Chair’s Letter

By working together, we’ve made major strides to boost our region’s $6 trillion economy. In recent months, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors have opened two new offices in foreign countries to market our region’s exports. Our office network now covers nearly 100 countries from 13 different business centers. Our upcoming trade missions will take dozens of regional business leaders to these foreign markets to build new relationships, make sales and create more high-paying jobs throughout our region.

Our collaboration has also notched big successes in protecting our region’s waters. For example, we are working collaboratively to reduce excess nutrients entering our most sensitive waters, including western Lake Erie.

We continue to build on these successes, and I look forward to hosting our 2017 Leadership Summit next month in Detroit and Windsor with Premier Wynne. Our program will celebrate the progress made so far, and push our partnership in new directions. Connected and autonomous transportation, infrastructure, and the fight against aquatic invasive species will feature in our agenda to “create the future.”

Our partnerships make us stronger, and we appreciate your continued engagement in this important work.

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

Governors and Premiers to Hold Leadership Summit in Detroit and Windsor

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers will convene in Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario, for their 2017 Leadership Summit from October 20-22. Michigan Governor Rick Snyder and Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne will co-host this Summit, which will include executives from government, industry and nongovernmental organizations.

The theme of this Summit will be “Creating the Future” and focus areas will include regional competitiveness, transportation, infrastructure and the environment. This is an invitation-only event.
Conference to Lead Trade Missions to South America, Mexico and Africa

In the next year, the Conference will lead trade missions to several promising markets. These include Brazil and Argentina from November 5-11, 2017; Mexico from February 26-March 2, 2018; and South Africa from June 4-8, 2018. Trade missions are an excellent way for companies to visit international markets as part of an organized group of business people. Each trade mission participant receives a customized, pre-qualified schedule of one-on-one business appointments, logistical support for travel, assistance with drivers and interpreters, networking events and country briefings.

These in-market missions attract significant visibility and ensure high-level meetings with government officials, business associations and potential business partners. Participating companies can apply for grant funding in many of the Conference’s member States to offset participation and travel costs.

This combination of mission quality and value has already attracted more than 375 companies to more than 22 foreign markets including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Czech Republic, Chile, Colombia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Québec, Romania, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

For more information on the Conference’s Trade Missions please click HERE.

New Trade Offices Open in Singapore and South Korea

The Conference recently celebrated the opening of new international trade offices in Southeast Asia and South Korea. The trade offices, located in Singapore and Seoul, will assist small and medium enterprises from the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region to grow their business and export to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and South Korea. The Conference’s trade offices provide a scope of services tailored for each participating member’s needs including agent distributor searches, matchmaking, trade events, investment activities, referrals, an extensive databases of trade contacts, development of trade leads, business appointment assistance and trade missions. Following the opening of the Arab Gulf Trade Office in Dubai earlier this year, the Conference’s network now comprises thirteen trade offices providing global market access to 91 countries on six continents.
Regional Body and Compact Council to Review Decision-Making Procedures

On August 2, the Regional Body and Compact Council launched a collaborative effort to review and update regional decision-making procedures for any future proposals to divert Great Lakes-St Lawrence River Basin water. The Regional Body and Compact Council will provide regular opportunities for regional partners and the public to provide input and feedback throughout this process.

In 2010, the Regional Body and Compact Council adopted procedures for reviewing proposals to divert water from the Basin. Water diversions are generally banned under State, Provincial and federal laws, but exceptions for public water supply purposes in areas near the Basin can be allowed in limited and strictly regulated instances.

In 2016, the Regional Body and the Compact Council began reviewing the first request for such a diversion under these procedures. Following a thorough and transparent process, the Compact Council issued a final decision in June 2016.

Following the planned review of current procedures in consultation with stakeholders and the public, as well as Tribes and First Nations, the Regional Body and Compact Council expect to review proposed recommendations and updates at their June 2018 meetings. Any proposed changes may then be tentatively formally considered for adoption at meetings planned for December 2018. Both meetings will be open to the public.

This procedural review is one part of the Regional Body and Compact Council’s ongoing commitment to protect the 20 percent of the world’s surface freshwater in the Basin. It builds on unprecedented work to strengthen water conservation and efficiency, water use information, and the understanding of cumulative water use across the Basin. For more information, please click HERE.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Great Lakes USA Hosts World’s Largest Travel Company

Great Lakes USA hosted a familiarization tour for travel trade representatives from TUI-Germany. The group traveled to regional destinations in Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

TUI is the world’s largest travel company, representing 1,600 travel agencies and online portals, six touristic airlines, 16 cruise liners and more than 300 hotels. Further information on Great Lakes USA is available HERE.

The tour included the Sand Point Lighthouse in Escanaba, Michigan.