Chair’s Letter

“Creating the Future” is the theme of the Leadership Summit that I will be co-hosting with Premier Wynne in Detroit and Windsor this fall. It is also the goal of the Conference’s work across a number of different areas that are central to our region's economic competitiveness and environmental health. To be successful, we need new and creative ideas and a willingness to be bold.

Our battle against aquatic invasive species continues and requires new solutions. I joined with my fellow Governors and Premiers to identify the “least wanted species” that seriously threaten our region. Creating a clear call to action on these 16 species has led to more than 40 governmental steps to restrict or prohibit transport or possession. However, this is not sufficient to protect our shared waters. In Michigan, we recently issued the Invasive Carp Challenge that will award $1 million to the best ideas to stop these fish. This challenge can unleash new thinking and capitalize on our region’s entrepreneurial spirit to solve a pressing environmental problem.

The Conference is bringing similarly creative thinking to issues including transportation, infrastructure, tourism, and water quality, which will be the focus areas of this fall’s Leadership Summit. We are engaging with many partners on our work program, and we appreciate your efforts toward our shared goals.

—Rick Snyder
Chair, Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers
Governor, State of Michigan

Michigan’s Invasive Carp Challenge Seeks Innovative Ideas

The State of Michigan wants bold ideas to keep invasive bighead, silver, and black carp out of the Great Lakes. Michigan Governor Rick Snyder and the Michigan Legislature have launched a $1 million global search for the best solutions to this looming crisis.

This innovative competition seeks to protect the ecosystem of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin, as well as recreation, tourism, and the region’s $7 billion fishery. Cash prizes will be awarded for one or more solutions. Anyone with an innovative idea is encouraged to apply, except for agencies directly involved in the challenge.

Ideas at any stage of development will be accepted, from concepts with sound rationale to projects that are already in development or testing phases. The challenge is expected to launch in July 2017 with a winner announced no later than April 1, 2018. More information on the Invasive Carp Challenge can be found HERE.
Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cruise Industry
Growing Steadily

The cruise industry on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River continues to grow. Itineraries that will take passengers to regional destinations such as Chicago, Mackinac Island, Niagara Falls, and Toronto are seeing renewed interest from domestic and international tourists. Total ship berths are up more than 50 percent since 2011, and have nearly tripled in the last decade. Robust growth is expected to continue in coming years.

Challenges such as customs and pilotage policies remain, however, and the Governors’ and Premiers’ Maritime Initiative will continue to work with cruise operators and other regional partners to support the growth of this exciting industry.

Regional Body and Compact Council to Hold June Meetings in Niagara-on-the-Lake

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body (Regional Body) will meet on Wednesday, June 21, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. EDT in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. A meeting of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council (Compact Council) will begin immediately following the adjournment of the Regional Body meeting, expected at approximately 9:45 a.m. EDT. During the meetings, David Szeptycki with the Regional Municipality of York will deliver a report on how it has been managing its use of Great Lakes water since its intra-Basin diversion was approved.

Both meetings will be open to the public and will include an opportunity for public comment. Meeting participation will also be open via conference call. Meeting agenda, materials to be discussed and call-in information are available at http://www.glslregionalbody.org and http://www.glslcompactcouncil.org/. All materials posted to the websites are subject to revision up to and through the meetings.

Provincial-State Cooperation Celebrated at Québec Exhibition

Québec’s Musée de la Civilisation is currently hosting an exhibit entitled “Québec and the World: 50 Years of International Action.” The exhibit celebrates Québec’s global engagement including cooperation with its neighbors in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region. A centerpiece of the exhibit is a signed copy of the Great Lakes Charter of 1985 along with a photo of the Charter’s signing. Québec Premier René Lévesque signed the Charter along with the Premier of Ontario and the eight Great Lakes Governors. The Charter and photo are on loan from the Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers. Further information on the exhibit, which will run through November 5, 2017, can be found HERE. The Musée de la Civilisation is located at 85, rue Dalhousie in Québec City.
Conference to Lead Trade Mission to Brazil and Argentina

The Conference will lead a multi-sector trade mission to Brazil and Argentina from November 5-11, 2017. Save valuable time and money by letting the Conference’s Trade Representatives provide you with market intelligence and a customized schedule of B2B meetings with prospective customers, business partners and industry leaders. Mission participants will also benefit from networking events and logistical support provided by the Conference. Grant funding is available in many of the Conference’s member States to offset participation fees and travel costs. More information on the mission can be found HERE.

Why Brazil and Argentina?
- Brazil’s population of about 205 million is the fifth largest in the world, representing nearly 3 percent of global consumers.
- The Brazilian economy is showing signs of recovery. In Q1 of 2017, the economy expanded for the first time since 2014.
- About 90 percent of U.S. exports to Argentina are used in agriculture, chemicals, IT, machine tools, oil extraction and refining, and transportation.
- Argentina’s infrastructure requires major updating and renewal, providing significant opportunity for exporters of equipment and services.

Great Lakes USA Hosts UK and Germany Media Tour

Great Lakes USA hosted a familiarization tour for media from Germany and the United Kingdom. In Ohio, participants visited Cleveland, Amish Country and Cedar Point. The group also had the exciting opportunity to experience the Murch Canopy Walk at the Holden Arboretum. In Michigan, they visited Holland, Ann Arbor and Detroit. Further information on Great Lakes USA is available HERE.

The tour included the Murch Canopy Walk at the Holden Arboretum in Ohio.