

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin

### 1) Why is the Ecosystem Charter needed?

There are two principal reasons why the Charter is needed. First, many of our laws, programs, policies and institutions support the *concept* of an ecosystem approach to management in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. However, *application* of the concept is difficult due to often narrow, single-media or issue-specific mandates. The Charter provides a single, concise and clearly articulated statement that defines goals for an ecosystem approach, and ties a common thread through our many laws, programs, policies and institutions.

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If you are already an Ecosystem Charter Signatory, please pass this sheet along to another interested party. Also, please let us know how you are using and/or benefitting from the Charter. We will provide periodic updates on signatory progress in our bimonthly newsletter, the *ADVISOR*.

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Second, citizens, elected officials and even resource managers are often faced with the question "Who speaks for the Great Lakes?" Few seem to understand how our many laws, programs, policies and institutions relate to one another. Through the endorsement process, the Ecosystem Charter demonstrates that many agencies and organizations—despite their individual priorities, strategies and mandates—do subscribe to a commonly held set of principles. Thus, the Charter is a valuable educational tool that can explain how concepts of an ecosystem approach can actually be applied by the many public and non-governmental interests in the Basin.

### 2) How will my agency/organization benefit from the Charter?

You will benefit in several ways. First, by endorsing the Charter, your agency/organization will be recognized as a team player in a basinwide partnership that shares common objectives. Second, referencing the Charter can help strengthen your program and project proposals by demonstrating that those proposals address widely held principles and acknowledged unmet needs. Finally, your public policy advocacy efforts can be strengthened by referencing Charter principles consistent with your positions.

### 3) What is expected of endorsing agencies/organizations?

Those endorsing the Charter are expected to 1) consider Charter principles as guidance when developing work plans and priorities; 2) communicate and cooperate with others, to the extent possible, in pursuing those priorities; and 3) consider the Charter as a means for periodically assessing programs. Signatories are invited to provide a statement for the Charter addendum about how the Charter relates to their program(s)/mandate(s) and to comment briefly on how Charter implementation will be pursued. Signatory statements provide each agency/organization with a means to evaluate its own progress in Charter implementation. Those endorsing the Charter are not expected to pursue principles that go beyond the scope of their mandate. Further, they are not required to develop elaborate evaluation or reporting procedures.

### 4) Is the Charter a legally binding document?

No. The Charter is a voluntary "good faith" agreement among endorsing agencies and organizations. Simply stated, it is an expression of an agency's/organization's understanding of what an ecosystem approach to management should be. It provides guidance that the endorsing agency/organization can consider in pursuit of its own mandate. It does not supplant, compete with or otherwise directly affect implementation of existing laws, agreements, policies, etc.

**5) Does the Charter depart from established policy?**

No. The Charter is not a vehicle for introducing new policies and does not depart from established and broadly recognized laws, programs and policies with an ecosystem focus. Rather, the Charter showcases and advances them by summarizing key principles in a single and concise manner. The Charter consolidates principles found in more than 60 documents ranging from local partnership agreements to global policies. The Charter is consistent with and derived from documents such as the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, Boundary Waters Treaty, Great Lakes Charter, etc. Endorsing the Charter reaffirms an agency's/organization's commitment to these existing policies.

**6) Will signing the Charter force my agency/organization to pursue new programs or commit limited resources to new priorities?**

No. The Charter is intended to showcase and reference existing ecosystem efforts, while offering guidance as new ones are developed. The endorsing agency/organization is asked only to pursue those principles within its mandate and current priorities. It encourages, but does not require, pursuit of new programs where needed to advance the Charter's principles.

**7) What does the endorsement process entail, and what is the timeline?**

Endorsements are accepted on an ongoing basis. Any agency, organization or business interested in becoming a signatory can do so by completing the Signatory Response Form. The Charter addendum is periodically updated to reflect new signatories. The Signatory Response Form is available from the Great Lakes Commission. It can also be found along with other Charter-related information via the Ecosystem Charter home page at: <http://www.glc.org/projects/ecochart/ecochart.html>. All signatories will be kept apprised of Charter-related developments through the Great Lakes Commission as the coordinating organization.

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Note: Several action items under Principle XI in the Sustainable Communities section were inadvertently left off during the final printing of the document. Please read the Ecosystem Charter to include the following five additional items under Principle XI.

- Supporting and pursuing policies and programs that provide for the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, and working to revise or eliminate those that do not.
- Identifying energy efficiency and conservation as a public and private sector priority and supporting the use of renewable energy resources.
- Supporting adequate and prudent infrastructure investment, particularly for water treatment and distribution systems, consistent with the goal of sustainable communities.
- Supporting and pursuing policies and programs that encourage the development of industries providing pollution control and mitigation products and services.
- Developing common data collection measures and indicators to integrate and/or supplement traditional independent measures of environmental, social and economic health and well-being to gauge progress in achieving a sustainable society.

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For more information about the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin, contact the Great Lakes Commission at 313-665-9135; write to the Commission at 400 Fourth St., Argus II, Ann Arbor, MI 48103-4816; or send an email to [vpebbles@glc.org](mailto:vpebbles@glc.org).

# SIGNATORY RESPONSE FORM

## - AN ECOSYSTEM CHARTER FOR THE GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE BASIN -

**INTRODUCTION:** The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin is a statement that summarizes commonly held principles for pursuing an "ecosystem approach" to Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin management. Any government agency, or non-governmental organization that subscribes to these principles is invited to be a signatory. Signatories agree to use the Charter as guidance in developing their own work plans and priorities, as a means to enhance communication and cooperation with others, and as a means for assessing progress toward a shared vision for the future. The Charter is a non-binding "good faith" agreement; it does not replace or affect implementation of existing laws, agreements and policies. Rather, it showcases these initiatives in the spirit of promoting an ecosystem approach to Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin management.

- I endorse the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin and my agency/organization will be a Charter signatory. I would like the following statement to accompany my agency's/organization's name in the Charter addendum. (Please provide a brief statement that expresses your comments on the Charter, how you will use it for guidance, incorporate it into workplans, implementation activities or advocacy efforts, etc.)

### SIGNATORY STATEMENT:

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- My agency/organization would like to be involved in future review/revision of the Charter. Please contact us with further details.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsements will be accepted on an ongoing basis.

Please complete and return to:  
Great Lakes Commission  
400 Fourth Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103-4816

Ph: 313-665-9135, Fax: 313-665-4370, Email: [glc@great-lakes.net](mailto:glc@great-lakes.net)



# An Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin

## ADDENDUM

### *SIGNATORIES AND STATEMENTS*

January 1997

The following is a listing of agencies and organizations that have signified their endorsement of the Ecosystem Charter. By signing, they agree to use the Charter as guidance in the development of their work plans and priorities, as a means to enhance communication with others, and as a means for assessing progress toward a shared vision for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin Ecosystem. Signatories will pursue principles and related actions that are consistent with their individual mandates and priorities and within available resources.

This listing represents signatories to date. It will be periodically updated to include additional signatories (and associated statements) secured over time. Signatories recognize that the Ecosystem Charter is a "living document" that will be periodically reviewed and revised in the interest of both expanding the breadth of the community of signatories, and addressing evolving Basin issues and needs.

#### **ABDI-Land Conservation Department**

The mission of the Land Conservation Committees and the Land and Water Conservation staff is to provide leadership and promote sound land and water stewardship through education, technical support and consistent program direction in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, and Iron Counties of Wisconsin. We will continue our efforts in assisting private landholders in the development of ecosystem-based resource management plans. We support the concepts developed under the Ecosystem Charter and will incorporate these principles in all aspects of planning in order to reach our common goals of healthy environment, healthy economy and exceptional quality of life as members of the Lake Superior community.

#### **Ashtabula Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Barry Soil and Water Conservation District**

For the past 50 years the Barry Soil and Water Conservation District has been committed to managing the land, water, forest and wildlife resources here in Barry County, Michigan. Our purpose as a grass-roots local organization is to improve, sustain and diversify these resources for further generations. The Charter reflects our goal of helping land owners develop an ecosystem/watershed approach to managing their property for agriculture, forestry hunting, fishing, recreation or just plain healthy living. Principles IX, XI, XIV, XVI and XVII are applicable to all our efforts, but are highlighted in our approach to the watershed of the Thornapple River, a tributary to the Grand River and ultimately flowing into Lake Michigan.

#### **Bruce Trail Association**

#### **Canadian Shipowners Association**

#### **Canandaigua Lake Watershed Task Force**

#### **Carlton County Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Center for Environmental Programs, Bowling Green State University**

The Ecosystem Charter is a significant synthesizing document which addresses the diverse needs and interests of residents of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. Charter principles are compatible with the mission of our Center to provide environmental education, research and public service for the region. Accordingly, we will be pleased to participate in further review/revision of this document and to assist in promoting its underlying concept of ecosystem management for the Great Lakes. BGSU is located southwest of Lake Erie in the Maumee River Basin, one of the largest inflow sources and an area of concern for the Great Lakes. The University offers several environmental degrees and our Center is actively involved in research and education pertinent to Great Lakes issues. Relevant courses include offerings on Great Lakes ecosystems, biodiversity, sustainable development, water quality, wetland ecology, and limnology; research activities include projects in wetland ecology, pollution assessment and control, algology, and the impact of exotics such as zebra mussels on the Great Lakes ecosystem.

#### **Center for a Sustainable Great Lakes**

The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin is an important document which adds to the understanding of "ecosystem approach" to management within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Ecosystem. Our preference would be that a "human ecosystem approach" be taken that would focus on the management of human activities within the Basin to insure the long-term sustainability of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Ecosystem as a definable human ecosystem. With such an approach the issues related to "sustainable development" become moot. The Charter is a good beginning. It needs to be revisited and revised as our understanding of the relationship between people and the Great-St. Lawrence River improves.

#### **Chocolay Watershed Project, Marquette Conservation District**

#### **City of Monroe, Michigan (Water Department)**

### **Cook County Soil & Water Conservation District**

### **Conservator Society of Hamilton District**

### **Cummins & Barnard Ecological Engineering, Inc.**

The mission of Cummins & Barnard Ecological Engineering, Inc. is absolutely accordant with the Charter. Our work, centered in the Basin, begins to re-establish ecological landscape balance in a post-exploitation economy. We use as our template for solving problems of imbalance, the five-billion-year-old engineering system that biological organisms and communities represent. This means designing phyto-microbial system is to purify wastes in water and soil. It means assessing natural features value, performing ecological restoration, providing ecosystem-based management consulting and improving environmental management for commerce and industry.

### **Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District**

Our natural resources are priceless economic and edaphic assets of the Great Lakes Basin and deserve protection now to avert irrevocable damage to our ecosystem, especially the critical edges, and erosion of our socio-economic base.

### **Ducks Unlimited Canada**

For the past 20 years Ducks Unlimited Canada has been a leader in conserving Great Lakes coastal wetlands. These are among the Continent's most important environments which have suffered significant damage due to improper water regulation, dyking, introduction of exotic species and pollution. The rehabilitation and management of these habitats will continue to be of the highest priority for Ducks Unlimited Canada.

### **Ducks Unlimited, Inc.**

Ducks Unlimited, Inc. promotes biodiversity and the protection of the integrity of the Great Lakes ecosystem through our mission to protect, restore and enhance waterfowl habitat in the Great Lakes region. Culturing partnerships with State and Federal Agencies, Corporations, Private Landowners, and other Private partners aided the expansion of Ducks Unlimited's national and international conservation programs in the Great Lakes during the past decade. Ducks Unlimited, Inc., is committed to protecting restoring and enhancing wetlands and associated uplands in coastal regions and large watersheds.

### **Ecology and Environment, Inc.**

### **Ecovision Associates**

### **1854 Authority**

Respect for the Earth and its resources has long been a guiding principle in the life and traditions of the indigenous peoples of the Great Lakes Region. Understanding that every effect has a cause, and that we are a component of the environment around us, the 1854 Authority strives to be a part of the integrated resource management needed to protect and enhance the unique ecosystem in which we live. The 1854 Authority is in the process of developing a Comprehensive Environmental Enhancement Resource Management Plan and the principles set forth in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin Ecosystem Charter will be used to formulate our vision.

### **Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District**

### **Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority**

### **Fathom Five National Marine Park, Parks Canada**

It is with great satisfaction, that we confirm our support to the Ecosystem Charter. Parks Canada's *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (1994) echo the Vision and Principles of this charter. Again, we are encouraged by the intent, cooperation and collaboration that is demonstrated by this charter.

### **Fenton Livingston Soil Conservation Districts**

The Fenton-Livingston SWCD is proud to endorse the Ecosystem Charter and the principles and vision that it espouses. We will use the document as a framework for all future initiatives which the District proposes.

### **Freshwater Foundation**

### **Fulton Soil and Water Conservation District**

We of the Fulton Soil and Water Conservation District are concerned about the excessive urban, agricultural, and industrial runoff that carries sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other pollutants into our streams, rivers, and lakes. Our objective is to provide technical assistance to farmers, landowners, industry, developers, and local governments to initiate methods that reduce runoff pollution from point and nonpoint sources. We will utilize all available cost-sharing programs which assist the public to address nonpoint source pollution, such as pollution abatement program, FSA sediment control programs, Upper Tiffin upland treatment, and Clean Water Act. We will further conduct various tour meetings, or workshops that promote conservation practices that improve water quality.

### **Galien River Soil and Water Conservation District**

The Galien River SWCD supports the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. It is important for all peoples to work together to port our natural resources, of which the Great Lakes is an important source to take care of and preserve. Where else can families go to the beach, eat fresh fruits and vegetables in season, walk the paths of our ancestors, collect drift wood, rocks and shells, etc. of this great area?! We will not take for granted what is here today. We will help protect for tomorrow.

### **Gauga Soil and Water Conservation District**

### **Global Tomorrow Coalition**

### **Gogebic Soil and Water Conservation District**

### **Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians**

### **Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Initiative**

### **Grand Valley State University Water Resources Institute**

The Ecosystem Charter is a significant step forward. It summarizes the major environmental concerns for our region and the actions that will be necessary to deal with those concerns. It also identifies the diverse socio/economic/political factors and organizations which will be critical to our success in preserving a quality environment for future generations. The document will serve as a valuable guide for the development of research, education and political initiatives.

#### **Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**

The Ecosystem Charter addresses principles of ecosystem management which are of special importance of the kinds of research undertaken regionally by GLERL of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. We believe we have much to gain by cooperating with other federal agencies, state agencies, academia and our Canadian colleagues in collaborative research on issues addressed in the Charter. The Charter provides the framework and agenda for pursuing these collaborative efforts. In this time of changing national priorities, downsizing government and tight budgets, it is important to have a Charter that addresses the ecosystem approach and consequently the need to cooperate in making the best use of resources for sound ecosystem research.

#### **Great Lakes Non-point Abatement Coalition-Wisconsin Chapter**

Our coalition of 28 counties draining to Lake Michigan support concepts of local government involvement and implementation. Our organization's mission is to develop, promote, and support non-point source pollution control programs for implementation at the local government level, which seek to protect the water quality of the Great Lakes. Our organization will actively promote Principles I, II, XIII, XIV, XVI, and XVII.

#### **Great Lakes Pollution Prevention Centre**

The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Basin reflects the concepts essential for the prevention of pollution. As a living document, it offers a focus for all sections of society to take action towards a conscious goal based on a single set of fundamental principles.

#### **Great Lakes Tomorrow (U.S. Directors)**

#### **Griesinger Films, Inc.**

The Ecosystem Charter is a revolutionary document. Griesinger Films supports every effort to operationalize sustainability. We will continue to provide video productions that help establish the intellectual ecological/economic underpinnings for a healthy biosphere.

#### **Hancock Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Houghton-Keweenaw Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Huron River Watershed Council**

To achieve this vision for the Great Lakes, the principles of this Charter must be applied to each smaller component of the ecosystem. These principles will guide the Huron River Watershed Council's efforts to restore and protect the ecological integrity of the Huron River system--a tributary to Lake Erie and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin.

#### **Huron Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Illinois Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

#### **Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program, University of Illinois**

#### **Indiana Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

#### **Indiana Department of Natural Resources**

The mission of Indiana's Department of Natural Resources is "to protect, enhance preserve, and wisely use" the state's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The Ecosystem Charter's vision statement and principles serve as guideposts for the department in the fulfillment of that mission within the Great Lakes basin. The charter is a constant reminder of the need to follow an ecosystem approach to resource management as departmental Great Lakes basin programs and activities are reviewed, modified or implemented. In addition, most of the principles are also applicable throughout the remainder of the state and can be incorporated into programs outside the Great Lakes basin.

#### **Indiana University-Bloomington, School of Public and Environmental Affairs**

#### **Ingham Conservation District**

The Ingham Conservation District has worked successfully to meet the demands of changing resources. The Ecosystem Charter compliments our own goals to build livable and sustainable communities for this generation and the next. With these 17 principles, we will continue to challenge ourselves to look beyond our local boundaries and adopt a wider view of managing for the total ecosystem.

#### **International Great Lakes St. Lawrence Mayors' Conference**

The International Great Lake St. Lawrence Mayors' Conference was established in 1987 to provide a forum for discussion and advocacy on economic and environmental issues pertaining to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence River system. These world-class water resources provide a common bond among the shoreline communities and an opportunity for local units of government to participate in relevant resource policy development. For this reason, the Mayors' Conference is pleased to be an Ecosystem Charter signatory. The Mayors' Conference adopted a resolution on September 15, 1994 endorsing the Charter, recognizing it as among "the first steps toward the principles of a true ecosystem approach to management."

#### **Isabella Soil Conservation District**

#### **Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Izaak Walton League, Minnesota Division**

#### **Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District**

The Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District endorses the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. Our Soil and Water District has always been guided by the principles stated in the Charter to help Jefferson County Residents conserve natural resources. We realize, because of our many miles of Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River coastlines, that we must measure every action very carefully to avoid adverse impact on our ecosystem. We vow to continue and improve our efforts to utilize the principles of the Charter.

#### **Jefferson County Water Quality Coordinating Committee**

Jefferson County is a rural county, located in the north central portion of New York State. Jefferson County is bordered by 256 miles of shoreline on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River (162 mainland/94 miles of island shoreline). In addition all three major watersheds (Lake Ontario watershed,

Black River watershed, St. Lawrence River Watershed) flow into and affect the Great Lakes Basin.

The charter will be used as a resource for the Jefferson County Water Quality Coordinating Committee as we develop and implement programs to improve water quality in Jefferson County.

#### **Kahnawake Environment**

#### **Kent Environmental Council**

The Kent Environmental Council enthusiastically endorses the principles affirmed in the Ecosystem Charter. We are engaged in a study of the vital signs and indicators of sustainable development as they would apply in our immediate locale, and will publish our findings in an effort to strengthen and unify the movement in support of ecological integrity in Kent and Portage Counties.

#### **Keweenaw Bay Indian Community**

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community proudly endorses the *Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin*. The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community believes the Charter to be of assistance in establishing management strategies for various environmental resources present in the Basin. Our tribal government is committed to maintaining the integrity and diversity of our natural resources and protecting these resources for future generations.

#### **LaGrange County Soil and Water Conservation District**

With Water quality being a major concern to residents in our county, we, The LaGrange County Soil and Water Conservation District supervisors and staff, appreciate the opportunity to endorse the *Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin*. We will promote the charter and the ecosystem management approach to the best of our ability and knowledge.

#### **Lake Michigan Marina Development Commission**

Lake Michigan Marina Development Commission, a commission of mayors from Indiana's shoreline cities of Hammond, Whiting, East Chicago, Gary, Portage and Michigan City, was established by the Indiana General Assembly ten years ago to spur marina and economic development along the state's shoreline on Lake Michigan and two navigable tributaries. The Marina Commission recognizes that preservation of the natural environment, improvement of water quality and sustainable development are inherent in successful marina development and critical to human health and well-being. The Marina Commission endorses the concepts that are set forth in the Ecosystem Charter and looks to them to serve as a benchmark for assessing progress and providing guidance for future efforts on the Indiana shoreline and throughout the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Basin.

#### **Lake Superior Center**

Lake Superior Center seeks to engage large numbers of the general public and make them responsive to the economic, recreational, biological, aesthetic and spiritual worth of Lake Superior. This is done with the belief that the creation of a "public will" is essential along with research and regulation in the future of Lake Superior. This is done through exhibits, trips and programs. No affinity for the Lake is assumed in the audience. We seek to expand the "family" rather than only address kindred spirits.

The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin is consistent with the view that Lake Superior Center holds for the Basin. Principle XVI and VII are statements and methods that are specific areas of performance for Lake Superior Center.

#### **Land and Water Systems Partnership (Institute for Water Research, Center for Remote Sensing, Michigan State University)**

#### **LaPorte County Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **League of Women Voters of Illinois**

#### **League of Women Voters of Michigan**

The League of Women Voters of Michigan sees the Ecosystem Charter as an important step in promoting an ecosystem approach to management. Its ultimate significance depends upon its use by the signatories and others. LWV will use it as a starting point in advocacy on Great Lakes issues. The open and cooperative process by which the Ecosystem Charter was drafted should serve as a model for future Great Lakes efforts.

#### **League of Women Voters of Minnesota**

#### **League of Women Voters of New York**

#### **League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania**

The League of Women Voters has a long standing interest in education and advocacy for better water resources management as part of our commitment to informed citizen participation in government. In Pennsylvania we have engaged in a Groundwater Policy Education Project and developed a Water Resources Education Network. The 17 Principles of the Ecosystem Charter agree with the basic position of the League that "natural resources should be managed as inter-related parts of life-supporting ecosystems." The Charter and the process by which it was created, gives us an opportunity to cooperate beyond political boundaries in a larger framework that mirrors the natural systems in which we live.

#### **Leelanau Soil and Water Conservation District**

As we move into the 21st Century, the days of addressing just soil erosion move into the archives. Ecosystem management has become the primary goal to which our conservation district subscribes.

#### **Luce/West Mackinac Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Macomb Soil and Water Conservation District**

The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin with its vision will be used by the Macomb Soil and Water Conservation District in these ways: The concept of an ecosystem approach will be kept in mind when developing the Macomb Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Plan of Operations, the Long Range Plan and Environmental Education Programs.

#### **Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation Department**

The Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation Department will include Principles II, IV, V, IX, and XIV in our Program implementation and development.



**Mason-Lake Soil Conservation District**

**Mercer Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Michigan Association of Conservation Districts**

**Michigan Attorney General's Office**

**Michigan Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

**Michigan Environmental Defense**

**Michigan State Section, American Water Resources Association**

The Michigan State Section of the American Water Resources Association (AWRA) will support and promote the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin by ensuring that the Section's activities are consistent with the Charter and by providing a forum where issues related to the Charter can be discussed and debated. The Michigan State Section of AWRA will advance the principles of the Charter by promoting water resources education, research and management, by collecting and disseminating information, knowledge and data concerning all aspects of water resources and by fostering the rational and objective promotion, development, utilization and management of Michigan's water resources. The Michigan State Section of AWRA will network and cooperate with appropriate governmental institutions, private interests and other water resources organizations interested in promoting and advancing the Great Lakes Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin.

**Michigan State University Extension**

**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources**

**Minnesota Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

**Minnesota Sea Grant**

The Charter will be a valuable educational tool for Minnesota Sea Grant. Much of the strength of the Ecosystem Charter lies in the very process of its initial creation. As a consensus document, it reflects the fact that very diverse interests were able to come to agreement on sound ecosystem management principles for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. Given the complexity of the many layers of government, initiatives, and regulations affecting the region, the Charter provides a necessary central framework from which to evaluate the success of our efforts to maintain and improve the environmental quality of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin.

**Missaukee Conservation District**

**Muskegon County Soil Conservation District**

**National Association of Conservation Districts, North Central Region**

The 189 conservation districts in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin have been working since the late 1930s to correct land and water abuses from mankind's activities. Districts recognize the delicate balance that exists in this natural system and the need for economic activities that often upset this balance. Districts will find the 17 principles an

excellent starting point in refining the work they began over 50 years ago.

**National Biological Survey, Great Lakes Science Center**

**National Park Service, Midwest Region**

The Charter's vision statement and principles clearly support and reinforce the mission of the National Park Service in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. It is with much satisfaction, therefore, that the National Park Service becomes a signatory to this Charter. We welcome the opportunity to work closely with other Charter signatories in pursuing an ecosystem management approach in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin.

**Nature's Niche: Citizens for Sustainable Re-creation**

Nature's Niche advocates interdependence and mutuality in all relationships. The Charter exemplifies these ideals of integrative complementarity. Currently, there is much excitement and hope for an emerging ethos of global responsibility for which the Charter is a catalyst.

A highlight for Nature's Niche in 1993 was participation in the nine day event of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, held in Chicago, Illinois. To date in 1994, attention has principally focused upon collaboration with Jean Feraca of Wisconsin Public Radio's Ideas Network. The Charter's effort to meld ecological fittedness with spirituality is an over-arching ideal of all citizens who embrace sustainable re-creation.

**New York Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

The New York State delegates to the Great Lakes Commission support the concept and the process for developing an Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Ecosystem and the Vision statement included in the Charter. We recognize that the Principles and the Findings are the basis for discussion on how the Charter could be implemented in the Great Lakes Basin and that continuing discussions among agencies and stakeholders will provide the communication needed to gain consensus on addressing the Ecosystem Charter in New York State.

**New York Rivers United**

New York Rivers United believes the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin provides an excellent basis for enhancement and maintenance of all aspects of the Basin Ecosystem. The principles set forth in the Ecosystem Charter will assist us in setting goals for our activities in conservation, restoration and enhancement of New York State's river systems.

**Northland College**

Northland College and its Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute endorse the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes Basin because its principles parallel our interest in, and commitment to, partnerships dedicated to positive solutions of problems. Northland is a college of about 800 students who come from 45 states and ten other countries to study at its campus near the shores of Lake Superior in Ashland, Wisconsin. Founded in 1892 in the cutover Northern forest, the College has always been committed to the liberal arts as the appropriate tool for understanding the world. For a generation now, since 1971, it has added an institutional emphasis on the environment--across both traditional and innovative curricular programs and as caretakers of a physical environment that extends beyond Northland College's

campus. The Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute has, since 1972, been the environmental outreach arm of Northland College working in areas of environmental education, fresh water and forest ecosystems education and involvement.

#### **North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Northwest Indiana Forum, Inc.**

The Northwest Indiana Forum is pleased to endorse the Ecosystem Charter, and would like to suggest several issues for future discussions concerning ecosystem issues. As outlined in our correspondence of September 29, 1994, we suggest future discussion concerning tenet 4 of the vision statement, monitoring programs referenced in Principle III, Lakewide Management Plans referenced in Principle IV, the financing of research referenced in Principle VI, and pollution prevention referenced in Principle VI.

#### **Northwest Michigan Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.**

#### **Oconto County Land Conservation Division**

#### **Ohio Coastal Resources Management Project, Inc.**

The Ohio Coastal Resource Management Project (OCRMP) will use the principles outlined in the Charter as we approach public policy issues relating to the Lake Erie Basin from a citizen perspective. The vision statement reflects the increasing common interest each user has in this resource of statewide, regional and national importance. OCRMP will use the Charter to increase public knowledge and understanding of coastal issues, to promote stewardship of Ohio's north coast through systematic analysis of resource issues, and to develop and recommend solutions to existing management problems. It is time for all of us to work together to put these principles into practice, taking practical steps toward an ecosystem approach to restore and enhance the integrity of the Lakes and to direct our efforts toward sustainable development.

#### **Ohio Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

#### **Ohio Department of Natural Resources**

The Ecosystem Charter is a major step to integrating all aspects of the Great Lakes environment. We expect to use the Charter to measure our activities and decisions and assure we consider all relevant impacts. The Charter also needs to be revisited periodically to make it a living document.

#### **Oneida Indian Nation**

#### **Ontario County of Soil and Water Conservation District**

For over fifty years our nation's Soil and Water Districts have been preserving and protecting resources. This charter offers a point of focus for all segments of society to reach common goals. We are all stakeholders, and as such we are fully supportive of the spirit of the Charter.

#### **Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters**

#### **Ontonagon Soil Conservation District**

#### **Ozaukee County Land Conservation Department**

The ecosystem charter reflects concerns and goals of the Ozaukee County Land Conservation Committee and Depart-

ment. We recognize the need to identify and support partners who share an ecosystem management approach.

#### **Pennsylvania Delegation to the Great Lakes Commission**

#### **Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission**

The principles of the Charter are consistent with the mission of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and with agency responsibilities to provide fishing and boating opportunities. The Charter supports and reinforces our agency's commitment to a broad focus on social, environmental, and fish community interrelationships as we strive to achieve a healthy ecosystem and a stable, balanced fish community in Lake Erie.

#### **Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District**

#### **Pine Grove Township (Van Buren County) Michigan**

The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin is a document which shows understanding of the system, what needs to be done to correct problems and prevent harm now and in the future, and gives relatively clear directives about the processes required to carry out the plan in the form of information, education and public participation. It is up to each of us now not to put the document on the shelf, but rather to use it as our guide in every action pursued in our State: if our action does not help the ecosystem, we at least have to make sure our actions do not hurt the ecosystem. We wholeheartedly endorse the Charter.

#### **Potter County Conservation District**

#### **Portage Land Association for Conservation and Education (PLACE)**

PLACE applauds the vision of the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. We will use it as a foundational document to educate our members, fellow citizens and leaders of the importance of working towards a sustainable society.

#### **Presque Isle Soil Conservation District**

The Presque Isle Soil Conservation District fully supports the Charter's effort to pull together the many different activities and mandates directed toward an ecosystem based approach of management within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. The District will do its part in facilitating and coordinating partnership among various entities in their quest for a productive nation in harmony with a quality environment.

#### **Regional Groundwater Center, University of Michigan-Flint**

#### **R.O.L.E. (Residents Organized for Lewiston-Porter's Environment)**

The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin is an important and vital document in defining future actions needed to sustain the environmental health and economic viability of the world's "sixth ocean." The fact that it is a living document corresponds significantly with human health and quality of life issues impacting on the region's communities.

#### **St. Joseph River Basin Commission-Indiana**

#### **St. Joseph River Soil and Water Conservation District**

The St. Joseph River SWCD supports the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. As a major agricultural area, tourism/recreation, industry and manufacturing we must all work together to improve and maintain the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin. Continued guidance through work plans, communications and education will allow future generations to enjoy the natural resources benefits of living in this area.

#### **Saint Lawrence Aquarium & Ecological Center Inc.**

#### **Saint Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission**

The Charter formalizes in writing the philosophy the Commission has pursued informally. The explicit statement of the ecosystem approach will be incorporated in the Statement of Commission Philosophy, Annual Work Program, and other documents used in the management of the resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Ecosystem.

#### **Saint Lawrence Economic Development Council (SODES)**

The mandate of the St. Lawrence Economic Development Council (SODES) is to represent the St. Lawrence maritime community and promote its economic interests. SODES endorses the Charter's Vision and supports Principles I, V, VI, VII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIV, XV and XVI. Since SODES believes that economic concerns and St. Lawrence issues are not fully reflected in all the principles and supporting statements, it can give only partial support to the Charter. SODES looks forward to working with Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin interests in addressing these issues of concern and thereby improving the Charter in the future.

#### **Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation**

#### **St. Regis Mohawk Tribe - Environment Division**

The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe will utilize the Ecosystem Charter to develop and implement water quality standards for the St. Lawrence River in Akwesagne. The standards and this charter will promote protection for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin and help restore its "cleanliness." We hope this will help in achieving cooperation between the "big three" industries near Akwesagne (Alcoa, Reynolds Aluminum and General Motors) and accept responsibility for their actions and help restore our culture.

#### **Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

#### **Save the Dunes Council**

The Save the Dunes Council is a conservation organization founded in 1952 to preserve and protect the Indiana Dunes for public use and enjoyment. We support the concepts outlined in the Ecosystem Charter, recognizing the importance of an ecosystem approach to resource management. A tremendous opportunity exists in the Great Lakes Basin to maintain biodiversity and to restore degraded areas, while promoting sensible economic development. The Ecosystem Charter can serve as a road map for this effort. The Save the Dunes Council intends to utilize these principles as we build consensus for sustainable development in Northwest Indiana.

#### **Schoolcraft Soil and Water Conservation District**

Grassroot implementation of the concepts of the Ecosystem Charter is the basis for achieving the Charter's goal. Conservation Districts are in the unique position to help provide

the local technical support, education and incentives to accomplish this.

#### **Seaway Review**

*Seaway Review* has covered maritime issues in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin for 25 years. Over that period the magazine has always believed that environmental stewardship and economic growth are compatible goals for the region. The Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin represents an affirmation of this position and proof that, working together, all stakeholders in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin can find consensus. *Seaway Review* enthusiastically endorses the letter and spirit of the Charter and will be fully supportive of its use as a guideline in future policy development.

#### **Seneca Trail Resource Conservation and Development Council**

The mission of the Seneca Trail Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. is to develop and implement programs and projects to protect the environment and enrich the lives of people living in the Great Lakes Basin through the conservation, development and wise use of the Council's human and natural resources. It is the opinion of our organization that the Charter recognizes the importance of an ecosystem approach to resource management and confirms the linkage between economic activity and the environment. The Seneca Trail RC&D Council shares a goal of sustainable development for the Great Lakes with the Charter, and believes that its principles facilitate sound resource management. We are convinced that a great opportunity exists in the Basin to maintain biodiversity and restore degraded areas, while promoting sensible, orderly economic development. Therefore, the Seneca Trail RC&D Council enthusiastically endorses the letter and spirit of the Ecosystem Charter and will fully support its use as a guideline in future Council policy development.

#### **Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute**

(See Northland College for statement)

#### **South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District**

The Charter will be used to justify erosion and sedimentation clean up of the St. Louis Bay and St. Louis river.

#### **State University of New York, Albany**

#### **State University of New York, Buffalo, Office of Vice President for Research**

#### **State University of New York, Central Office**

#### **Trout Unlimited**

The staff and membership of Trout Unlimited are pleased to join the other signatories of the *Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin* in a commitment to achieving broad consensus concerning the fundamental goals underpinning management of those activities that impinge on the well being of the basin ecosystem. A long history of advocacy on behalf of and participation in watershed management efforts has convinced us that one essential feature of the curatorial process which is successful in producing a healthy, self sustaining ecological system in that it is based on a set of well defined, broadly shared postulates. The principles incorporated in the Ecosystem Charter, coupled with the commitment in of its sponsor to fine tune the

document both to permit a broader array stakeholder subscription and to incorporate evolving perspectives on systemic management, stand as guides by which we may all judge the propriety of any proposed activity within the basin.

**University of Minnesota, College of Natural Resources**

**University of Toronto, Institute of Environmental Studies**

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Central Division**

This Charter is significant in that it represents all standing objectives and principles of virtually all parties who have an interest in the Great Lakes. It is not a directive but a catalyst that will cause signatories to bring together their authorities and budgetary priorities in furtherance of protecting the Great Lakes for the benefit of present and future generations of human inhabitants of the basin.

I note that, while the Charter states that it is not a legally binding document and defers to each agency's mandates and policies, the principles cite challenging agency decisions. I sign this Charter, on behalf of the North Central Division office and the Buffalo, Chicago, and Detroit Districts of the Corps of Engineers authorities granted by the Legislative and Executive branches of the Federal Government and budgetary priorities established by the Office of Management and Budget. Accordingly, the Corps of Engineers will not recognize a challenge to a Corps decision based on claims that the Corps has not fulfilled actions cited in this Charter.

Within the bounds of the Corps authorities and priorities, the Corps will strive to accomplish relevant cited actions and work hand-in-hand with sister signatories to honor the spirit of the Charter.

**U.S. Coast Guard, Ninth District**

The Ninth District of the United States Coast Guard is responsible for marine safety and marine environmental protection in all of the United States waters of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin. The Ninth District is both a provider of services to, and a regulator of waterborne commerce and recreation in the Great Lakes. The basic principles of the Charter, which recognize both the right to use the resources of the lakes and the responsibility to preserve the integrity of the lakes, serve as a good summary of the competing principles which the Ninth District observes when balancing its service and regulatory missions in an increasingly complex ecological, economic and political environment.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service - Regional Conservationists for the Great Lakes (2) - State Conservationists from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin**

The Great Lakes State Conservationists from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) support the guiding principles outlined in the Ecosystem Charter. We pledge our cooperation and involvement to help protect and restore our natural resources throughout the basin.

**U.S. Dept. of Interior, U.S. Geological Survey**

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) supports the principles and the vision statement of the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. The mission of the USGS is to conduct, on a continuing, systematic, and scientific basis, investigations of the geological structure, mineral re-

sources, and products of the national domain with major emphasis on developing and disseminating scientific information to enhance the knowledge and understanding the Nation's earth resources. USGS stands ready to form partnerships with the other Charter signatories in the accomplishment to this mission and looks forward to working with these agencies to promote the continued environmental health and stability of the Great Lakes.

**U.S. EPA Office of Superfund, Emergency Response Section (Grosse Ile, MI)**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Regions 3 & 5**

The Ecosystem Charter will support the goals, objectives, and action strategies the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is developing in the Great Lakes Ecosystem Plan. The two documents are complementary and good vehicles toward solidification of strong partnerships. We share a goal of sustainable development for the Great Lakes, and believe the Charter principles facilitate sound resource management decisions.

**Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner**

The Office of the Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner supports the Vision and Principles of the Ecosystem Charter for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin. As we work to protect and restore surface waters, there is increasing recognition that the watershed is the only level from which meaningful progress can be made. Waterways are complex systems that must be managed through comprehensive, ecological approaches. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin Ecosystem Charter provides unifying guidance for the thousands of otherwise fragmented governments and agencies charged with water and natural resource management responsibilities.

**Washington County Land Conservation Department**

**Washtenaw County Soil Conservation District**

Program coordination is fundamental to achieving any of our individual goals relating to a sustained Great Lakes ecosystem. This charter is a great step toward opening the necessary communication lines between all those involved in these efforts.

**Waterfront Regeneration Trust (Toronto)**

The Charter confirms the fundamental and inextricable linkage between economic activity and the environment, that everything is connected and that people are part of nature and not separate from it. It follows that we are responsible for our actions to ourselves, to other people, to other generations and to other species. The Trust will use the Charter as a guiding context for our work on the North shore of Lake Ontario. Stewardship of this magnificent and invaluable resource is basic to our environmental health, economic well-being and quality of life.

**Wayne State University, Department of Chemical Engineering**

**Wexford Soil and Water Conservation District**

For 50 years the Wexford Soil and Water Conservation District has assisted landowners in protecting their soil and water resources. Today, the District recognizes that the regions future quality of life and economic stability are dependent on the protection of our natural resources.

Through education, restoration, wise landuse, and partnerships, we concur that your goals are consistent with our principles of true a ecosystems management approach.

**Williams Soil and Water Conservation District**

We see this Charter, and the principles contained therein, as an invaluable tool to be used in conserving this ecosystem and in unifying concerned groups throughout the Basin. This year and in the future, the Ecosystem Charter will provide guidance to us as we develop our Long Range Plan and thereafter our Annual Plan of Work. It will foster cooperation with other organizations and it will help direct us as individuals to act as stewards of this great global resource.

**Yates County Soil and Water Conservation District**