



GREAT LAKES
LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

Great Lakes Legislative Caucus Annual Meeting

Embassy Suites Buffalo
Buffalo, New York
September 25-26, 2015

Agenda

Representative Cory Mason, Wisconsin, Presiding

Friday, September 25

1:30 – 5:30 pm Optional Site Visit: Buffalo River Area of Concern

GLLC members who arrive early will have an opportunity to tour the revitalization efforts underway in the Buffalo River Area of Concern and the City of Buffalo's waterfront. Declared functionally dead in 1969, the Buffalo River is one of the many waterways that have benefited from the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The \$1.3 million invested by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Remedial Action Plan coordination leveraged an additional \$75 million in public and private funds for the river cleanup. These activities have helped transform this once polluted river into a recreational and tourism destination that is a vital economic and environmental asset for the City of Buffalo and western New York.

5:30 – 6:30 pm Registration AVANT FOYER

6:30 – 8 pm Reception AVANT BALLROOM

Saturday, September 26

7 – 8:15 am Executive Committee Breakfast Meeting EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM

7:30 – 8:30 am Registration AVANT FOYER

8:30 am Great Lakes Legislative Caucus Meeting Convenes ENCORE BALLROOM

8:30 – 8:35 am Welcome, Introductions, and Meeting Preview

8:35 – 8:50 am **Welcome to New York**

Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes, New York

8:50 – 10:15 am **Business Session**

- Chair’s Report
- State and Provincial Roundtable
- Resolutions to be Considered

10:15 – 10:30 am **Break**

10:30 – 11:10 am **Update on Asian Carp and Efforts to Control its Spread**

States from across the region, in collaboration with the federal government, continue to monitor the movement of Asian carp and implement strategies to prevent this aquatic invader from reaching the Great Lakes. In this session, legislators will receive an update on the Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework as well as explore future monitoring and prevention plans.

Mike Weimer, Senior Fish Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Chair, Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee

11:10 am – 12 pm **Binational Cooperation on Reducing Phosphorus Loadings and Harmful Algal Blooms**

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement charges the U.S. and Canada with taking steps to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.” Managing nutrient loads is one of the activities intended to ensure that the water is “drinkable, fishable, and swimmable.” This session will explore the problem of nutrient pollution that causes toxic algal blooms and low-oxygen areas in Lake Erie, both of which negatively impact water quality in the lake. Attendees will learn about the impact of phosphorus pollution on Lake Erie, the proposed targets for reducing phosphorus loadings recommended by the International Joint Commission, and the steps legislators can take to help address the problem.

Dereh Glance, Commissioner, International Joint Commission

12 – 1:30 pm **Featured Luncheon Presentation:**
“Queen of the Mist: The Dramatic Tale of the First Person to Conquer Niagara Falls”

AVANT I & II

Joan Murray, author of “Queen of the Mist”

1:30 – 1:45 pm **Break**

- 1:45 – 2:20 pm** **Spotlight on Lake Erie**
- Lake Erie is often in the news because of the problems created by nutrient runoff in the lake's western basin. During this session, the focus will be on eastern Lake Erie, including the state of its ecology and the emerging threats facing the lake.*
- Kerrie Gallo, Director of Ecological Programs, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper*
- 2:20 – 2:55 pm** **Harbor Maintenance Operations and Funding: Opportunities and Challenges for the Great Lakes Region**
- The Great Lakes are home to vast network of large commercial ports, small recreational harbors, and navigation channels. Maintaining this system is a federal responsibility, and the region depends on this work to support commercial shipping and recreational boating. This session will update GLLC members on the status of the federal government's ongoing and planned projects for the Great Lakes region, including the federal funding available to invest in this important work.*
- Joshua Feldmann, Buffalo District Operations Chief, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*
- 2:55 – 3:30 pm** **The Risks and Impacts of Crude Oil Transport in the Great Lakes Region**
- The oil boom in the western U.S. and Canada brings with it great benefits for the economy and for energy security, but meeting the demand for safe transportation to eastern refineries can pose significant challenges. This session will look at the relative risks and potential impacts of different modes for shipping crude oil and what the ramifications might be for state and provincial governments.*
- Dr. Susan Christopherson, Professor and Department Chair, Department of City & Regional Planning, Cornell University*
- 3:30 – 3:45 pm** **Issue Brief: Waukesha, Wisconsin – Putting the Great Lakes Compact to the Test**
- Nate Drag, Watershed Project Coordinator for New York, Alliance for the Great Lakes*
- 3:45 – 4 pm** **Break**
- 4 – 5 pm** **Business Session Resumes**
- Resolutions: Discussion and Action
 - Open Forum and Discussion
 - Invitation to the 2016 Annual Meeting
 - Closing Remarks
- 5 pm** **Adjourn**

The Great Lakes Legislative Caucus thanks the Consulate General of Canada in New York and the Joyce Foundation for their generous support of the 2015 Annual Meeting.