



# Advisor

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## Restoration strategy effort initiated by executive order

### Region unites via Great Lakes Regional Collaboration

Acting through its Board of Directors, the Great Lakes Commission has expressed its strong support for the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, a wide-ranging, cooperative effort to design and implement a strategy to restore, protect and sustainably use the Great Lakes.

More than 300 elected officials, policy leaders and stakeholders convened in Chicago on Dec. 3 for the official “roll out” of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, which was established by presidential executive order on May 18, 2004. The ceremony, led by U.S. EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt, featured statements of support from 46 regional leaders, including tribal chiefs, state legislators, members of Congress and the region’s governors. A joint statement on behalf of the Great Lakes Commission, International Joint Commission (IJC) and Great Lakes Fishery Commission was presented by Dennis Schornack, U.S. Chair of the IJC.

Afterwards, participants joined in a signing ceremony for

the Great Lakes Declaration, which committed signatories “to collaboratively work together and with the Great Lakes community toward a common goal of protecting and restoring the Great Lakes ecosystem.”

Dr. Michael J. Donahue, Commission president/CEO, signed on behalf of Chair Tom Huntley. The Commission’s Board of Directors subsequently agreed to endorse a framework document that establishes a process leading to the development and implementation of a consensus-based restoration strategy. Such a strategy will yield a blueprint for restoration-related programs and funding needs and, in so doing, strengthen intergovernmental relationships to ensure strong cooperation and collaboration.

The ceremony was followed by the initial meetings of eight strategy teams that have been tasked with developing draft action plans for addressing specific Great



*Regional leaders gather in support of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration. From left, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich; Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm; Indiana State Sen. Beverly Gard; Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians Tribal Chair Frank Ettawageshik; Minnesota Lt. Gov. Carol Molnau; Ohio Gov. Bob Taft; U.S. EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt; Wis. Gov. Jim Doyle; Erie, Pa. Mayor Rick Filippi; IJC U.S. Section Chair Dennis Schornack; and New York Gov. George Pataki.*

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*The Advisor is published bimonthly by the Great Lakes Commission. The Great Lakes Commission is a binational agency established in 1955 to promote the orderly, integrated and comprehensive development, use and conservation of the water and related natural resources of the Great Lakes basin and St. Lawrence River.*

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# Commission News & Views

From the desk of the president/CEO...

## Great Lakes Commission

The Great Lakes Commission is a binational public agency dedicated to the use, management and protection of the water, land and other natural resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. In partnership with the eight Great Lakes states and provinces of Ontario and Québec, the Commission applies sustainable development principles in addressing issues of resource management, environmental protection, transportation and sustainable development. The Commission provides accurate and objective information on public policy issues; an effective forum for developing and coordinating public policy; and a unified, systemwide voice to advocate member interests.

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Cover illustration: Ice-covered Great Lakes ship arriving in Duluth ship canal. Jerry Bielicki, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

## Great (Lakes) Expectations

The closing days of 2004 brought with them a sense of great optimism – and equally great expectations – for the restoration, protection and sustainable use of North America's freshwater seas. On Dec. 3, in an unprecedented demonstration of unanimity, leaders at all levels of government declared their support for the international treasure we call the Great Lakes.

They publicly committed themselves to an executive order-based collaboration that would yield a “widely understood and broadly supported strategy” to achieve common

goals. Just 14 days later, the president signed another executive order that explicitly recognized the Great Lakes system as a component of “ocean-related matters” and called for an integrated, multiagency approach to advance “the environmental, economic, and security interests of present and future generations...” Together, these two events offer proof positive that our region is finally receiving the national attention it deserves.

Any Great Lakes historian will tell us that the landscape of regional governance is littered with grand pronouncements, unfulfilled promises and great ideas that never survived the convoluted journey from concept to implementation. We cannot, however, afford to let this happen as these executive orders are implemented. There's far too much at stake and our window of opportunity will not remain open for long. “Everglades envy” has evolved into “Executive Order envy” and other regions won't hesitate to push to the front of the federal funding queue if our efforts falter.

The grand pronouncements and photo ops are now over. As with any public policy initiative, ultimate success will be a func-

tion of the “down in the trenches” work that follows. That's where you will find the Great Lakes Commission.

Our membership has embraced the spirit of both executive orders and is moving aggressively to ensure that their associated processes, plans and institutional arrangements translate into the laws, policies, programs and funds this region needs.

*The next step is “getting out of the gate” with the laws, policies, programs and – most importantly – the appropriations needed to get the job done.*

The Commission is signatory to the Dec. 3 Great Lakes Declaration and, acting through its Board of Directors, has endorsed the associated regional collaboration frame-

work. Commission members and Observer agency officials are co-chairing many of the strategy teams, and our staff is providing research, technical and/or writing services to all the teams. An equally intensive level of involvement is anticipated as the new national Committee on Ocean Policy is established. The Commission's focus on science-based decisionmaking will serve both executive orders well, and also help ensure that their implementation is linked and fully coordinated.

The last 12 months have been all about “getting on the map” and “getting our house in order.” The next step is “getting out of the gate” with the laws, policies, programs and – most importantly – the appropriations needed to get the job done. Progress has been impressive and, as we enter 2005, we are well-positioned to build on these initial successes to reach the ultimate goal: cleaner lakes, a healthier economy and a higher quality of life. We should expect, and accept, no less.



Michael J. Donahue, Ph.D.

## After 30 years, a fresh look at nonpoint pollution

In 1972, the landmark Pollution from Land Use Activities Reference Group (PLUARG) study represented the first truly comprehensive effort to address the connection between land use and water quality in the binational Great Lakes region. Now, more than 30 years later, the Great Lakes Commission is heading an effort to assess how far we've come since then and where the issue stands today.

PLUARG was organized by the International Joint Commission (IJC) to study the extent and cause of pollution from land-use activities and make recommendations on possible remedies. The PLUARG reports were among the first to acknowledge the need to move beyond point sources of pollution, and to consider nonpoint sources. They still provide the primary foundation for thinking about nonpoint source pollution issues in this region and elsewhere.

In November, the Great Lakes Commission convened a workshop to assess the current state of nonpoint source pollution and control

programs, and the changes in land-use activities in the years since the PLUARG reports. The workshop brought together Great Lakes agency officials, researchers and practitioners involved in land-use management and nonpoint source pollution control in the Great Lakes region.

Participants identified significant issues and unmet needs, and discussed opportunities for advancing a regional agenda for land-use management and nonpoint source pollution control. A summary of the proceedings is being prepared by Commission staff and will include a section of findings and recommendations for consideration by the appropriate entities. The proceedings will be available online at [www.glc.org/postpluarg](http://www.glc.org/postpluarg).

Funding was provided by the U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Other partners included the IJC and the National Association of Conservation Districts' Great Lakes Committee. Contact: Beth Johnson, [bjohnson@glc.org](mailto:bjohnson@glc.org).

### Basin Program seeks grant applications

*Up to \$2 million in small- and large-scale grants will be awarded in 2005 to local projects that seek to improve water quality through the reduction of soil erosion and sedimentation under the Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control. **Application deadline is March 1, 2005.** For details, see [www.glc.org/basin](http://www.glc.org/basin).*

## Campaign to raise awareness of erosion, sedimentation problems

A campaign to raise awareness of the environmental and economic damage caused by erosion and sedimentation and promote measures to control them is being launched by the Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.

The "Building Awareness Campaign" will encourage communities and organizations in the Great Lakes basin to implement soil erosion and sedimentation control practices. It will also seek to change the behavior of landowners and others whose practices are contributing to the problem, and build support for public strategies and policies to prevent erosion and sedimentation.

"Controlling erosion and sedimentation is critical to protecting water quality," said Jim Bredin, chair of the Great Lakes Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Task Force. "It not only clogs streams and rivers, it can carry with it a load of pesticides, fertilizers, waste and other contami-

nants washed off the land, as well."

The campaign will include a toolkit for local organizations containing such items as prepared ads, speaker kits, public service announcements and fact sheets. A larger outreach campaign directed at the basin as a whole will be conducted by the Great Lakes Commission.

Special awards will be created for state science fair winners whose projects address erosion and sedimentation, and a "Conservation Champion" award will be given each year to a local organization or individual(s) that has done an outstanding job of promoting and implementing soil erosion and sediment control.

The Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and guided by a regional, multiagency task force, with staff support by the Great Lakes Commission.

Contact: Gary Overmier, [garyo@glc.org](mailto:garyo@glc.org).

## Great Lakes Day in Washington

March 2, 2005  
Washington, D.C.

## IAGLR Annual Conference on Great Lakes Research

May 23-27, 2005  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

## 2005 Great Lakes Conference and IJC Biennial Meeting on Water Quality

June 9-11, 2005  
Kingston, Ontario

mark your calendar

## Commission completing trio of John Glenn projects

The Great Lakes Commission is presently completing a trio of projects authorized under the John Glenn Great Lakes Basin Program. Established in Sec. 455 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999, the John Glenn program called for three studies to be conducted on key environmental and economic aspects of the Great Lakes system. The first is a strategic plan for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers programs in the Great Lakes region; the second is an inven-

tory of the available information on the Great Lakes biohydrological system; and the third is a report detailing the economic benefits of recreational boating in the Great Lakes region. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contracted with the Commission to conduct the studies, which are the products of staff research teams augmented by advisory committees and other experts. Details of each are as follows:

### *Draft strategic plan delivered to Corps of Engineers*

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999 directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to “conduct a comprehensive study of the Great Lakes region to ensure the future use, management, and protection of water resources and related resources of the Great Lakes basin.” Specifically, it directed that the Corps submit to Congress a report outlining a strategic plan for Corps of Engineers programs and proposed projects in the Great Lakes basin.

The Great Lakes Commission was contracted to assist with this study, the draft of which has just been delivered to the Corps. The study includes details of current projects; an analysis of factors limiting the use of existing programs and authorities; and the need for new or modi-

fied authorities.

Projects that were studied primarily involved environmental restoration; technical and planning assistance to states and remedial action planning committees; sediment issues; flood damage reduction and shoreline erosion prevention. Navigation, recreational boating and related topics were not studied because they were addressed in other sections of WRDA 1999. The study found that federal funding has consistently fallen short of authorized and needed levels, and that authorities to enhance partnerships with other federal and state agencies would greatly benefit the Great Lakes region.

Contact Jon MacDonagh-Dumler, 734-971-9135, or [jonmacd@glc.org](mailto:jonmacd@glc.org).

### *Biohydro study assesses information resources, needs*

A draft assessment of the adequacy of the information available to the Great Lakes states for the purpose of acting upon water withdrawal proposals was recently completed by the Great Lakes Commission.

Commissioned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the report, “Improvements to the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Biohydrological Information Base” responds to a congressional directive to evaluate the role of U.S. federal agencies in collecting and distributing information needed to support implementation of Annex 2001 to the Great Lakes Charter

The study, the most comprehensive assess-

ment of its kind ever undertaken, addresses current and historic information resources including groundwater mapping and monitoring; streamflow modeling; the hydrology and hydraulics of the Great Lakes drainage basins and interconnecting waterways; water use data and estimation techniques; current and future land uses; water demand forecasts; ecological impact modeling; and information integration needs of the region.

After review, the report will be delivered to Congress, the governors of the eight Great Lakes states and the International Joint Commission.

Contact: Roger Gauthier, [gauthier@glc.org](mailto:gauthier@glc.org).

## John Glenn projects (cont'd)

### ***Recreational boating study reveals significant economic impact***

Recreational boating in the eight Great Lakes states has a direct economic impact of more than \$22 billion annually and helps generate nearly a quarter million jobs, according to the initial findings of a study by the Great Lakes Commission.

The Great Lakes Recreational Boating Economic Benefits Study is a collaborative effort between the Commission and the national Recreation Marine Research Center (RMRC) at Michigan State University, and is funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Unlike previous studies, which focused on state- and industry-specific aspects of recreational boating, this work embraces the entire eight-state region, and identifies the total economic impact generated by Great Lakes boaters and the industry that supports them.

"There is a great deal of valuable information here, both in terms of the overall Great Lakes data but also separated by state," said Van Snider, president of the Michigan Boating Industries Association (MBIA) and a member of the study's advisory committee. "Obviously, it will be of great value to state associations, agencies and others such as MBIA."

The study offers a wealth of new data and information, noting that there are approximately 4.3 million recreational boats registered in the eight Great Lakes states. Much of the data on boater spending was collected through recently

developed online surveys involving the National Boater Panel, a group of 10,000 recreational boaters who volunteered to report their ongoing economic activity to the RMRC.

"I believe this study is a tremendous resource," said Frank Jennings, a recreational boating specialist for the U.S. Coast Guard Ninth District and another advisory committee member. "It presents an abundance of information in a very digestible manner. This is just the sort of thing that lawmakers, state boating officials, and tourism officials will turn to again and again."

The first phase of the study is scheduled for release in early 2005. A second phase, to be completed by September 2005, will include additional material based on new data and information, as well as tools for calculating and illustrating the economic impact of the recreational boating industry.

Contact: Dave Knight, [dknight@glc.org](mailto:dknight@glc.org).



*Charter fishing in Lake Michigan off Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Photo: Michigan Travel Bureau*

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### **Regional collaboration (continued from page one)**

Lakes issues. The Great Lakes Commission is well-represented on these teams – Donahue is co-chairing the Indicators and Information team (along with Dr. Steve Brandt, director of the NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab) and eight of the remaining co-chairs are Commission members or Observers. Commission staff have also been assigned to all eight strategy teams and will provide support for research and writing tasks.

A number of the Commission's recent technical

and policy reports offer relevant background for the tasks at hand. These include the proceedings from the recent series of restoration priorities workshops held throughout the region and the next iteration of the Commission's *Great Lakes Program to Ensure Environmental and Economic Prosperity*, to be released in early 2005.

For more information, see [www.epa.gov/greatlakes/collaboration](http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/collaboration) or contact: Mike Donahue, [mdonahue@glc.org](mailto:mdonahue@glc.org).

## Did you know

*The first sailing vessel on the upper Great Lakes was also the first vessel lost in those waters. The Griffin, built by Robert Cavalier de La Salle in 1679, was returning from its maiden voyage with a load of furs from the western shores of Lake Michigan when it was lost without a trace. A shipwreck hunter recently found what he believes may be its remains in northern Lake Michigan. Source: Ontario Archaeological Society.*



## Ohio names three new Alternate Commissioners



Ed Hammett



Michelle Hoffer

The Great Lakes Commission is pleased to welcome three new Alternate Commissioners from the state of Ohio: John Baker, president of the Great Lakes District Council of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) of the AFL-CIO; Ed Hammett, executive director of the Ohio Lake Erie Office of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; and Michele Hoffer, special assistant to Ohio DNR Director Sam Speck, immediate past chair of the Great Lakes Commission.

Baker was appointed as an alternate for Commissioner Jim Weakley, president of the Lake Carriers' Association. A senior labor leader with extensive experience in international trade and trade missions, Baker is also president of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force and serves on the board of the International Association of Great Lakes Ports. He has been president of the ILA Great Lakes District Council since 1982

(photo not available at press time).

Hammett was recently named Alternate Commissioner by Chris Jones, director of the Ohio EPA. He has 32 years of experience in environmental planning and management, having served in various positions in the Ohio EPA, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Conservation Foundation and the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments. (Jones will be stepping down from Ohio EPA in January after six years in the post.)

As a special assistant to Director Speck, who named her as his alternate, Hoffer has focused primarily on water-related issues such as Annex 2001 implementation and the Ohio Water Resources Council. She previously served as chief engineer at the Ohio Department of Health and chief of the Ohio DNR Division of Water.

Contact: Mike Donahue, [mdonahue@glc.org](mailto:mdonahue@glc.org).

## Great Lakes Observing System to be chartered in 2005

With the business plan for the Great Lakes Observing System (GLOS) nearing completion, the last in a series of workshops to identify user needs was held Nov. 30-Dec. 3 in Ann Arbor, co-sponsored by the NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab (GLERL) and the International Joint Commission.

This workshop, titled *The Future of Open Water Observation Technology for Great Lakes Research*, provided a forum for more than 75 scientists and resource managers to address emerging needs, prospects for a basinwide network of open water buoys, and recommendations for data transmission and sharing.

GLOS will provide real-time access to a range of physical, chemical and biological Great Lakes data collected by multiple, independent systems. It is one of 11 regional nodes of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) being developed to cover the nation's coastal areas.

The GLOS Business Plan, under development by a regional steering committee for the last 12 months, outlines GLOS governance;

goals, objectives and benefits; subsystems and components; product development, evaluation and marketing; data management priorities; an education plan; and funding mechanisms. The GLOS Regional Association will be chartered in 2005, along with adoption of partnership agreements between agencies, organizations and institutions. Continued development of GLOS through 2007 is anticipated through subsequent grants from the NOAA Coastal Services Center.

GLOS development and implementation is an interest of the newly formed Great Lakes Regional Collaboration and will be addressed in the work of the Indicators and Information Strategy Team, co-chaired by Commission President/CEO Mike Donahue and NOAA-GLERL Director Stephen Brandt.

For more information about GLOS, visit [www.glc.org/glos](http://www.glc.org/glos). The public is encouraged to provide input and identify data needs at [www.glc.org/glos/survey/survey.html](http://www.glc.org/glos/survey/survey.html).

Contact: Roger Gauthier, [gauthier@glc.org](mailto:gauthier@glc.org).

### **Carol A. Ratza scholarship... apply now!**

Applications are being accepted for the 2005 Carol A. Ratza Memorial Scholarship. This award is open to high school seniors and returning students who will be enrolled full-time at a Great Lakes college or university in fall 2005. **The application deadline is April 1, 2005.** See [www.glc.org/about/scholarships](http://www.glc.org/about/scholarships). Contact: Christine Manninen, [manninen@glc.org](mailto:manninen@glc.org)

## Enhanced advocacy, Commissioner roles in works for 2005

The Great Lakes Commission Board of Directors met in late December, closing out the year with a quick look back at accomplishments and a long look forward at the many opportunities 2005 will bring.

On the administrative and financial front, the FY 2004 audit was approved, with the Commission's independent auditor giving the organization a clean bill of financial health. The past fiscal year was a highly successful one, with the Commission's largest budget, revenue stream, reserve fund and portfolio of projects in its 49-year history.

The board also approved plans for enhanced

advocacy efforts, including a stronger presence in Washington, D.C.; additional dimensions to the upcoming "Great Lakes Day in Washington" on March 2, 2005; and a revised format for the Commission's annual legislative and appropriations priorities statement, the *Great Lakes Program to Ensure Environmental and Economic Prosperity*.

A new committee structure, designed specifically to increase individual Commissioner involvement in priority setting and implementation, was also approved and will begin with the 2005 Semiannual Meeting, set for early May in upstate New York.

Contact: Mike Donahue, [mdonahue@glc.org](mailto:mdonahue@glc.org).

## Sustainability findings to inform restoration efforts

"Sustainability" is an appealing concept but its practical application can be elusive. A significant step in addressing that problem was the *Actions Toward a Sustainable Great Lakes* conference last May, hosted by the Great Lakes Commission, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers- Buffalo District and 24 other partner agencies. The event drew a diverse audience of some 200 regional leaders and stakeholders.

Proceedings from that conference, representing a compendium of findings and recommendations drawn from breakout sessions, will be published by the Commission in mid-January

and distributed via the Great Lakes Information Network. Categories will include water use and management, water quality, toxic hotspots, aquatic invasive species, human health, habitat/wetlands, sustainable waterways (commercial and recreational), and research and decision support.

The proceedings will also be widely distributed to participants in the newly initiated Great Lakes Regional Collaboration process, given the relevance of all these issue areas to the collaboration's strategy teams.

Contact: Mike Donahue, [mdonahue@glc.org](mailto:mdonahue@glc.org).

## Water resources plan prepared for Isle Royale

The Great Lakes Commission, in conjunction with the National Park Service - Water Resources Division has completed a draft water resources management plan for Isle Royale National Park (ISRO) in northwest Lake Superior.

ISRO is an island archipelago and primarily a wilderness maritime park. The primary purpose of the plan is to assist park managers with water resources-related decisions by providing information on threats to the park's water resources and guidance on actions that can prevent or mitigate their degradation.

In collaboration with the National Park Service, Commission staff began developing the plan in 2002. Elements include a description of the park's hydrological and geological environment; objectives for managing its water-related resource issues; a summary of air, land, water and biological/ecological resources; and a summary of government legislation and regulations that apply to its water resources. The draft plan is under review by the National Park Service, with release expected in early 2005.

Contact: Mike Schneider, [michaels@glc.org](mailto:michaels@glc.org).

### Ohio Sustainable Land Use Workshop

As part of its state policy roundtable series to promote sustainable land use in the Great Lakes basin, the Great Lakes Commission will co-host a workshop, "Measuring Change Toward Balanced Growth," at Cleveland State University on Jan. 21, 2005. The workshop will look at proposed sustainable land use indicators under the Ohio Lake Erie Commission's Ohio Balanced Growth Initiative. For more information, see [www.glc.org/landuse/ohroundtable](http://www.glc.org/landuse/ohroundtable) or contact: Victoria Pebbles, [vpebbles@glc.org](mailto:vpebbles@glc.org).

## Retirement, promotions and new hires at Commission



Steve Thorp



Dave Knight



Victoria Pebbles



Ric Lawson



Marcia Woodburn

Steve Thorp, longtime manager of the Commission's Transportation and Sustainable Development Program, has retired after 22 years of outstanding service to the Commission and the entire Great Lakes region.

Internationally recognized as a leading authority on Great Lakes-St. Lawrence maritime transportation, Thorp was the architect behind many major initiatives that continue to influence regional resource use and policy.

Among many others, his contributions included authoring a seminal study on modal shift impacts; documenting the economic benefits of water-based recreation; organizing U.S. and Canadian Great Lakes mayors into a political force; promoting the return of passenger cruise vessels to the lakes; designing a strategy that has moved a second large lock at the Soo closer to reality; and championing regional interests in Washington, D.C.

"Steve's dedication to the lakes is extraordinary," said Mike Donahue, Commission president/CEO. "His knowledge of, and impact on, the environmental and economic well-being of this region is simply unequalled. His

presence as a researcher, policy analyst, consensus builder, advocate and 'institutional memory' will be missed."

Dave Knight, an experienced Great Lakes maritime expert in his own right, has been promoted to program manager for Transportation and Sustainable Development. Victoria Pebbles, a staff member since 1993, has been promoted to associate program manager and will lead a variety of initiatives relating to land use, dredging, resource inventories and related sustainable use issues.

In addition, Ric Lawson, a five-year veteran, has been promoted to senior project manager. Lawson leads a number of technical, research and policy initiatives in the areas of wetland health and monitoring inventories.

Marcia Woodburn, who interned with the Commission in 2000, has returned as program specialist in Resource Management, where she will focus on aquatic invasive species prevention and control initiatives. In addition, the Commission expects to add four additional staff members in early 2005; hirings will be announced on the Commission web site as they occur.

Contact: Mike Donahue, [mdonahue@glc.org](mailto:mdonahue@glc.org).

## New grant will promote region's monitoring needs

The Great Lakes Commission has received a grant from the Joyce Foundation to raise awareness and promote the use of the Great Lakes Monitoring Inventory among resource managers, environmental policymakers and the general public in the Great Lakes basin.

The soon-to-be-completed inventory is a comprehensive compilation of environmental monitoring programs in the Great Lakes basin. Available as a web-based searchable database, the inventory provides a much-needed mechanism for information sharing throughout the region. A gap analysis of missing and duplicative elements in Great Lakes basin monitoring efforts will also be included.

The project will promote the inventory as a foundation for the development of a comprehensive and integrated Great Lakes monitoring

system. It will also illustrate the need to address gaps and unmet needs identified by the project.

The inventory and gap analysis will be promoted via four major elements:

- A technical report, which will be distributed via the project web site, [www.glc.org/monitoring/greatlakes](http://www.glc.org/monitoring/greatlakes), and on CD
- A concise, illustrated print version for distribution to key resource managers and general interest groups
- Presentations at regional meetings and conferences
- Development of a legislative strategy and document(s) to emphasize the need for enhanced funding for monitoring in the region

The inventory is under final review and will be posted on the project web site when complete. Contact: Ric Lawson, [rlawson@glc.org](mailto:rlawson@glc.org).



## Fish consumption advisories – good science or bad rap?

**Dr. David Carpenter, School of Public Health, SUNY Albany**

The reason fish advisories are so important is that many fish, especially those in the Great Lakes, are highly contaminated with toxins that pose a serious threat to human health.

These toxins include methyl mercury and persistent organic pollutants, such as dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and certain pesticides. All of these bioaccumulate in the fat of fish and when we eat such fish, the contaminants accumulate in our bodies.

These agents can stay in the human body for years, causing cancer; disrupting thyroid and sex steroid endocrine systems and weakening the immune system. Perhaps the most serious problem is developmental damage to the fetus, which can result from the contaminants consumed by the mother even years before she becomes pregnant. For children exposed before birth – particularly in the case of dioxins, PCBs and methyl mercury – these toxins can also cause

neurobehavioral problems and a reduction in IQ. This “dumbing-down” of the next generation is, in my judgment, the most serious hazard from these contaminants. PCBs and dioxins can also be passed from mother to infant in breast milk, and cause harm to the developing child.

Not all fish are equally contaminated. The large, predatory fish are most dangerous, since they accumulate contaminants from smaller fish in their diet. The smaller fish, and especially small plant-eating fish, are much less contaminated.

Fish advisories provide information to sports fishing enthusiasts on how to protect their health and the health of their families. An advisory is not a law prohibiting fishing or fish consumption. But, at minimum, it is the responsibility of government to provide information to the consumer so that those who choose may make wise choices on what they eat.

# POINT POINT



*Dr. David Carpenter, M.D. is a professor of environmental health and toxicology at the University at Albany (N.Y.) and a member of the International Joint Commission's Great Lakes Science Advisory Board.*

**Dan Thomas, President, Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council**

The Great Lakes are one of the world's premier sportfishing regions. But all around our region, people are confused as to the safety of these fish because of the many and varied fish consumption advisories. Great Lakes states have nearly two-thirds of the more than 3,000 such advisories currently in effect in the United States, making it sound as if we poor folks in the Great Lakes region are living in a cesspool of pollutants. But what are the facts?

Five bioaccumulative toxins – PCBs, dioxin, mercury, chlordane and DDT – account for nearly all fish advisories. Environmental releases of all of them have either been declining or effectively halted in recent decades, but the number of fish advisories continues to increase. Why? Because the scientific instruments used to detect these chemicals have become incredibly more sensitive – as much as a million times more than 15 years ago, detecting traces in the parts per trillion range. This pretty much guarantees that

you're going to find toxic contamination anywhere you look for it.

One of the rules of science is that everything is a trade-off between risks and benefits. The fact is, the traces of contamination in Great Lakes fish pose far less threat to one's health than the artery-clogging fat found in a hamburger. The National Academy of Sciences says that people should continue to eat the fish they catch because the cardiac, nutritional and other benefits outweigh the risks it poses.

Research has consistently shown that, unless you're exposed to industrial levels of pollution over a long time, there's little to fear from normal consumption of Great Lakes fish. Vulnerable populations, such as women of childbearing age and children, can limit their exposure by removing fatty tissue before cooking and moderating consumption. But Great Lakes fish is still part of a healthy diet.

# counterpoint



*A lifelong fisherman, Dan Thomas is a member of the board of directors of the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers and a founding officer and charter member of Salmon Unlimited, Inc.*

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Great Lakes Commission or its member jurisdictions.

**Post-PLUARG assessment**  
[www.glc.org/postpluarg](http://www.glc.org/postpluarg)

**Great Lakes Basin  
Program for Soil Erosion  
and Sediment Control**  
[www.glc.org/basin](http://www.glc.org/basin)

**Great Lakes Biohydrologi-  
cal Information Study**  
[www.glc.org/wateruse/  
biohydro](http://www.glc.org/wateruse/biohydro)

**MSU Recreational  
Marine Research Center**  
[www.prr.msu.edu/  
boaterpanel](http://www.prr.msu.edu/boaterpanel)

**Great Lakes Monitoring  
Inventory**  
[www.glc.org/monitoring/  
greatlakes](http://www.glc.org/monitoring/greatlakes)

**Great Lakes Observing  
System (GLOS)**  
[www.glc.org/glos](http://www.glc.org/glos)

**Isle Royale National Park**  
[www.nps.gov/isro](http://www.nps.gov/isro)

**Ohio Balanced Growth  
Roundtable**  
[www.glc.org/landuse/  
ohroundtable](http://www.glc.org/landuse/ohroundtable)

**University at Albany (N.Y.)  
Department of  
Environmental Toxicology**  
[www.wadsworth.org/EHT](http://www.wadsworth.org/EHT)

**Great Lakes Sport Fishing  
Council**  
[www.great-lakes.org](http://www.great-lakes.org)

**International Association of  
Fish and Wildlife Agencies**  
[www.iafwa.org](http://www.iafwa.org)

**Michigan Statewide Public  
Advisory Council (SPAC)**  
[www.glc.org/spac](http://www.glc.org/spac)

**2004 Great Lakes Program  
to Ensure Environmental  
and Economic Prosperity**  
[www.glc.org/restore](http://www.glc.org/restore)

## Michigan setting guidelines for delisting Areas of Concern

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has initiated an effort to measure progress in restoring the state's 14 Areas of Concern (AOC) and ultimately remove them from the list of the region's "toxic hot spots."

The agency is developing minimum criteria for determining when any of 14 beneficial use impairments (BUI), as defined under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), have been removed. These guidelines will outline the minimum restoration levels that must be achieved to justify removing each BUI. Individual AOCs may establish more stringent targets, but not less, for delisting their impairments.

The guidelines review each BUI's significance in Michigan's AOCs; outline restoration criteria and assessments; provide an associated rationale; and highlight relevant state programs and authorities. Reflecting the intent of Annex 2 of the GLWQA, which established the AOC program, the agency has determined that restoration criteria apply only to:

- Water quality parameters and their effects;
- Pollutants originating in an AOC;

- The geographic area of an AOC; and
- Restoration of an AOC within the authority of state law.

With support from the Great Lakes Commission, the Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC) for Michigan's AOC program is assisting MDEQ in reviewing the draft guidelines and disseminating them to stakeholders. Draft guidelines have been completed for six of the 14 BUIs and will be posted in January on the SPAC web site, [www.glc.org/spac](http://www.glc.org/spac). Additional guidelines will be developed and posted over the coming year.

A similar effort is underway by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to develop delisting targets for that state's four AOCs. Both efforts build upon more general delisting guidelines developed by the International Joint Commission and the U.S. Policy Committee.

Contact: Shanna Draheim, MDEQ Water Bureau, [draheims@michigan.gov](mailto:draheims@michigan.gov); or Matt Doss, Great Lakes Commission, [mdoss@glc.org](mailto:mdoss@glc.org).

## Bush creates policymaking board for oceans, Great Lakes

A federal policymaking board with jurisdiction over ocean and Great Lakes matters has been created by President George W. Bush through an executive order issued Dec. 17.

The Committee on Ocean Policy, established as part of the Council on Environmental Quality, will advise the executive branch on ocean-related matters and obtain information and advice from state, local and tribal officials and private parties regarding such matters. The order specifically defines "ocean-related matters" as including the Great Lakes.

Significantly for the Great Lakes region, the committee will provide an avenue for action regarding outcomes of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, initiated Dec. 3 in Chicago and established by an earlier executive order on May 18, 2004 (see cover story, this issue).

"This is a major development with positive implications for the Great Lakes region," said Dr. Michael J. Donahue, president/CEO of the Great Lakes Commission. "We now have an official body within the executive branch responsible for coordinating Great Lakes and ocean policy. This should also enhance efforts to implement the strategies being developed via the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration process."

The committee will be chaired by the chair of the Council on Environmental Quality and consist of Cabinet members, other heads of major federal agencies, presidential assistants and other appointees.

The executive order is available online at [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/12/20041217-5.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/12/20041217-5.html).

## Omnibus bill brings mixed results for Great Lakes priorities

Prior to adjournment, the 108th Congress passed an omnibus spending bill which consolidated nine of 13 appropriations bills into one. Federal spending will decrease for some Great Lakes programs while others will be maintained at last year's levels or even increase, though a full assessment is difficult to determine due to the sheer size and complexity of the 1,600-page piece of legislation.

Selected actions on the seven priorities from the Commission's 2004 Great Lakes Program to Ensure Environmental and Economic Prosperity include the following:

*Cleaning up toxic hot spots* will see a notable jump, with \$22.5 million appropriated for U.S. EPA to implement cleanup projects under the Great Lakes Legacy Act; \$10.0 million was appropriated for FY 2004.

Congress appropriated \$2.0 million to fund the dispersal barrier project in the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal, an action called for in the Commission priority of *Shutting the door on invasive species*. Funding of \$2.5 million was maintained for the Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control, thanks to Commission advocacy for *Controlling nonpoint source pollution*. A reduction in federal spending was seen under *Restoring and conserving wetlands and critical coastal*

*habitats*: the Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Program received \$668,000 for FY 2005, down about 10 percent from the year prior. The goal of *Enhancing the commercial and recreational value of our waterways* is addressed, in part, by two Commission-supported initiatives: the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence System Review Study received \$1.65 million, down from \$2.0 million in FY2004, and the replacement lock at Sault Ste. Marie received \$2.6 million, up modestly from the previous fiscal year.

For more information, see [www.glc.org/restore](http://www.glc.org/restore) or contact: Jon MacDonagh-Dumler, [jonmacd@glc.org](mailto:jonmacd@glc.org).

### The Great Lakes Commission is 50!



Great Lakes  
Commission  
des Grands Lacs

In commemoration of our 50th anniversary in 2005, the Great Lakes Commission has unveiled a special logo to be used all year long. Look for it on Commission letterhead, documents, the web site and publications. Other commemorations will take place throughout the year, culminating in our official celebration at the 2005 Annual Meeting in Ann Arbor, Mich., in early October.

### Fellowship opportunity!

Students in graduate or professional degree programs in a marine or aquatic-related field in the United States are invited to apply for the 2005 Great Lakes Commission-Sea Grant Fellowship. The one-year appointment will involve contributing to and benefiting from research coordination and policy analysis activities at Commission offices in Ann Arbor, Mich. **Application deadline is Friday, Feb. 25, 2005.** For details and application information, see [www.glc.org/about/scholarships/fellow.html](http://www.glc.org/about/scholarships/fellow.html)

## Great Lakes Calendar

### Measuring Change Toward Balanced Growth

January 21, 2005, Cleveland, Ohio  
Contact: Victoria Pebbles, 734-971-9135, [vpebbles@glc.org](mailto:vpebbles@glc.org)

### Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands Science Forum

January 26-27, 2005, Green Bay, Wis.  
Contact: Laura England, 608-250-9971, [programs@wiscwetlands.org](mailto:programs@wiscwetlands.org)

### Great Lakes Day in Washington

March 2, 2005, Washington, D.C.  
Contact: Mike Donahue, 734-971-9135, [mdonahue@glc.org](mailto:mdonahue@glc.org)

### 2005 National Environmental Partnership Summit

April 11-14, 2005, Chicago, Ill.  
Contact: Lisa Grayson, 215-428-9655, [sponsors@environmentalsummit.org](mailto:sponsors@environmentalsummit.org)

### Annual International Conference on the St. Lawrence River Ecosystem

May 16-18, 2005, Cornwall, Ontario  
Contact: Christina Collard, 613-936-6620, [ccollard@riverinstitute.com](mailto:ccollard@riverinstitute.com)

### IAGLR Annual Conference on Great Lakes Research

May 23-27, 2005, Ann Arbor, Mich.  
Contact: Tom Johengen, 734-764-2426, [05chairs@iaglr.org](mailto:05chairs@iaglr.org)

### EECO 2005 Environment & Energy Conference

May 25-27, 2005, Toronto, Ontario  
Contact: The GLOBE Foundation of Canada, 604-775-7300, [info@eeco2005.com](mailto:info@eeco2005.com)

### 2005 Great Lakes Conference and IJC Biennial Meeting on Water Quality

June 9-11, 2005, Kingston, Ontario  
Contact: Jennifer Day, 519-257-6733, [dayj@windsor.ijc.org](mailto:dayj@windsor.ijc.org)

Further details and a more extensive calendar are available online via the Great Lakes Information Network ([www.great-lakes.net](http://www.great-lakes.net)). If you have an event you'd like us to include, please contact Kirk Haverkamp at 734-971-9135 or [kirkh@glc.org](mailto:kirkh@glc.org)

### Save trees and money!

If you prefer to read the electronic version of the Advisor online via the Commission's home page ([www.glc.org](http://www.glc.org)), please let us know and we'll cancel your print subscription.

# The Last Word

## A “sustainable” New Year’s resolution



Tom Huntley

“Sustainability” is a term that is casually bantered about in the Great Lakes community, widely supported in principle, and often invoked during planning processes and strategy sessions. Unfortunately, it is seldom defined with any precision and, even less frequently, embraced in policy development and program implementation.

We now have a tremendous opportunity to move this term from the conceptual to application stage. It was gratifying to see the president’s Great Lakes Regional Collaboration initiative, through the “Great Lakes Declaration” signed on Dec. 3, explicitly reference the economic dimension of the resource along with its ecological attributes. It was also gratifying to note a similar reference in the opening paragraph of the president’s Dec. 17 executive order establishing the Committee on Ocean Policy.

Some 50 years ago, the authors of the Great Lakes Basin Compact recognized the interrelatedness of environment and economy in establishing the Great Lakes Commission. To this day, every action we take, and every project or study we initiate, is guided by this notion of sustainability. Briefly stated, we can’t support a prosperous economy without a clean environment, and we can’t maintain a clean environment without a prosperous economy. It’s a simple concept, but can be a challenge to apply. We’re up to the task.

In 2005 we will embrace this challenge by supporting these and related initiatives through our research, technical support and policy development responsibilities outlined in the Compact. I invite the Commission’s “extended family” to join us in this effort. I can’t think of a better New Year’s resolution for the Great Lakes!

*Hon. Thomas E. Huntley, chair, Great Lakes Commission*

## Where in the Great Lakes?



Photo: Judith A. Kubitz

Can you identify this Great Lakes scene? If you think you know, e-mail your answer, along with your name, address and phone number to [kirkh@glc.org](mailto:kirkh@glc.org) or mail it to the *Advisor* at the address on the mailing panel below. All correct responses received by **March 1, 2005** will be entered into a drawing. The winner will receive his/her choice of a Great Lakes Commission satchel or a \$10 credit toward the purchase of any Commission publication.

Last issue’s winner was Meredith Welling, of the Milwaukee



Metropolitan Sewerage District, who identified our closeup of the Calatrava Milwaukee Art Museum and its retractable sunscreen “wings,” shown in fuller view at left. Thanks to everyone who entered! Photo courtesy Greater Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau.

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