



RESOLUTION

Adopted October 13, 2022

Celebrating the 50th Anniversaries of the Clean Water Act and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

Whereas, the Great Lakes sustain a \$6 trillion economy, contain more than 90% of North America’s supply of surface freshwater, and provide drinking water for more than 40 million people in the United States and Canada; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes are a resource under the shared stewardship of the United States and Canada, in addition to the states, provinces, tribes, and first nations throughout the region; and

Whereas, the Clean Water Act, enacted by the U.S. federal government on October 18, 1972, became one of the first and most impactful environmental laws in the United States, establishing a structure to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters”; and

Whereas, the Clean Water Act established the enduring goals of “making all U.S. waters fishable and swimmable, to have zero water pollution discharge, and to prohibit discharge of toxic amounts of toxic pollutants”; and

Whereas, the Clean Water Act continues to provide necessary regulatory structure to ensure the restoration and preservation of water resources in the U.S. and establish mechanisms through which federal and state governments can coordinate; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, agreed to by the governments of Canada and the United States and signed on April 15, 1972, is a bilateral commitment “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Waters of the Great Lakes”; and

Whereas, the original Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement established a mechanism and framework under which the parties agreed to reduce pollution and address excessive algae growth and heightened the awareness of the Great Lakes as the world’s most precious freshwater resource; and

Whereas, the parties entered into a subsequent agreement in 1978, which established additional goals including ridding the Great Lakes of persistent toxic substances, restoration of the most polluted locations in the watershed, called Areas of Concern, and creating management plans that aim to eliminate pollutants on a lakewide basis; and

Whereas, the parties entered into two subsequent agreements (in 1987 and 2012), which further expanded the agreement to address nonpoint sources of pollution and include nine specific goals and ten annexes to address Areas of Concern, Lakewide Management, Chemicals of Mutual Concern, Nutrients, Discharges from Vessels, Aquatic Invasive Species, Habitats and Species, Groundwater, Climate Change Impacts, and Science; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement is a model for international cooperation and continues to provide important structure to address the principles laid out in the Clean Water Act in 1972, and achieve the bilateral goals set by the parties to ensure the enduring restoration and preservation of the Great Lakes.

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Clean Water Act and commends the government of the United States for fifty years of steadfast effort to implement the Clean Water Act; and

Be It Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and commends the governments of Canada and the United States for fifty years of bilateral cooperation in support of the Great Lakes.

Adopted at the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, October 11-13, 2022, held in Erie, Pennsylvania. The resolution was passed unanimously.