natural Resources

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Senior Manager, Government of Ontario  
Office of International Relations and Protocol

ERIC MARQUIS  
Québec Government Representative  
in Chicago, Government of Québec

RUSSELL RASMUSSEN  
Administrator, Water Division, Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources

Photos, top to bottom:  
American Courage  
departs the MacArthur Lock at the Soo Looks heading  
©Richard G. Rateick, Jr.

Hydroelectric generating station near the St. Lawrence  
River in Parc des Chutes, Rivière-du-Loup, Québec.  
©flickr/madi-flickr.

A Lake Michigan view from Indiana Dunes National  
Lakeshore, Michigan City, Indiana.  
©flickr/Tom Gill.

Cover photo: The Big Sable Point Light on Lake  
Michigan in Ludington State Park, Mason County,  
Michigan.  
©flickr/ Rachel Kramer.
Constructed in the early 1900s, the Chicago Area Waterway System created an artificial connection between the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan, carrying sewage away from the Great Lakes and allowing ships to pass between the two watersheds. While this system has done much to protect public health and promote economic development, the artificial connection between the two major watersheds has also become a high-risk area for the spread of AIS.

Recognizing this threat, the Commission convened the Chicago Area Waterway System Advisory Committee, which consists of representatives from regional public and private stakeholders, representing governmental, commercial, recreational, business, and environmental sectors. Over the last two years the Advisory Committee worked to reach consensus on the best short and long-term measures to prevent Asian carp and other AIS from using Chicagoland waterways to move from the Mississippi River basin to the Great Lakes basin.

The Great Lakes Commission directed an independent firm to produce the analyses necessary to support the Advisory Committee's decision-making. This work culminated in letters to President Obama and Congress recommending that funding be made available to further study the feasibility of developing special AIS control mechanisms and positioning them at strategic locations in the Chicago Area Waterway System.

We will be continuing our work with the Advisory Committee as we track progress in designing and implementing ways to control the spread of AIS at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam and pursue a long-term solution to this AIS threat.
BUILDING CONSENSUS ON RESTORING LAKE ERIE WATERS

Out of control large blooms of algae are harming Lake Erie, creating dead zones for fish and wildlife, causing billions of dollars of damage to the commercial fishing and tourism industries, and threatening the drinking water supply for millions. Phosphorus -- a key contributor to the growth of toxic algae -- often gets into the Great Lakes through agricultural runoff and releases from wastewater plants. In August 2014, more than 400,000 people in Ohio were left without access to drinking water for two days due to a dense bloom of toxic algae.

This public health crisis spurred the Commission to convene the Lake Erie Nutrient Targets (LENT) Working Group in 2014 to look at how to reduce nutrients and improve water quality in Lake Erie. The LENT group included leaders from Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York and the province of Ontario.

In June, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers held their Leadership Summit in Quebec City. One of their achievements was a commitment from the Governors of Ohio and Michigan and Premier of Ontario to a 40 percent reduction in the amount of phosphorus entering Lake Erie’s Western basin by the year 2025, with an interim goal of a 20 percent reduction by 2020. This commitment illustrates the alignment of Commission projects with priorities of the Governors and Premiers in two important ways: first, the phosphorus reduction targets build directly on the work of the Lake Erie Nutrient Targets Working Group, which fleshed out a ten step plan designed to meet the reduction targets; and second, the Commission’s Source Water Initiative -- to be launched in mid-2016 -- will continue this important work to reduce phosphorus in Lake Erie. The Initiative will directly respond to one of the action items outlined in the LENT plan by using Blue Accounting processes and methods to create a system to track progress toward the 40 percent phosphorus reduction target.

LOOKING TO 2016 AND BEYOND

2016 is off to an exciting start at the Commission. We are completing work on an updated five-year strategic plan to guide our work from 2016 through 2020. We are also growing, with three new strategic hires in the past year and more to come in 2016.

We continue our work leading a broad coalition of partners in advocating for policies that benefit the Great Lakes region, including continued Congressional support for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The GLRI is producing real results, with more than 2,900 projects implemented, six of the worst “toxic hotspots” cleaned up, a 70 percent increase in farmland enrolled in conservation programs in priority watersheds, 150,000 acres of habitat restored, and 3,800 miles of rivers opened for native fish.

Thank you for your continued support for the Great Lakes Commission. We are proud of the work we have accomplished together over the past 60 years. We look forward to the next 60 years of helping the states and provinces of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River region speak with a unified voice to ensure a vibrant economy, healthy environment and high quality of life.
Funders and Supporters

The funders listed below provided support to the Great Lakes Commission in calendar year 2015.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Council of Great Lakes Governors
Ecology & Environment, Inc.
Government of Ontario
Government of Québec
Great Lakes Fishery Commission
Great Lakes Fishery Trust
Great Lakes Protection Fund
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
International Joint Commission
Joyce Foundation
LimnoTech, Inc.
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Michigan Technological University
Navigant Consulting
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
NOAA National Sea Grant College Program
Ohio State University
State of Illinois
State of Indiana
State of Michigan
State of Minnesota
State of New York
State of Ohio
State of Wisconsin
The Nature Conservancy
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Great Lakes National Program Office
U.S. EPA, Region 5, Air and Radiological Division
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

Revenues and Expenses

The financial report covers the Great Lakes Commission’s fiscal year, which concluded June 30, 2015.

The Great Lakes Commission concluded FY 2015 in sound financial condition, with operating revenues of over $6.5 million. Total expenses exceeded revenues by 1.35 percent. Overall, the Commission continues to effectively manage its general, restricted and cash reserve funds to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. These figures were confirmed by an independent audit, which is conducted each year to examine the Commission’s financial operations. The 2015 fiscal year ended June 30, 2015.

Revenues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contracts</td>
<td>$7,037,320</td>
<td>92.38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>State contributions</td>
<td>480,000</td>
<td>6.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meetings, publications, misc.</td>
<td>40,765</td>
<td>0.54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest income</td>
<td>16,267</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in fair value of investments</td>
<td>43,235</td>
<td>0.57%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,617,587</strong></td>
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Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contracts</td>
<td>$5,013,998</td>
<td>64.95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>2,120,890</td>
<td>27.47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office operations</td>
<td>275,120</td>
<td>3.56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program activities</td>
<td>131,957</td>
<td>1.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>125,383</td>
<td>1.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>52,801</td>
<td>0.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,720,149</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in net position ($102,562) -1.35%
Commissioners, Alternates and Observers
As of July 2015. Delegation chairs are in bold.

Illinois
Wayne A. Rosenthal, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
Benjamin J. Brockschmidt, Illinois Chamber of Commerce
Stephanie Comer, Comer Family Foundation
Joe Deal, City of Chicago
Dan Injerd, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources

Minnesota
John Linc Stine, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Hon. Ann Rest, State Senator
Hon. Carrie Ruud, State Senator
Hon. Paul Torkelson, State Representative
Hon. Jennifer Schultz, State Representative
Hon. Bob Gunther, State Representative

Pennsylvania
Kelvin Burch, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection
Robert W. Light, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College
Pat Lupo, Benedictine Sisters

Indiana
Jody W. Peacock, Ports of Indiana
Thomas W. Easterly, Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management
Steve Fisher, American Great Lakes Ports Association
Kay L. Nelson, Northwest Indiana Forum
Chris Smith, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources
Indiana Alternates
John Davis, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources
Bruno Pigott, Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management

New York
Marc Gerstman, New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Philip Reed, Jefferson County Legislator
James M. Tierney, New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Donald E. Zelazny, New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Ohio
James Zehringer, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources
Hon. John Eklund, State Senator
Craig W. Butler, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
James H. I. Weakley, Lake Carriers’ Association
Ohio Alternates
Michael Bailey, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources
John D. Baker, International Longshoremen’s Association
Karl Gebhardt, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Gail Hesse, Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Ontario
Bill Carr, Office of International Relations and Protocol
Robert Fleming, Ministry of the Environment
Rosalyn Lawrence, Ministry of Natural Resources
John Lieou, Ministry of Transportation

Wisconsin
Russell Rasmussen, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Lynn Dufrane, Nicolet National Bank
Stephen G. Galarneau, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Dean Haen, Port of Green Bay

Michigan
Jon W. Allen, Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality
Ian R. Davison, Ph.D., Central Michigan University
Hon. Bill Schuette, Attorney General
Helen Taylor, The Nature Conservancy
Hon. Rebekah Warren, State Senator
Michigan Alternates
Dr. Roger Eberhardt, Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality
S. Peter Manning, Dept. of the Attorney General

Québec
Eric Marquis, Québec Government Representative in Chicago
Étienne Chabot, Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques
Nathalie Camden, Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs
Marc Gagnon, Fednav Limited
Josée Hallé, Ministère des Transports du Québec
Québec Alternates
Eve Joseph, Ministère des Transports du Québec
Jérome Faivre, Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques
Frédéric Lecomte, Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs

Wisconsin
Russell Rasmussen, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Lynn Dufrane, Nicolet National Bank
Stephen G. Galarneau, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Dean Haen, Port of Green Bay
Great Lakes Commission Staff


Observers

Alliance for the Great Lakes, Joel Brammeier
Canadian Government (Federal), Program Officer, Environment and Energy, Mike Ripley
Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority, Mike McMillen
Coastal States Organization, Mary Munson
Council of Great Lakes Governors, David Naftzger
Council of Great Lakes Industries, Kathryn Buckner
Ducks Unlimited, Gildo M. Tori
John G. Shedd Aquarium, Michelle Parker
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, David Ullrich
Great Lakes Environmental Law Center, Nick Schroed
Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Bob Lambe
Great Lakes Observing System, Kelli Paige
Helsinki Commission, Monika Stankiewicz
International Joint Commission, Trish Morris
Maritime Administration, Great Lakes Gateway, Floyd Miras
National Association of Conservation Districts (vacant)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, Deborah Lee
NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, Jeffrey L. Payne
NOAA Sea Grant, Robert W. Light
National Park Service, Martin Sterkel
National Wildlife Federation, Mike Shriberg
Northwest Indiana Forum (vacant)
St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp., Craig H. Middlebrook
The Nature Conservancy (Michigan Chapter), Richard Bowman
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jan Miller
U.S. Coast Guard, Ninth Coast Guard District, Rear Admiral June Ryan
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Terry Cosby
U.S. Department of Energy, John Krummel
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes National Program Office, Chris Korleski
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Craig A. Czarnecki
U.S. Geological Survey, Russell M. Strach
About the Commission

The Great Lakes Commission was established in 1955 with a mandate to “promote the orderly, integrated and comprehensive development, use and conservation of the water resources of the Great Lakes basin.” Founded in state law with U.S. federal consent, with membership consisting of the eight Great Lakes states and associate member status for the provinces of Ontario and Québec, the Commission pursues four primary functions: communication and education, information integration and reporting, facilitation and consensus building, and policy coordination and advocacy.

Each Member jurisdiction is represented by a delegation consisting of three to five members who are appointees of the respective governor or premier, legislators or senior agency officials. A board of directors, consisting of the chair 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 professional staff in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Photo: Hiking the Oberg Mountain Loop with a view of Lake Superior in Tofte, Minnesota. ©flickr/Tim Wilson.