Great Lakes Commission des Grands Lacs

Advisor

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In This Issue

Features

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.*

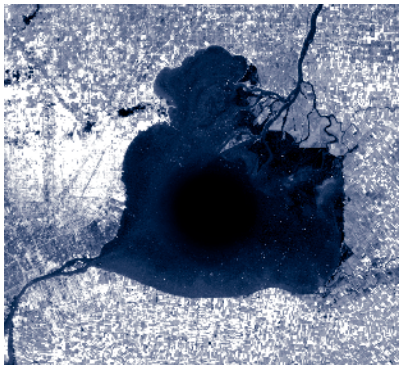
Project to focus on coastal habitat

New restoration initiative targets Lake St. Clair

Efforts to address the long-neglected management needs of Lake St. Clair will get another major boost this fall when the Great Lakes Commission begins a two-year project to help restore and protect the lake's coastal habitat.

The project is the fourth major Lake St. Clair initiative the Commission has undertaken in recent years, bringing much-needed attention to what has often been described as the "forgotten lake" in the Great Lakes system.

The new project, a cooperative effort with U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coastal Services Center, will collect significant ecological and socioeconomic data related to the Lake St. Clair coastal habitat and use that information to develop a draft coastal habitat restoration and conservation plan for the lake, as well as an integrated coastal management tool for use by local officials and managers.



Lake St. Clair, with coastal delta at upper right. Photo: Environmental Research Institute of Michigan

The project ties into the other major Lake St. Clair initiatives the Commission is pursuing: a comprehensive management plan for the lake and St. Clair River; an inventory of monitoring programs and development of a strategic monitoring plan; and a set of recommendations for a binational management framework for the lake itself, a draft of which was recently completed. The first two are joint projects with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the third is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"For a long time, Lake St. Clair was overlooked when it came to restoring and protecting the water resources of the Great Lakes," said Nat Robinson, chairman of the Great Lakes Commission. "These projects are helping to remedy that oversight and ensure that Lake St. Clair is a healthy and productive resource for the millions who live around its shores."

"Lake St. Clair is relatively small compared to the Great Lakes themselves but it's an essential part of the Great Lakes system," said Mike Donahue, Commission president/CEO. "What happens to Lake St. Clair affects lakes Erie and Ontario further down the system. It also provides drinking water for 4.5 million people, produces one-third of all the fish caught in the Great Lakes each year and is one of the most heavily utilized portions of the Great Lakes for recreational boating."

The majority of coastal wetlands remaining in the St. Clair-Detroit River corridor are found around Lake St. Clair, which has been designated as a biodiversity investment area through the State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) process. The lake

Continued on page 3

Cover photo: Georgian Bay at Tobemoray, Ont. Credit: Kirk Haverkamp

Lessons learned from our "Sixth Great Lake"

Our "Sixth Great Lake" is finally getting its due! As noted in our feature story, an intensive, year-and-a-half-long investment in Lake St. Clair watershed planning by the Great Lakes Commission and its many partners is yielding a major dividend. Watershed residents, and the many units of government that serve them, will benefit from a consensus-based blueprint that presents a shared vision for the system, and the associated goals, objectives and strategic actions needed to achieve that vision.

The process to date has been nothing short of remarkable, given the size and population of this binational watershed, the intensive use of its resources, the nature and severity of its environmental stresses, and the complexity of its governance framework. Yet our many partners share an unwavering commitment – and the requisite mutual trust – to see this restoration planning process through to its successful completion.

"The Lake St. Clair watershed is, in many respects, a microcosm of the larger Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. Restoration planning efforts at one level will most certainly inform efforts at the other."

Why should the entire Great Lakes-St. Lawrence community stand up and take notice of efforts in one small part of the region? Three good reasons come immediately to mind:

• The environmental and economic significance of the watershed goes far beyond its hydrologic boundaries. Its location in the Great Lakes basin, coupled with its unique ecological characteristics, have profound implications for the downstream portion of the system.

• The Lake St. Clair initiative is an experiment in innovative approaches to restoration planning. We haven't been constrained by any hard and fast rules. Rather, we've selectively drawn from Remedial Action Plan and Lakewide Management Plan processes, among many others. We've embraced what we've liked and rejected what we haven't.

• The Lake St. Clair watershed is, in many respects, a microcosm of the larger Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. Restoration planning efforts at one level will most certainly inform efforts at the other.

It's also important to note that this restoration plan responds to a congressional mandate. As such, it offers an important precedent for future efforts of this kind.

As a practitioner and teacher of planning for the past two decades, I've been exposed to an endless array of models, frameworks, processes and case studies. What I've found though, is that planning is as much an art as it is a science. I've also learned that there are at least six ingredients essential to success: a common vision, inclusiveness, scientific credibility, consensus, commitment and trust. Start with these and everything else will fall into place, whether it's a restoration plan for the Lake St. Clair watershed or the entire Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system.

Michael J. Donahue, Ph.D.

P.S. Thanks to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for financial support for current and upcoming Lake St. Clair restoration initiatives.

Toolkit to recommend water conservation measures

The Great Lakes Commission has begun an 18-month project to develop a regional water conservation toolkit. The project is one of eight Great Lakes Protection Fund (GLPF) – supported projects that will help the Great Lakes governors and premiers in their development of a new water withdrawal decisionmaking standard for the region.

The toolkit initiative primarily focuses on public water supply conservation. It will provide a recommended set of conservation measures that can be used by local public water suppliers; local, regional, state and provincial water resources managers; and other Great Lakes water users.

The project involves a survey of water conservation practices at the municipal and watershed level, a review of regional best practices of water conservation, identification of best practices that should be applied in the Great Lakes region, and development of an online directory of water conservation tools and information.

The survey of water conservation practices will provide important information for decisionmakers interested in developing regulatory approaches, incentive opportunities, legislative guidelines and technical guidance on best management practices (BMPs) for public supply water conservation programs.

The review of current best practices will include case studies of innovative and unique water conservation programs found within the Great Lakes region. Best water conservation practices outside the Great Lakes region will be examined in order to identify the best available technology and a range of options for water conservation.

The project builds on the Commission's current GLPF-supported Water Resources Management Decision Support System (WRMDSS) project, which has concluded that state and provincial water conservation programs are limited in scope and are typically part of drought contingency plans. Local water conservation programs, where they exist, are generally stronger but lack consistency in their approaches.

Contact: Tom Crane, tcrane@glc.org.

2002 Annual Meeting

Come to Cleveland!

Register now for the 2002 Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting, "Building Partnerships for Restoration," Oct. 14-15, 2002 at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio. Reserve your space now by using the form on the following page or by going online at ***https://www.glc.org/meeting*** *See you in Cleveland!*

Lake St. Clair *(continued from page 1)*

suffers from a variety of adverse effects, including urban and agricultural runoff, loss of wetlands and coastal habitat, toxic contamination from industry, beach closings due to recurring high levels of E. coli bacteria, invasive species, and pollution from faulty sewage and septic systems.

Data gathered under the new coastal habitat project will be incorporated into a digital information resource such as a geographic information system (GIS) database. Working in cooperation with Great Lakes stakeholders, the Commission will use that information to develop a draft coastal habitat restoration and conservation plan for the lake. That plan will in turn be used in the development of the comprehensive management plan for the entire lake.

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory will be a key partner in the data collection phase of the project, while NOAA will have primary responsibility for developing the integrated coastal management decision support tool. Other project partners include a variety of other U.S. and Canadian federal, state, provincial, local, nonprofit and tribal/First Nation entities. The project will be conducted under NOAA's Landscape Characterization and Restoration Program.

Contact: Victoria Pebbles, vpebbles@glc.org, or Matt Doss, mdoss@glc.org.

EPA head supports brownfields/greenfields roundtable

Brownfield site, Detroit, Mich. Photo: Victoria Pebbles.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) headquarters has provided the Great Lakes Commission with a grant to investigate the potential for linking brownfields development and greenfields protection.

The grant will fund the first of a potential series of roundtable policy discussions in each of the Commission's member states. The roundtables will help jurisdictions explore in greater detail the potential for adopting and implementing strategic actions that will better link brownfields redevelopment and greenfields protection. The first roundtable will be held in Lansing, Mich., this fall.

The grant resulted from a U.S. EPA initiative announced in January to "help local planners better integrate brownfields redevelopment and open space preservation through grants and technical assistance." Such roundtables had been called for in a resolution adopted by the Commission at its 2001 Annual Meeting. The strategic actions are contained in the Commission's *Bridges* report (www.glc.org/bridges/9-01BridgesI.pdf), released in fall 2001, which examined brownfields, greenfields and their potential linkages in the Great Lakes region. A resolution adopted at the Commission's 2001 Annual Meeting supported implementation of the report's strategic actions. Commission staff recognized the January initiative as an opportunity to build on the *Bridges* report and contacted U.S. EPA Administrator Christie Whitman's office, which approved funding for the initial roundtable.

Contact: Victoria Pebbles, vpebbles@glc.org.

mark your calendar

Great Lakes Regional Meeting - U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy
September 24-25, 2002
Chicago, Ill.

Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting
Oct. 14-15, 2002
Cleveland, Ohio

State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC)
Oct. 15-18, 2002
Cleveland, Ohio

Workshop examines resource improvement standard

As a component of its Water Resources Management Decision Support System (WRMDSS) project, the Great Lakes Commission hosted a workshop on the development of a "Resource Improvement Standard," July 31 in Chicago. Held in conjunction with a meeting of the Council of Great Lakes Governor's Annex 2001 Working Group, the workshop brought together nearly 70 participants from federal, state and provincial agencies, non-governmental organizations, and business/industry to inform and assist the Annex 2001 implementation process.

Workshop participants discussed, in detail, the definition and prospective application of the "resource improvement" standard called for in Annex 2001 to the Great Lakes Charter. The resource improvement standard is one of several criteria under a decisionmaking process being developed to assess new water withdrawal proposals and determine whether measures associated with a given proposal would yield a benefit to the water resources of the basin.

The information and comments generated from this workshop will assist the Annex 2001 Working Group in developing a resource improvement standard and will also inform the development of a WRMDSS framework. A summary report of the workshop is available on the WRMDSS website, www.glc.org/waterquantity/wrmdss.

The WRMDSS project, including the workshop, is supported by a grant from the Great Lakes Protection Fund.

Annex 2001, approved by the Great Lakes governors and premiers in June 2001, sets out the principles for developing and implementing a common, resource-based conservation standard to be applied to new proposals for consumptive use of Great Lakes basin water resources.

Contact: Tom Crane, tcrane@glc.org or Becky Lameka, blameka@glc.org.

Great Lakes mayors adopt water management principles

For 16 years the mayors of communities along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River have gathered to take stock of the freshwater ecosystem at their doorstep. This year, Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Québec, hosted the annual conference from June 12-14. St. Lawrence River issues were prominent on the agenda, while other presentations addressed matters relevant to the basin as a whole. The Great Lakes Commission has provided secretariat support to the association since its founding.

This mayors' meeting witnessed the adoption and signing of the Salaberry-de-Valleyfield Protocol. Conceived by Valleyfield's mayor, Denis Lapointe, the protocol conveys 10 principles embraced by the mayors for the protection and use of the water resources of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. These include accommodating natural fluctuations in the system's water levels, making aquatic nuisance species prevention and control a priority, closely monitoring potential adverse consequences of coastal development, promoting commercial navigation and calling for shoreline communities to be fully involved in the decisionmaking process for all aspects of Great Lakes-St. Lawrence water system management.

Resolutions adopted at the meeting included support for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes Navigation System Study, with appropriate environmental review, which will examine the feasibility of upgrading the system to better address current and anticipated maritime commerce needs. Mayors Richard Daley of Chicago and Scott King of Gary, Ind., secured adoption of a resolution encouraging local government leadership in the development of a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence protection and restoration strategy. Another resolution calling for the mayors to have a substantive role in the Great Lakes Charter Annex process regarding water use and diversion was also approved.

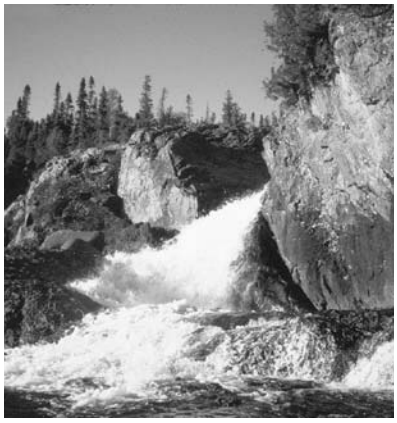


Photo: Robert Beltran.

One highlight of the conference was a tour of the Beauharnois hydroelectric power station. The 1,673-megawatt facility has the largest number of generating units in the world. The president of Hydro-Québec, André Caillé, discussed increasing electricity use in North America and the challenges of meeting the demand. The Valleyfield region has obvious potential for water power generation, as it is laced with river channels and canals, some old and abandoned.

Contacts: Steve Thorp, sthorp@glc.org, or Claude Mailloux, cmailloux@portquebec.ca.

Robinson appointed to DOE advisory panel

Spencer Abraham, secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy, has appointed Commission Chairman Nat Robinson to his advisory board, the department's highest-level advisory group. The Secretary of Energy Advisory Board is one of Abraham's primary tools for gaining balanced and expert external advice on the range of issues and challenges facing the department.

"With your help, I am confident that the board will make a substantial contribution to the success of the Department of Energy and its role in serving the nation," Abraham said in announcing Robinson's appointment.

In accepting the appointment, Robinson noted the significance of the issues at hand.

"The economic and environmental dimensions of energy production, transmission and use are of increasing interest in the Great Lakes region and nationally," Robinson said. " I welcome the opportunity to assist Secretary Abraham as he addresses these challenges."

The board, chaired by Michigan State University President Peter McPherson, includes leaders from industry, government and diverse interest groups.

Contact: Mike Donahue, mdonahue@glc.org.

Robinson stresses stewardship responsibility

The Great Lakes Commission's vision for revitalizing the greatest system of fresh water on the face of the earth was shared with an international audience when Chairman Nat Robinson addressed a gathering of experts in international water resources management in Traverse City, Mich., in July.

From left, Herb Gray, chairman of the Canadian Section of the International Joint Commission (IJC), Nat Robinson, chairman of the Great Lakes Commission and Dr. Gerry Galloway, secretary of the IJC's U.S. Section, at the Annual Conference on Integrated Trans-boundary Water Management.

Speaking before the Annual Conference on Integrated Trans-boundary Water Management, Robinson emphasized that governments alone cannot preserve a world-class resource such as the Great Lakes but that the duty of stewardship is borne by all.

"As individuals, we have a fundamental obligation to contribute to the environmental and economic prosperity of the regions in which we live," he said. "The everyday decisions that are made outside of government – whether they be business decisions or personal decisions – have a profound effect on the health of our environment, the sustainability of our economy, and the quality of our lives."

Robinson went on to outline the Commission's vision to "Restore the Greatness," detailing the seven goals set forth in the Commission's *Great Lakes Program to Ensure Environmental and Economic Prosperity* – cleaning up toxic hot spots, shutting the door on invasive species, controlling nonpoint source pollution, restoring and conserving wetlands and critical coastal habitat, ensuring the sustainable use of our water resources, strengthening our decision support capability, and enhancing the commercial and recreational value of our waterways.

The conference, sponsored by the Universities Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) and numerous other entities, brought together political, scientific, and other water resource officials from the United States, Canada and the rest of the world to discuss current projects and share expertise in addressing issues affecting water resources that straddle international boundaries.

Commission President/CEO Mike Donahue made two presentations at the same conference addressing leading regional issues. He highlighted the Commission's efforts to develop a decision support system tool for water resources management under Annex 2001 of the Great Lakes Charter. He also spoke to the need for institutional innovation and reform in the binational Great Lakes basin, summarizing outcomes of the Canada–United States Interuniversity Seminar on Great Lakes Governance he previously hosted for academics and policy practitioners.

Contact Jon Bartholic, bartholi@msu.edu or Mike Donahue, mdonahue@glc.org.

Water use database goes online

The Great Lakes Regional Water Use Database will soon be available through the Great Lakes Commission's website, www.glc.org. The online interface will allow users to search for water use data by state or province, entire Great Lakes basin, lake sub-basin and category of water use. Annual water use data for 1998 will be available first, with 1999 and 2000 data to follow shortly. Earlier years will be available by request.

Housed at the Great Lakes Commission, the database provides a centralized source of information on water withdrawals, diversions and consumptive uses throughout the U.S.–Canada Great Lakes basin. The Commission prepares annual water use reports, based on data submitted by the eight states and two provinces of the Great Lakes region.

The database has been operational since 1989 and is provided as an ongoing service to the Great Lakes governors, premiers and the general public. The database currently uses a Microsoft Access platform.

For more information, contact: Christine Manninen, manninen@glc.org.

Inventory, new software to help clear the air

Researchers and policymakers will have a better understanding of air pollution in the Great Lakes region, thanks to a substantial new grant the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) recently awarded to the Great Lakes Commission.

The $453,000 grant will fund the current phase of an ongoing inventory of air toxic emissions in the Great Lakes region and help make the information easily available over the Internet. The inventory will categorize 191 airborne pollutants by their sources – point, area or mobile – with special attention given to a number of contaminants of particular concern to the Great Lakes region, such as dioxins, mercury and benzopyrene.

The funds will allow completion of the 2002 annual inventory and the commencement of the 2003 study, as well as continued development of the Regional Air Pollutant Inventory Development System (RAPIDS) datamart. The improved RAPIDS software will provide an online clearinghouse of regional air quality data that will be easily accessible in a wide variety of formats, greatly simplifying access for those interested in using the data.

Data for the inventory is collected by the air quality agencies of the eight Great Lakes states and Ontario, all of whom are partners in the project. The Commission coordinates the project, assembles the collected data and is developing the RAPIDS datamart.

Chicago incinerator. Photo: Lake Michigan Federation.

First conducted with 1993 data, the inventory was developed in response to the 1986 Toxic Substances Control Agreement signed by the Great Lakes governors and premiers, and in reponse to amendments to the U.S. federal Clean Air Act.

Contact: Kevin Yam, kyam@glc.org.

Staff promotions acknowledge experience, responsibilities

Four staff members of the Great Lakes Commission have been promoted in recognition of increased responsibilities and accumulated experience.

Kathe Glassner-Shwayder (shwayder@glc.org) has been promoted to senior project manager in Resource Management, where she provides support to the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species in the areas of policy development and information/education.

Sarah Whitney (swhitney@glc.org) has been promoted to project manager in Resource Management, where she also provides support to the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, as well as to the Ohio watershed planning training project and the Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.

Stuart Eddy (seddy@glc.org) has been promoted to project manager in Communications and Internet Technology, where he works on the Great Lakes Geographic Information System (GIS) Online Project and coordinates computer technical support for Commission staff.

Michael Schneider (michaels@glc.org) has been promoted to senior program specialist in Resource Management, where he assists with the Great Lakes Basin Program, as well as collecting and mapping economically and environmentally sensitive data for the area contingency planning project.

Contact: Mike Donahue, mdonahue@glc.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

That Lake Huron has more islands than any other lake in the world? Its more than 30,000 islands include Manitoulin Island, the largest island in any freshwater lake. Source: Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality.

Sending nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain:
Is it safe to transport through the Great Lakes region?

POINT

U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich, D-Ohio

The question "Nuclear waste: Is it safe to move?" is an important question that can only be answered by examining all the risks because high-level nuclear waste will remain deadly for a million years. The transportation of this waste would require more than 96,000 truck shipments over four decades. Nationally, 11 million people reside within one-half mile of a truck or rail route. This never-before-attempted radioactive materials transportation effort would bring with it a constellation of hazards and risks, including accidents that lead to serious economic damage in cities and communities along shipping routes. I cannot support any plan that places this many people at risk.

If sending nuclear waste down our roads and rails with limited safeguards doesn't bother you, then maybe placing this deadly waste on barges in our rivers, lakes and oceans will. Because of a lack of rail facilities to several reactors, the Department of Energy will use barge shipments to move this waste to a port capable of transferring the 120-ton cask to a train.

Some of these shipments will occur on the Great Lakes, the world's largest source of fresh water. More than 35 million people living in the Great Lakes basin use them for drinking water, and I will venture to guess they would not be appreciative of nuclear waste shipments across their drinking water. I cannot support any plan that even contemplates shipping highly radioactive waste on the Great Lakes.

Before any nuclear waste shipments occur, the federal government must ensure the safety and security of these shipments. Therefore, I have introduced H.R. 4605, the Nuclear Waste Transportation Protection Amendments Act of 2002, which establishes a comprehensive nuclear waste transportation safety program focused on greater safety and security enhancements.

counterpoint

Dr. William Miller, professor of nuclear engineering, U. of Missouri-Columbia

The transportation of spent nuclear fuel is a proven safe technology whether by barge, rail, or truck. In the forty years we have been moving fuel around this country, which includes more than 3,000 shipments, there has never been an accident that released radioactive material. We even have experience with barge transportation. In 1994 fuel was moved by barge from the Shoreham nuclear plant on Long Island, N.Y., to the Limerick plant in Pennsylvania in 33 shipments. Large, decommissioned nuclear plant components have also been barged 270 miles up the Columbia River.

There is little reason to be concerned about transporting used fuel by barge on the Great Lakes, especially now. No routes have been selected and will not be for some time, and are unlikely to include barges. The Department of Energy's scenarios for moving fuel prefer rail shipments over all other options, and thus barging on the Great Lakes is unlikely.

Even if a barge were to be used, a close look gives confidence that they could safely move spent fuel. The fuel consists of metal rods containing ceramic pellets. There are no liquids to spill or gases to be released into the air. These rods are placed in shipping containers that are designed to withstand tremendous impacts followed by fire and then immersion in water without failing.

There are many reasons to be concerned about potential environmental damage to the Great Lakes by industrial activities. But the possible transport of used nuclear fuel by barge is not one of them.

New Great Lakes leaders appointed

It's been a summer of change around the Great Lakes, with new leadership taking over at key Great Lakes agencies and organizations.

New commanders are in place at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Detroit District, and the Ninth U.S. Coast Guard District, while a new director has been appointed to head the U.S. Maritime Administration's (MARAD) Great Lakes Region.

In July, Lt. Col. Thomas Magness IV assumed command of the Corps' Detroit District, where he supervises Corps activities on lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron and the Michigan portion of Lake Erie, as well as regional inland projects. Prior to coming to Detroit, Magness served as a combat engineer observer controller at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif.

He succeeds former commander Lt. Col. Richard Polo, who has been assigned to USACE Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

In May, Rear Adm. Ronald Silva took over as commander of the Ninth Coast Guard District, where he is operational commander for all Coast Guard forces on the Great Lakes. Silva previously served as the Coast Guard's assistant commandant for systems and chief engineer. He succeeds Vice Adm. James Hull, who assumed command of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area.

Also in July, Doris Bautch was named director of MARAD's Great Lakes Region, where her responsibilities include support for supplementary training for maritime industry personnel and participation in regional port and intermodal development activities. She most recently served as chief of MARAD's Division of Ports in Washington, D.C. She succeeds Alpha Ames Jr., who retired.

Changes are also pending at one of the Commission's private sector partners. The Lake Carriers' Association (LCA) has announced that James Weakly will succeed George Ryan as president of that organization, effective Jan. 15, 2003.

Weakley, a former U.S. Coast Guard officer, is presently serving in the Coast Guard Reserve, having been called to active duty in September, 2001. Prior to that, he was operations manager of Interlake Steamship Company. He will begin transitional duties as president-elect on Oct. 1.

Ryan, who is also a highly-regarded member of the Commission's Ohio Delegation, is retiring after 20 years of service with the LCA.

Editor's note - there is no official photo available yet for Doris Bautch.

Lt. Col. Thomas Magness IV

Rear Adm. Ronald Silva

James Weakly

2002 SOLEC to assess Great Lakes ecosystem

The fifth biennial State of the Great Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) will be held Oct. 15-18 at the Sheraton Convention Center in downtown Cleveland. A preconference reception will be held immediately after the conclusion of the Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting, to be held Oct. 14-15 at the same facility.

Participants will assess the current status of Great Lakes ecosystem components and the stresses upon them, based on the findings from a series of Great Lakes indicators under development since SOLEC '98.

The SOLEC conferences are hosted by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and Environment Canada every two years to gage progress in binational Great Lakes water quality initiatives. The conferences provide a forum for exchange of information on the ecological condition of the Great Lakes and surrounding lands. The SOLEC conferences draw a large number of public and nongovernmental officials who make decisions that affect the lakes.

Information about SOLEC and Great Lakes indicators is available online at www.on.ec.gc.ca/solec and at www.epa.gov/glnpo/solec.

Contacts: Nancy Stadler-Salt, Nancy.Stadler-Salt@ec.gc.ca; or Paul Bertram, bertram.paul@epamail.epa.gov.

Great Lakes agencies battle Asian carp

The Asian carp, a new aquatic nuisance species (ANS) threat, is poised to invade the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. Originally introduced in the southern reaches of the Mississippi River to support aquaculture operations, Asian carp have escaped from confinement facilities and migrated in high populations through the Upper Mississippi and Illinois river systems.

These nonindigenous fish fit the profile of a successful Great Lakes invader with high mobility, high reproductive capacity, growth to large sizes, voracious appetites and the ability to compete against native species. Two varieties, the bighead and silver carp, were spotted this summer within 25 miles of Lake Michigan in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, which connects the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes. Given the ecological impacts they have had in the Mississippi River, there is considerable concern over the effects an Asian carp invasion might have on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence ecosystem.

The Asian carp threat is a priority for the Great Lakes Commission, which has acted on a multitude of other ANS issues through its advocacy work and its technical/secretariat support for the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. Among these was the Commission's involvement in the construction of a dispersal barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to impede passage of invasive fish between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River.

Built by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the 60-foot wide barrier generates a DC electric field that discourages fish from crossing. Although targeted at bottom-dwelling fish such as the round goby, the electric barrier has shown potential for controlling the Asian carp, which inhabits the upper levels of the water column.

The Great Lakes Commission recently urged Congress to appropriate $500,000 in FY 2003 to ensure the full and continued operation of the dispersal barrier. These efforts complement those of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and the International Joint Commission to secure congressional financial support for long-term, fail-safe operation of an ANS barrier system, including the possible construction of a second, permanent electric barrier for greater effectiveness. Contact: Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, shwayder@glc.org.

Look for the Asian carp story in the next ANS Update*, in the Sept.-Oct. issue of the* Advisor.

New teams provide direct link to Corps HQ

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has implemented a new team concept that will provide a more effective means for Corps divisions and partner agencies, such as the Great Lakes Commission, to work with Corps Headquarters.

All eight Corps divisions, including the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division which encompasses the Chicago, Detroit and Buffalo districts of the Great Lakes region, are now represented by five-member subordinate command teams at Corps Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Effective July 1, the teams have been providing enhanced project management support and liaison services to their respective divisions, in essence establishing a "one-stop shopping" service for Corps divisions and their partners in matters requiring headquarters participation.

The team leader for the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division is Carol Angier. Prior to her team leader appointment, Angier was program defense coordinator, helping senior Corps leadership prepare for the defense of the Civil Works budget before the Office of Management and Budget and the Congress.

The Great Lakes Commission provides staff and advocacy support for an array of Corps activities, many relating to navigation, environmental quality and invasive species.

Contact: Carol Angier, carol.f.angier@usace.army.mil.

Great Lakes Links & Publications

Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting online registration
https://www.glc.org/meeting

Lake St. Clair Management Plan
www.glc.org/stclair

Water Resources Management Decision Support System for the Great Lakes
www.glc.org/waterquantity/wrmdss

International Association of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Mayors
www.st-laurent.org/english/assoc/mayor.htm

***Bridges* Report**
www.glc.org/bridges/9-01BridgesI.pdf

Great Lakes Regional Air Toxics Inventory
www.glc.org/air/air3.html

Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species
www.glc.org/ans/anspanel.html

Universities Council on Water Resources (UCOWR)
www.uwin.siu.edu/ucowr

State of the Great Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC)
www.epa.gov/glnpo/solec

USGS Great Lakes Science Center
www.glsc.usgs.gov

Great Lakes Science Center turns 75

Three-quarters of a century of Great Lakes research and scientific leadership were celebrated this summer as the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Great Lakes Science Center marked its 75th anniversary. A number of dignitaries, distinguished scientists past and present, and honored guests showed up for the Aug. 8 celebration at the Center's headquarters in Ann Arbor, Mich., including U.S. Representative Lynn Rivers and USGS Director Chip Groat. Speakers presented a history of science in the Great Lakes and highlighted notable scientific advancements.

Established in 1927, the Center works in close partnership with the Great Lakes Commission and other governmental, academic and private organizations. It has biological stations and research vessels throughout the Great Lakes, with studies that address fish populations, aquatic habitats, exotic species, nearshore and coastal communities and the biological processes that occur in the complex ecosystem of the Great Lakes.

Contact: Rebecca Hayes, rhayes@usgs.gov

Great Lakes Commission President/CEO Mike Donahue, left, speaks with USGS Director Chip Groat at ceremonies observing the 75th anniversary of the USGS Great Lakes Science Center.

The Last Word *(continued from page 12)*

– at last – is ready to start writing. And we at the Great Lakes Commission, under our Great Lakes Basin Compact authority, are ready to support, assist and otherwise advance this consensus-based effort.

We are prepared to start the process of gathering information, soliciting input and eventually putting into writing our collective and shared vision of what it will take to ensure substantive and measurable environmental and economic prosperity for the Great Lakes.

NATHANIEL E. ROBINSON
Chairman of the Board
Great Lakes Commission

Great Lakes Calendar

Stone Laboratory Open House
September 14, Gibralter Island, Ohio
Contact: Bonita Cordi, 614-292-8949, cordi.2@osu.edu

Great Lakes Regional Meeting - U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy
September 24-25, Chicago, Ill.
Contact: Terry Schaff, 202-418-3442, schaff@oceancommission.gov

SPAC Meeting: Successful Strategies for Communication, Outreach and Working with the Media
September 27-28, Ann Arbor, Mich.
Contact: Matt Doss, 734-665-9135, mdoss@glc.org

Wetlands 2002: Restoring Wetlands and Other Impaired Waters
Oct. 7-9, Indianapolis, Ind.
Contact: Tammy Taylor, 765-494-1814, taylor@ctic.purdue.edu

Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting
Oct. 14-15, 2002, Cleveland, Ohio
Contact: Mike Donahue, 734-665-9135, mdonahue@glc.org

State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC)
Oct. 15-18, 2002, Cleveland, Ohio
Contact: Paul Horvatin, 312-353-2117, horvatin.paul@epamail.epa.gov or Harvey Shear, 416-739-4704, harvey.shear@ec.gc.ca

Fifth International Symposium on Sediment Quality Assessment
October 16-18, Chicago, Ill.
Contact: Karen Bonnell, bonnellk@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Waters of Wisconsin Forum
October 21-22, Madison, Wis.
Contact: Amanda Okopski, 608-263-1692, ext. 22, aokopski@facstaff.wisc.edu

Further details and a more extensive calendar are available online via the Great Lakes Information Network (www.great-lakes.net). If you have an event you'd like us to include, please contact Kirk Haverkamp at 734-665-9135 or 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), please let us know and we'll cancel your print subscription.

From the top...

The Last Word

Nathaniel E. Robinson

Putting Pen to Paper!

"If we simply say it, it's only in the air!
But if we write it down, it is always there!"

This jingle is directly relevant to our resolve to ensure the development of a comprehensive, consensus-based Restoration Plan for the Great Lakes! Policymakers and opinion leaders have been talking about the importance of such a plan for more than two years. Until now, that's all it's been, a whole lot of talk and little else!

Last month, with the full support of the Commission membership, I directed Dr. Michael J. Donahue, our president/CEO, to help move this initiative from the talking stage to action. No doubt about it, progress is being made! We have finally taken that definitive step necessary for developing a Restoration Plan.

Here is what we are doing: We have initiated staff research into planning elements and frameworks. We have selected "Building Partnerships for Restoration" as our Annual Meeting theme. We have offered our expertise and assistance for placing our governors' restoration priorities into a science-based planning context. We have also secured funding from the National Sea Grant Office – and a partnership with the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network (among many others) – to help make it all happen!

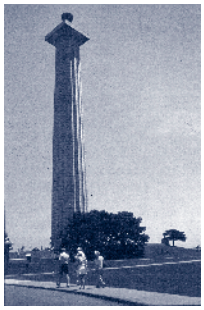
Financial support is available, major partners are on board and the region

Continued on page 11

Where in the Great Lakes?

Photo: Carole Swinheart

You could win a prize if you can identify the landmark shown in this Great Lakes-St. Lawrence photo! Send your guess via e-mail to kirkh@glc.org along with your name, address and daytime phone number (or call Kirk Haverkamp at 734-665-9135). All correct responses received by July 31 will be entered into a drawing. The winner will receive his/her choice of a Great Lakes Commission t-shirt or beach towel, or a $10 credit toward the purchase of any Commission publication.



The location of last issue's "Where in the Great Lakes?" photo was Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial at Put-in-Bay, Ohio. The contest winner was Cherie Blair of Bowling Green, Ohio. Thank you to all who participated!
Photo: Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism.

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