

# Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative

Transitional Charter



January 4, 2018

## I. Preamble

In 2016, the Great Lakes Commission partnered with Lawrence Technological University to explore the need for a stormwater technology transfer collaborative in the Great Lakes region. An advisory team, consisting of public and private stakeholders, was formed to guide the project. To understand the needs of the region, a two-step information gathering process was undertaken.

First, from November of 2016 to January of 2017, 43 interviews were conducted with stormwater professionals from the public and private sectors in the Great Lakes region. From these interviews, a needs assessment was created that identified barriers to stormwater technology transfer and whether a regional collaborative could help overcome those barriers. Second, the needs assessment was vetted and validated through three focus groups in spring 2017 (Mississauga, Ontario; Cleveland, Ohio; and, Appleton, Wisconsin).<sup>1</sup> The *Stormwater Technology Transfer in the Great Lakes Region: A Needs Assessment* published in 2017,<sup>2</sup> outlines major barriers and validates the need for an organization to facilitate the adoption of stormwater technology and green stormwater infrastructure strategies.

This Charter is an outgrowth of the process summarized above, and outlines the vision, mission, principles, and structure for a Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative.

## II. Vision Statement

As stormwater technology and practices<sup>3</sup> have advanced, barriers have developed between the supply of these technologies and practices, and their demand.<sup>4</sup> These barriers limit the adoption of stormwater technology and practices, which further limits their advancement. A gap has consequently grown between what stormwater technologies and practices are being implemented and recent innovations. The vision of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative is **to protect the Great Lakes and its watershed by advancing stormwater technology and practices and addressing the barriers between their supply and demand.**

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<sup>1</sup> Mississauga, ON: April 25th, 2017; Cleveland, OH: May 3rd, 2017; and, Appleton, WI: May 19th, 2017

<sup>2</sup> The Needs Assessment can be found at: <http://bit.ly/StormwaterNeedsAssessment>.

<sup>3</sup> Stormwater technology and practices include designed stormwater management devices, green infrastructure techniques, and other low impact development methods. These can be stand-alone applications or in combination with traditional implementations. Our work covers technologies and practices that are in the public domain and those that are proprietary.

<sup>4</sup> Supply includes manufacture, distribution, construction and installation of stormwater management technologies and practices; demand includes the desire to purchase and install/construct and accrue the benefits of stormwater management technologies and practices.

### III. Mission and Objectives

The Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative is a multi-sector coalition of stormwater management stakeholders<sup>5</sup> that works to regionally address the impacts of the quantity and quality of stormwater, enhance ecosystem services, reduce non-point source pollution, and promote social and economic benefits of stormwater technology and practices. The mission of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative is to **provide a forum for networking, partnership building, and the exchange of information to advance the development, transfer, and deployment of innovative<sup>6</sup> stormwater management technology and practices** in the binational Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River region.

In response to the needs identified in the *Stormwater Technology Transfer in the Great Lakes Region: A Needs Assessment*, the objectives of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative are to:

- A. Help match available, verified innovative stormwater technology and practices to the needs of communities;
- B. Build confidence in the performance of innovative stormwater technology and practices through education, advocacy, robust metrics, and performance standards;
- C. Evaluate and promote the life-cycle costs and associated benefits (e.g., triple bottom line and co-benefits) of innovative stormwater technology and practices; and,
- D. Advance and promote post-development/installed ownership, inspection, maintenance, and performance assessment of innovative stormwater technology and practices.

Steps taken to achieve these objectives are outlined in the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative's annual workplan.

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<sup>5</sup> Including, but not limited to: community leaders, non-governmental organizations, manufacturers of stormwater technology and practices, and design/consultant firms.

<sup>6</sup> The term "innovative" is a relative term that depends on the user's experience beyond traditional methods of stormwater management.

## IV. Operating Principles

The Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative strives for broad, balanced membership across multiple sectors of stormwater management. The organization and its members recognize that the credibility of its work products derive from the fact they were developed through a collaborative process that enables consideration of a wide range of concerns and perspectives. Participants will make decisions and take positions by consensus. The Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative defines consensus as overwhelming agreement among Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative members attained through a good-faith effort to meet the interests of all stakeholders. This agreement means that all members must accept, but not necessarily fully support, a decision being considered. If consensus cannot be reached, the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative will work to find a solution that is widely agreed upon.

Decisions made by the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of the agencies, organizations, or companies that employ the individuals who participate in the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative. As such, decisions of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative shall not prevent or preclude a member from taking positions that differ from those of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative.

## V. Organizational Structure

The following structure supports the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative to achieve its stated mission:

- **Co-chairs** provide leadership and guidance for the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative. One co-chair shall represent the supply side of stormwater technology and practices.<sup>7</sup> The other co-chair shall represent the demand side of stormwater technology and practices.<sup>8</sup> Co-chairs shall be nominated by the broader Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative membership and shall serve staggered, two-year terms. The co-chairs will head the Leadership Team. Co-chairs shall be responsible for:
  - Leading the development of an annual workplan that supports the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative mission;
  - Convening the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative according to the annual workplan;

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<sup>7</sup> Entities that manufacture, develop, distribute or promote stormwater technology and practices, including those in the public domain and those that are proprietary.

<sup>8</sup> Entities that desire or require the use and deployment of stormwater technology and practices, including those in the public domain and those that are proprietary.

- Leading efforts to secure funding, as may be necessary, to support the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative and its annual workplan; and,
  - Forming committees that may be needed to assist their responsibilities.
  
- **Executive Committee** will assist the co-chairs in guiding and managing the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative. The executive committee will consist of five to nine members that represent the broad membership of the collaborative. Committee members will sit for one-year terms. The executive committee shall join the co-chairs on the Leadership Team. Executive committee members shall be responsible for:
  - Assisting the development of an annual workplan that supports the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative mission;
  - Helping execute the annual workplan according the leadership of the co-chairs; and,
  - Supporting efforts to secure funding that is needed to support the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative and its annual workplan.
  
- **General Members** will reflect a broad, balanced membership across both countries of the Great Lakes region and multiple sectors of stormwater management.<sup>9</sup> Membership in the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative is open to groups and individuals that agree to: a) follow the operating principles laid out in this Charter, and b) work to fulfill the mission of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative. General member responsibilities include:
  - Participating in periodic Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative events;
  - Contributing to executing the annual workplan; and,
  - Providing input on and first access to materials produced by the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative.
  
- **Task Committees** may be formed on an ad-hoc basis to focus on select Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative priorities.

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<sup>9</sup> Members must exist, do business in, or otherwise have some connection to the Great Lakes states and provinces.

## VI. Workplan

An annual workplan shall guide the activities of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative. Co-chairs shall lead the development of such workplan with the assistance of the executive committee. The workplan shall be shared with general members with an opportunity for input and feedback before it is finalized. The Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative workplan shall include proposed priorities and a process to achieve them with anticipated timeframes and metrics, and other details, as appropriate, based on availability of funds to complete the work.

## VII. Role of outside organizations

The Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative may enter into agreements with outside organizations to aid in administration, membership recruitment, work support, financial management, logistics support, meeting facilitation, data management, web site design and management, research, report production, communication and information services, and public liaison or other needs seen as necessary by the co-chairs.

## VIII. Amendments

This Charter may be amended at any time as necessary by consensus of the general membership. In the case of major revisions, an ad-hoc subcommittee may be formed to facilitate this process.

## IX. Agreement and Ratification

Members of the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative agree to participate in collaborative activities and will operate under the terms set forth in this Charter. Members can terminate their participation at any time by notifying the Leadership Team sixty days in advance of the termination. This Charter shall be effective for five years from the date of ratification below.

Herewith, this document officially ratifies the Great Lakes Stormwater Technology Transfer Collaborative, on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018, by consensus of the Leadership Team.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The initial Leadership Team that first ratified the Great Lakes Stormwater Collaborative charter was appointed at the November 2017 kickoff event.