What is the Great Lakes Commission?

- A public agency established by the Great Lakes Basin Compact in 1955
- In 1968, Congress passed an act authorizing its consent to the Compact and the interstate compact agency.
- Ontario and Québec officially joined as associate members in 1999
- Allows its Member states and provinces speak with a unified voice and to reach consensus on and advocate for the region’s priorities
Who is the Great Lakes Commission?

- **Commissioners:**
  3-5 from each of the 10 states and provinces

- **Board of Directors:**
  1 from each state / province delegation

- **Chair:** Sharon Jackson, Deputy General Counsel, Office of the Governor of Indiana

- **Professional Staff**

A Strategic Plan for the Great Lakes Commission

**Vision**

The Great Lakes Commission is a binational leader and a trusted voice ensuring the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River support a healthy environment, vibrant economy and high quality of life for current and future generations.

**Mission**

The Great Lakes Commission represents, advises and assists its member states and provinces by fostering dialogue, developing consensus, facilitating collaboration and speaking with a unified voice to advance collective interests and responsibilities to promote economic prosperity and environmental protection and to achieve the balanced and sustainable use of Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin water resources.
A Strategic Plan for the Great Lakes Commission

Core Competencies
- Communications and Outreach
- Information Management and Delivery
- Facilitation and Consensus Building
- Policy Coordination and Advocacy
- Regional Project management

Program Areas
- Water Quality
- Water Management and Infrastructure
- Commercial Navigation
- Economic Development and Waterfront Community Revitalization
- Coastal Conservation and Habitat Restoration
- Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention and Control
- Information Management and Blue Accounting

Great Lakes 2020:
A Vision for a Healthy and Resilient Great Lakes Basin

- Fund and reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to help communities clean up degraded areas and create new economic opportunities along their waterfronts.
- Safeguard drinking water and modernize clean water infrastructure to protect public health, support business and industry, and help revitalize communities.
- Strengthen the Great Lakes navigation system to support the national economy, create jobs, and reduce traffic congestion.
- Protect against invasive species like invasive carp, zebra mussels and sea lamprey.
- Promote agricultural conservation to protect water quality, reduce nutrient pollution, and prevent harmful algal blooms.
- Build resilience to protect the people, places, economy, and environment of the Great Lakes Basin.
- Invest in a collaborative, data-driven approach such as Blue Accounting to set Basinwide goals and track progress.
Working Together to Build Basinwide Resilience

GLC 2020 Annual Meeting
• Bringing diverse stakeholders together

Meeting Themes:
• Regional Partnership
• Climate Resilience
• Enhance & Protect Great Lakes Basin Resources

Climate Resilience

• Special Committee on Climate Resilience
  – November 2019 through January 2020
  – Framework for Action

• Standing Committee on Climate Resilience
  – January 2020 to present
Framework For Action

- **Recommendation 1**: Establish a Standing Committee on Climate Resilience, comprised of Commissioners from each jurisdiction and authorized to convene additional representatives from the jurisdictions as needed. Timeframe: immediate and continuing

- **Recommendation 2**: Task the Standing Committee to develop and recommend a common definition of “Resilience” for the Great Lakes Basin. Timeframe: For consideration by the public at the Commission’s semi-annual meeting in Kenosha, WI and by the end of Q2.

- **Recommendation 3**: Develop a compilation and clearinghouse of progress that highlights state, provincial and regional efforts related to climate resilience in the Great Lakes Basin (Timeframe: Q2 2020) and establish partnerships with government agencies, research institutions and NGO’s to produce a report that compiles and assesses the environmental, economic, and social impacts of climate change to the Great Lakes Basin. Timeframe: immediate and continuing.

- **Recommendation 4**: Develop a Great Lakes Climate Resilience “State of the Basin” - a long-term outlook and an action plan that prioritizes efforts that form a roadmap to advance climate resilience in the Great Lakes Basin. Timeframe: to be explored by Standing Committee in 2020.

- **Recommendation 5**: Establish processes for sharing data, evaluating risks and challenges, and deploying strategies to advance climate resilience in the Great Lakes in collaboration with local, regional, and federal partners.

- **Recommendation 6**: Establish regular dialogue focused on climate resilience among Commissioners, Observers, and other stakeholders during Commission annual and semi-annual meetings. Timeframe: structure to be developed and recommended by Standing Committee in 2020.

- **Recommendation 7**: As needed or recommended by the Standing Committee, develop and adopt a clear, consistent and consensus-based policy statement on climate resilience for the Great Lakes Basin. Timeframe: Commission action not later than Q3 2020.
Defining a Resilient Great Lakes Basin

Draft Committee Definition:

*A resilient Great Lakes Basin is one in which communities, infrastructure, ecosystems, and the economy can withstand, adapt to, and recover from climate-related stressors and changing conditions to ensure equitable and inclusive social, economic, and environmental well-being across the Basin.*

Pursuing Resilience - Together

- Understand, highlight, and coordinate existing efforts
  - Federal, state, provincial, indigenous, and municipal governments
  - NGOs, academia, business, and industry
- Eliminate silos  Connect efforts
- Utilize existing forum to share expertise, identify opportunities, and address common challenges
Building a Resilient Great Lakes Basin

• GLC Action Plan: 2020
  – Establish shared goals, set timeframes
  – Identify roles
• Implementation: 2021 and beyond
  – Pursue activities and objectives
  – Track progress
  – Establish resilience as a core value throughout the Great Lakes Basin

Thank You!

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