



Co-Chair's Letter

Building on our successful summit on Mackinac Island this summer, it will be my privilege to welcome my fellow Great Lakes Governors and Premiers to Chicago



Illinois Governor
Pat Quinn

on April 25-26, 2014. This executive meeting will focus on “Accelerating Progress” and in this issue of *The Compass* you will see some examples of our recent successes.

The Council of Great Lakes Governors recently opened its eighth foreign trade office in Mexico City. This office extends the Council’s global reach into an exciting and dynamic market that is hungry for our products and

services. We are planning a trade mission to Mexico next year and look forward to boosting exports from our region’s small and medium sized companies.

We are accelerating our work to protect and restore the Great Lakes. We have made much progress in developing a regional agreement to help one another in cases of aquatic invasive species invasions. This is just one part of our comprehensive strategy to combat this threat.

For the first time ever, we recently assessed the cumulative impact of water withdrawals, consumptive uses and diversions from the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. No assessment of this type had ever been done on a similar scale anywhere in the world. Our innovative assessment tool is a platform for future work and a model for collaboration both within and outside the Basin.

Our partnerships are creating major achievements. We appreciate your continuing work with us, and look forward to building on these efforts next April in Chicago.

—Pat Quinn
Co-Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors
Governor, State of Illinois

Compact Council Elects Governor Cuomo as Chair

At its December 6, 2013 meetings in Chicago, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council (Compact Council) elected Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York to serve as Chair. He will also serve in this role for the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body (Regional Body).

The organizations also presented the first ever Cumulative Impact Assessment at the meeting. Until now, no assessment of this kind had ever been conducted anywhere in the world at a similar scale. The assessment analyzes the impacts of water uses on the overall water budget of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. Understanding cumulative impacts is essential for users and managers, and the Regional Body and Compact Council will perform future assessments at least every five years.

In developing this assessment, the Council of Great Lakes Governors also worked with regional partners to create a web dashboard that includes additional information about the Great Lakes. This interactive tool provides essential data and information to decision makers and the general public, and was made possible in part by a grant from the NOAA Regional Ocean Partnership funding program. The dashboard can be accessed [HERE](#).



Council Opens Mexico Trade Office

The Council of Great Lakes Governors launched its Mexico Trade Office on October 1st. With locations in Mexico City and Guadalajara, the Mexico Trade Office will promote exports from the Great Lakes region, and help Great Lakes companies find customers and business opportunities in Mexico. Mexico enjoys a strategic geographic position, great natural wealth and a large youth population. These factors, together with growing industrial sectors, sound international trade relations, and relative economic and financial stability, establish it as a prime destination for international business. Mexico's economy is the 14th largest in the world.

U.S.-Mexico annual trade increased from \$88 billion to nearly \$500 billion from 1993 to 2012.

The Council's Mexico Trade Office serves as the Michigan Mexico Center and will be operated under contract by Global Business Partners Mexico. Since



Representatives from Michigan attended the Queretaro Automotive Meetings in November.

2006, the firm has assisted nearly 2,500 companies to penetrate the Mexican market, and has expertise in many key industries including automotive, construction, food and beverages, and green technologies. "The Michigan Mexico Center has hit the ground running - hosting 20 small Michigan automotive suppliers for the Queretaro Automotive Meetings in November. We are impressed with this support," said Deanna Richeson, Director of Export Strategy in Michigan.

"We recognize the importance of Mexico for its vast opportunities for American companies, and our primary goal is to assist any Council member to achieve its goals in trade

with Mexico," said Efren Flores, Director of the Council's Mexico Trade Office.



For more information on the Council's Mexico Trade Office please click [HERE](#).

Council to Lead Trade Missions to Asia

The Council of Great Lakes Governors will be leading multi-sector trade missions to India from April 22 - May 1, 2014, and, separately, to Singapore and Indonesia from May 30 - June 7, 2014. The Singapore and Indonesia mission is being held in conjunction with Singapore International Water Expo. Water-related companies from the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River region will have a unique opportunity to exhibit or walk the show.



Each mission participant will receive a customized appointment schedule to meet with prospective buyers, distributors, agents and interested parties. In addition, participants will benefit from networking events, briefings and logistical support. Grant funding is available in many States to offset the mission costs. For more information on the Council's trade missions please click [HERE](#).

On January 14 at 9:00 a.m. CST, the Council of Great Lakes Governors and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Partnership are hosting a FREE "**Singapore and Indonesia Water Sector Opportunities**" webinar for Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region companies. For more information please click [HERE](#).

Governors and Premiers Tackle “Least Wanted” Invasive Species

The Governors and Premiers of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin continue to fight aquatic invasive species (AIS) throughout the region. At the Council of Great Lakes Governors Leadership Summit in June 2013, the Governors and Premiers unveiled a list of the “least wanted” AIS that present an imminent threat to the region. The States and Provinces are taking bold actions to stop the movement of these AIS into the Basin.

- **Illinois** prohibited the possession and transport of many of the “least wanted” AIS including hydrilla and other aquatic plants.

- **Michigan** similarly banned nearly all of the “least wanted” fish and plants including northern snakehead and Brazilian elodea. It also highlights the various species on an “AIS of the Week” website that can be accessed [HERE](#).

- **New York** halted the importation, possession and sale of live bighead carp.

Additionally, the Governors and Premiers are developing a mutual aid agreement that will enhance information and resource sharing as well as rapid response among the States and Provinces.

The “least wanted” list and other AIS resources can be found [HERE](#).



Great Lakes USA Launches Sports Travel Guide

Great Lakes USA launched a new sports travel brochure that complements Brand USA’s promotion of sports in the US. The guide covers football, baseball, hockey, basketball, soccer, golf and motor racing, and local activities and events. It also highlights the diverse range of sporting experiences available in the Great Lakes region as well as facts about the sports, teams and stadiums. Great Lakes USA launched the brochure at World Travel Market, the UK’s premier travel trade show.

“In previous years we produced guides on shopping, great escapes, winter and the outdoors but this year we have decided to tie in with Brand USA’s promotion of sports tourism.

Sports draws people together and watching a sporting event is a great way to add an extra dimension to a Great Lakes holiday," said Toby McCarrick, Great Lakes USA Executive Director.



Great Lakes USA staff and members promote regional tourism at the World Travel Market in London.

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