Chair’s Letter

I was honored to recently join my fellow Governors and Premiers in historic Québec City for our region’s 2015 Leadership Summit. Our program focused on “Connecting Across Borders.” Toward this end, we launched a new Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers to coordinate our future work. This Conference builds on our longstanding relationships as Governors and Premiers, and will bring us together as ten equal partners united in our commitment to sustainably grow the region’s economy.

We announced a series of ambitious actions to grow our region’s economy and protect the world’s greatest freshwater system. We pledged to develop a strategy to double maritime trade, shrink the environmental impact of the region’s transportation network, and support the region’s industrial core.

We took important steps to further protect our natural resources. For example, we completed a mutual aid agreement to help combat aquatic invasive species. We launched an innovative pilot program between Michigan, Ohio and Ontario to harmonize AIS regulations. I also committed with my colleagues to combat nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie. Our work will accelerate in coming weeks and months as we tackle this critical challenge.

Lastly, we initiated work to foster regional economic clusters based on an analysis by Harvard Business School. This will complement our efforts to grow regional exports through multi-sector missions to some of the world’s most dynamic markets.

Through all of this work, we look forward to better connecting across borders for the benefit of our region and our citizens. Thanks for your continued work with us.

—Rick Snyder
Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors
Governor, State of Michigan
this effort by creating a new level of commitment by all ten States and Provinces to strengthen North America’s heartland. The Governors and Premiers can speak with one voice to promote the interests of the entire region.”

“This Summit is an opportunity to put together our different initiatives, including Québec’s Maritime Strategy, to improve our maritime transportation system, shape regional tourism, and maximize the economic and social potential of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence system. Sustainable development and responsible economic growth have always been core values of our region’s work and will continue to guide our future actions, united under the authority of the new Conference,” stated Québec Premier Philippe Couillard.

Governor Snyder and Premier Couillard hosted the June 12-14 summit and were joined by Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. Senior representatives of Indiana Governor Mike Pence; Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton; New York Governor Andrew Cuomo; Ohio Governor John Kasich; and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf participated on their behalf during the summit’s events, including Lieutenant Governors Sue Ellspermann of Indiana, Kathy Hochul of New York, Mary Taylor of Ohio, and Michael Stack of Pennsylvania.

The Governors and Premiers continue to collaborate with one another, and with other partners, toward shared goals. Prominent speakers at the summit included:

- The Honorable Gary Doer, Canada’s Ambassador to the U.S.;
- David Jacobson, former U.S. Ambassador to Canada and Vice Chair, BMO Capital Markets;
- Mark Barker, President, Interlake Steamship Company;
- Allister Paterson, President, Canada Steamship Lines;
- Michael Sabia, President and CEO, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec;
- Dr. Christian Ketels, Principal Associate, Harvard Business School;
- Penny Lewandowski, Vice President, Edward Lowe Foundation;
- Derek Vanstone, Vice President, Corporate Strategy, Industry and Government Affairs, Air Canada; and,

GOVERNORS’ AND PREMIERS’ LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ACTIONS:

- Creating the Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers through which the ten States and Provinces will collaborate to ensure the region’s continuing prosperity
- Pledging to develop a strategy to double maritime trade, shrink the environmental impact of the region’s transportation network, and support the region’s industrial core
- Further protecting the region from aquatic invasive species by fully operationalizing a regional mutual aid agreement, and launching an innovative pilot program among Michigan, Ohio and Ontario to harmonize AIS regulations
- Combating nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie through a landmark agreement
- Creating a new program to foster regional economic clusters based on analysis by Harvard Business School
- Announcing multi-sector missions to promote exports to China, Europe, South America, and Central Asia
Council Leads Trade Mission to Montréal

Building on a successful Leadership Summit in Quebéc City, the Council led a trade mission to Montréal, Québec from June 14-17. Twenty-five delegates representing 20 Great Lakes companies and State Economic Development Officials from Michigan and New York participated in the trade mission. Companies represented a wide array of industries including agriculture, aerospace, life sciences, auto, medical and rail.

The Council’s Canada Office, working in conjunction with the New York Canada Trade Office, created customized one-on-one meeting schedules for each company to connect with potential distributors and end users.

Mission participants joined Governor Snyder of Michigan for a Quebéc business briefing provided by U.S. Consul General in Montréal Nina Maria Fite.

Council Recruiting Companies for South America Trade Mission

Small and medium-sized companies from the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region that are looking to enter or grow their footprint in South America are invited to join the Council’s multi-State/Provincial trade mission to Brazil, Chile and Colombia October 17-27, 2015. The trade mission will make stops in São Paulo, Brazil; Santiago, Chile; and Bogota, Colombia.

The Council’s Trade Offices in the region will work extensively with each mission participant to develop market intelligence and create a tailored business appointment schedule in each country. Mission participants will benefit from business briefings, networking events and logistical assistance.

The region’s key growth sectors include agricultural machinery and equipment, aerospace and aviation, construction, electrical power, energy, environmental technology and mining.

Many of the Council’s member States and Provinces have grant funding available for qualified companies to offset participation cost. The mission recruitment deadline is August 19, 2015. Further information on the South America trade mission can be found at http://www.cglg.org/projects/international-trade/trade-missions/south-america-mission-2015/

Why export to Brazil, Chile and Colombia?

- Brazil is Latin America’s largest economy and has a population of nearly 200 million people. It has been one of the world’s fastest growing economies. U.S. exports to Brazil in 2014 exceeded $42 billion.
- With a population of nearly 20 million, Chile offers a dynamic, transparent and low-risk business climate for exporters. The U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement ensures 100% of U.S. products are automatically duty free.
- In 2014, U.S. exports to Colombia reached $20 billion. It has political stability, improved security and a strong middle class which has created an economic boom.
Michigan, Ohio and Ontario Collaborate to Combat AIS

Michigan, Ohio and Ontario have launched an innovative pilot project to harmonize aquatic invasive species regulations and increase cooperation among the three jurisdictions. The Council’s Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Task Force will help to facilitate this process, and work to develop a model that can include other States and Provinces in the future.

Last year, the Governors and Premiers adopted a Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA) to protect the region from AIS. This groundbreaking agreement helps prevent the introduction and spread of AIS, fosters mutual aid among the States and Provinces to respond to AIS, and encourages further cooperative actions by the States and Provinces. The Michigan-Ohio- Ontario pilot project builds on the success of the MAA and sets the stage for continued collaboration.

Regional Body and Compact Council to Hold June Meetings

On June 25, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body (“Regional Body”) and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council (“Compact Council”) will meet at 2:00 p.m EDT via conference call. This meeting will be open to the public and will include an opportunity for public comments. An agenda, materials to be discussed, and call-in information are available at http://www.glslregionalbody.org/ and http://www.glslcompactcouncil.org/

Great Lakes USA Hosts German Delegation

From April 27-May 4, Great Lakes USA hosted four German tour operators on a tour of destinations in our region. The group visited a number of locations including Chicago, Galena, and Rockford, Illinois; Madison, Wisconsin; and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota.