



GLLC STRATEGIC PLAN for 2023-2027

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The leaders of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus (GLLC) developed this Strategic Plan to strengthen the organization; promote the role of state and provincial legislators in the policy making process; and make the Caucus a forum for taking coordinated regional action to address key issues that affect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. The first iteration of the GLLC Strategic Plan was developed in 2018.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The major elements of this plan will remain in effect from 2023 through 2027. The GLLC Executive Committee will conduct a systematic review of progress made on the strategies and priorities and revise them as needed to help the Caucus achieve its mission. The review will be presented to the GLLC membership at the Annual Meeting. The leaders of the Caucus will undertake a new strategic planning process in late 2027 following the election of a new leadership team at the 2027 Annual Meeting.

VISION

The GLLC will strengthen the role of state and provincial legislators in the policymaking process to restore, protect, and sustainably use the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin.

MISSION

The mission of the GLLC is to strengthen the role of state and provincial legislators in the regional, national, and binational policymaking process by providing a forum to advance policy recommendations, collaborate, and educate around the restoration, protection, and sustainable use of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River for current and future generations.

VALUES

Member-driven: The members of the GLLC will decide on the issues to address and the activities to undertake. Staff will assist the members as they pursue the Caucus's mission.

Collaborative: Caucus members will work together within jurisdictions and across the region. The Caucus will collaborate with external organizations to bring excellence and efficiency to the policymaking process.

Solution-Driven: As it works to implement policy, the GLLC will rely on expert advice to identify innovative best practices as well as science-based and evidence-based solutions to the problems affecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

Balanced: Recognizing the interdependence of the ecology and the economy of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, the Caucus will strive to balance the needs of both when cooperating to develop legislation.

Future Thinking: The Caucus will consider the potential impacts on future generations as it works to solve today's problems.

Transparent: The Caucus will make information on its policy development and other activities publicly available so that stakeholders will be able to understand every step of the process leading to policy implementation.

Diverse: The Caucus values a membership that reflects the diversity of the legislative bodies in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River region.

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND PRIORITIES

The first four objectives describe what the Caucus will do as an organization to achieve the mission. The remaining objective describes internal actions that the leaders consider necessary to build a stronger organization to carry out the work over the long-term.

Objective 1: Promote policy recommendations consistent with the mission and evidence-based best practices.

Strategy 1: Maintain a Policy Agenda to focus activities and resources.

1. Annual meetings, webinars, Patricia Birkholz Institutes, regional legislative activity, and other advocacy efforts will focus on the issue areas on the Policy Agenda.
2. Emerging issues may be addressed as resources allow and as determined by the GLLC officers and Executive Committee.

Strategy 2: Hold the Patricia Birkholz Institute biennially to focus on one area of the Policy Agenda.

1. Following the Birkholz Institute, form a Task Force to develop policy recommendations for the duration of the biennium.

Strategy 3: Build the annual meetings and other events with the intention of action.

1. Host and staff will focus the meeting agendas on the issues in the Policy Agenda.
2. At every annual meeting, the Chair will report on the progress made during the year to address issues on the Policy Agenda.

Strategy 4: Pursue projects to gather binational data to help identify opportunities to harmonize state and provincial laws on issues on the policy agenda.

1. The Executive Committee will conduct outreach to top Great Lakes foundations to encourage them to consider projects to gather region-wide data to help state and provincial legislators obtain the information they need.
2. Continue to partner with the Great Lakes Commission's Blue Accounting platform to track progress across the region.

Objective 2: Increase the Caucus's voice at the binational, regional Great Lakes-St. Lawrence level.

Strategy 1: Improve external communication about the GLLC and its activities and accomplishments.

1. Direct staff to put together a Communications Plan to be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee.
 - i. Examine expanding social media platforms, such as Facebook
 - ii. Create a way for members to communicate directly
2. Make web meetings open to all interested attendees, not just GLLC members, other legislators, and legislative staff.
3. Publicize resolutions, policy recommendations, sign-on letters, and other priorities

Strategy 2: Strengthen ties to other Great Lakes organizations and entities

1. Staff will pursue partnerships and recognitions from other Great Lakes organizations.
2. Communicate with federal, county, city, and municipal partners about the work of the GLLC and collaboration opportunities
3. The Chair may appoint members to represent the GLLC at meetings of other organizations.
4. Work with other national and regional organizations on Policy Agenda issues

Objective 3: Demonstrate the role of state and provincial legislators in Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River policy.

Strategy 1: Document the influence of state and provincial legislators.

1. On a quarterly basis, staff will update the state and provincial legislative trackers to reflect the introduction and progress of legislation that addresses the issues on the policy agenda.
2. GLLC members will share information with staff on the introduction of bills and resolutions.

Strategy 2: Submit comment letters on federal or regional initiatives that have the potential to impact the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

1. Staff will alert the Executive Committee of any developments related to issues on the policy agenda.
2. As directed by the Chair or the Executive Committee, staff will draft and submit letters on such developments from the Chair, Executive Committee, or GLLC members, as appropriate.

Strategy 3: Pursue and publicize the GLLC resolution process.

1. Executive Committee members will conduct peer-to-peer outreach to publicize resolution opportunities.
2. Staff will assist legislative staff in Ontario and Québec to inform members regarding GLLC activities, including resolutions.

Objective 4: Educate state and provincial legislators about issues affecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

Strategy 1: Increase participation in web meetings.

1. Staff will survey the members to solicit ideas for possible topics and speakers.
2. With input from the Executive Committee, staff will improve the marketing of individual web meetings and the annual schedule.
 - a. Staff will use the GLLC website, Twitter, Facebook, "The Caucus Current," to share web meeting registration information, archived videos, and speaker presentations.
 - b. Staff will track registrations by source to determine the most effective means of reaching potential registrants.
 - c. Staff will track views of the archived videos to document their utility.
 - d. CSG staff will share the web-meeting schedule during annual state visits.
 - e. Staff will coordinate with CSG Eastern Regional Conference staff to increase publicity to legislators in New York, Pennsylvania, and Québec.
3. Executive Committee members will conduct peer-to-peer outreach for each web-meeting (pre-meeting to encourage registration and post-meeting to encourage viewing the archived video).
4. Staff will share distribution lists with Executive Committee members to assist in their peer-to-peer outreach. Lists will be updated monthly or as needed.
5. Staff will work with legislative assembly staff from Ontario and Québec to address participation from the provinces.

Strategy 2: Share information on state and provincial legislative activity and emerging issues among all jurisdictions.

1. Executive Committee members will report at annual meetings and on the annual legislative review web-meeting on issues related to the policy agenda as well as emerging issues.
2. Each Executive Committee member will provide one interview on developments related to the issues on the Policy Agenda and emerging issues for inclusion in "The Caucus Current."

Objective 5: Strengthen GLLC membership, governance, and financial sustainability.

Strategy 1: Recruit new members annually.

1. Executive Committee members will conduct annual peer-to-peer outreach to legislative colleagues, including leaders and members of related legislative committees.
2. At the beginning of each year, staff will provide Executive Committee members with sample text for outreach messages to prospective members.
3. Staff will share the GLLC brochure with legislators during annual capitol visits.
4. Executive Committee members from the states will send staff the contact information for new legislators.
5. Staff will conduct special outreach to state legislators from coastal districts.
6. Québec and Ontario will work together on an approach to expanding participation from legislators in the provinces.

Strategy 2: As needed, revise the GLLC Rules of Organization, policies, and practices.

1. At least once during every five-year period, the Chair will appoint a Rules Review Committee to examine and recommend changes to the GLLC's rules, policies, and procedures.
2. All recommended changes will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee. Amendments to the rules will require final ratification by GLLC members at the next annual meeting or web-meeting.
3. The Rules Review Committee will recommend an approach to incorporate stakeholder groups, such as Indigenous representatives, into the work of the Caucus as part of its recommended rules revision.

Strategy 3: Secure new long-term funding partners.

1. Executive Committee members will recommend local foundations to approach for general operating support or support for special projects (e.g., Birkholz Institutes).
2. Ask other organizations to consider making the GLLC a partner on their own grant proposals

Strategy 4: Identify other appropriate sources of funding

1. Consider making each annual meeting self-sustaining through registration fees and sponsorships.
2. Consider additional sources of funding, such as
 - a. Jurisdictional or member dues.
 - b. Meeting registration fees.
 - c. An approach to soliciting and using donations from private-sector partners in a manner that avoids the perception of a conflict of interest.
 - d. An approach to soliciting donations from current and former GLLC members.
3. Direct staff to prepare a Financial Sustainability Plan to be reviewed by the Executive Committee