



Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body

Conseil régional des ressources en eau des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint- Laurent

The Great Lakes Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, and the Premiers of Ontario and Québec are taking the lead in protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The Great Lakes Governors and Premiers recognize that:

- There are threats to the Basin now, and they could increase in the future. We are looking ahead and taking protective steps to avoid conflicts and shortages.
- The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin is critical to our economy. We must use the water wisely to help ensure that it remains at healthy levels and to maintain our region's competitive economic advantage.

On December 13, 2005, the Great Lakes Governors and Premiers signed the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, and the Governors endorsed the companion Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact. The agreements detail how the States and Provinces will manage and protect the Basin and provide a framework for each State and Province to enact laws for its protection. The agreements include the following points:

- Economic development will be fostered through the sustainable use and responsible management of Basin waters.
- There will be a ban on new diversions of water from the Basin. Limited exceptions could be allowed, such as for public water supply purposes in communities near the Basin, but exceptions would be strictly regulated.
- The States and Provinces will use a consistent standard to review proposed uses of Basin water.
- Regional goals and objectives for water conservation and efficiency will be developed, and they will be reviewed every five years. Each State and Province will develop and implement a water conservation and efficiency program.
- The collection of technical data will be strengthened, and the States and Provinces will share the information, which will improve decision-making by the governments.
- There is a strong commitment to continued public involvement in the implementation of the agreements.

The Governors and Premiers are working aggressively to put these agreements into action. In the United States, each of the eight State legislatures must ratify the interstate Compact. Congress will also be asked for its consent. After this, the Compact will become both State and federal law. In order to put the agreement into law in Ontario and Québec, the Provinces will amend their statutes and regulations as appropriate. No federal legislation is required in Canada.

For More Information

The Council of Great Lakes Governors that serves as the Secretariat to the Regional Body is located at 35 East Wacker Drive, Suite 1850, Chicago, IL 60601. Our phone number is (312) 407-0177. For additional information, we encourage you to visit our website at www.gslregionalbody.org.

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