



NEWS RELEASE

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President's budget proposes \$475 million Great Lakes restoration initiative

Ann Arbor, Mich. – The Great Lakes Commission applauds President Obama's FY 2010 budget proposal of \$475 million for a Great Lakes restoration initiative. Great Lakes Commission Chair Illinois Governor Pat Quinn welcomed the announcement.

"President Obama's historic proposal will re-energize Great Lakes cleanup and restoration," Governor Quinn said. "The lakes are an economic force for the Great Lakes region. This initiative will complement work now underway by state and local governments and expedite cleanup and economic redevelopment efforts along the Great Lakes."

Budget documents released today state that the infusion of federal funding will address regional issues affecting the Great Lakes, such as preventing invasive species, reducing polluted runoff and cleaning up contaminated sediment.

"States, cities, tribes, federal agencies, businesses and conservation groups put together a plan to restore the Great Lakes -- the water belt of our country -- three years ago," said Todd Ambs, vice chair of the Commission and Water Division administrator for the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources. "And we now have a President who wants to make sure the federal government does its part to put the plan into action."

Immediate past Chair of the Great Lakes Commission Michigan Lt. Gov. John Cherry echoed that sentiment and noted that Michigan recently completed its own plan to protect and restore the Great Lakes. The *MI-Great Lakes Plan* will complement the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration restoration strategy, released in 2005.

Cherry said, "President Obama is keeping his promise to protect and restore the Great Lakes because he knows that it will create jobs and help our economy recover. As the Great Lakes state, Michigan welcomes the President's leadership. We urge Congress to support the proposal."

Speaking at the Great Lakes Commission meetings this week in Washington, D.C., Lisa Jackson, Administrator of U.S. EPA and Nancy Sutley, chair of the White House Council on Environmental

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Great Lakes Commission

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Quality, conveyed the President's commitment to the Great Lakes and hinted that an important announcement was coming soon. The Commission's meeting highlighted Great Lakes restoration as a critical element of a broader economic revitalization strategy for the region. Speaking on behalf of 25 regional chambers of commerce, Joe Roman, director of the Greater Cleveland Partnership, showcased Great Lakes restoration as part of a "Business Agenda for Economic Transformation in the Great Lakes Region."

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The Great Lakes Commission, chaired by Illinois Gov. Patrick Quinn, is an interstate compact agency established under state and U.S. federal law and dedicated to promoting a strong economy, healthy environment and high quality of life for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region and its residents. The Commission consists of governors' appointees, state legislators and agency officials from its eight member states. Associate membership for Ontario and Québec was established through the signing of a "Declaration of Partnership." The Commission maintains a formal Observer program involving U.S. and Canadian federal agencies, tribal authorities, binational agencies and other regional interests. The Commission offices are located in Ann Arbor, Michigan.