CHAIR’S LETTER
RICK SNYDER

I was honored to co-host with Premier Wynne the 2017 Leadership Summit of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers. Detroit and Windsor provided the ideal backdrop for our summit program, which focused on Creating the Future.

Over three days, we talked with one another — and with other current and future leaders — about our wide-ranging agenda. We announced a series of ambitious actions to grow our region’s $6 trillion economy and protect the world’s greatest freshwater system.

A highlight of our program was a demonstration and presentations by students involved in the FIRST robotics program. These future leaders talked about how this fun program has helped teach them valuable skills while building some amazing machines.

Another highlight was our tour of Detroit — the “comeback city.” We saw firsthand how a city can overcome challenges while adapting to new circumstances.

I would like to thank our many partners for making this summit a success, and for supporting our broader work. We look forward to our continued work together to create a better, brighter future.

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

GOVERNORS AND PREMIERS GATHER IN DETROIT AND WINDSOR

In October, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers gathered in Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario for their 2017 Leadership Summit. They united to propel the region’s growth and announced a series of bold actions on transportation, trade and tourism, including:

• Creating an ambitious initiative to make the region a worldwide center for the development and deployment of connected and autonomous vehicles and smart ships.
• Opening export promotion offices in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Korea, as well as initiating three joint missions for regional business leaders.
• Launching a U.S. regional tourism marketing program in China, the world’s fastest growing market for tourists to North America.
CREATING THE FUTURE OF THE REGION’S MARITIME SYSTEM

The Governors and Premiers convened the first Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Maritime Day in Washington, D.C. on December 13-14. This event brought together representatives from the States and Provinces, federal governments, industry, and other regional stakeholders. Participants discussed regional priorities and met with Congressional representatives to continue creating the future of the regional maritime system. Focus areas included smart ships, the cruising industry, and the Soo Locks. The next Maritime Day will take place on April 18-19, 2018, in Ottawa, Ontario.

At the Governors’ and Premiers’ Leadership Summit, Chairman and Michigan Governor Rick Snyder signed a memorandum of understanding creating a regional smart ship initiative in collaboration with the Norwegian Forum for Autonomous Ships. This initiative includes the creation of the Smart Ships Coalition, a regional research and development consortium. In the coming year, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers will be developing policy recommendations to improve smart ship technology, safety and public awareness. In November, a regional delegation traveled to Norway to meet with international experts in this rapidly evolving sector.

WATER MANAGEMENT

REGIONAL BODY AND COMPACT COUNCIL SELECT NEW LEADERSHIP

The Regional Body and “Great Lakes” Compact Council selected new leadership during their meetings on December 8. Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton became chair of both groups, and Indiana Governor Eric Holcombe became vice-chair. They will hold these positions until December 2018.

Also during the meeting, the Regional Body and Compact Council announced the release of a Cumulative Impact Analysis for the years 2011-2015, and, separately, the Great Lakes Commission released its 2016 State and Provincial water use report. Finally, the Regional Body and Compact Council approved budgets for fiscal year 2019, which include resources for updating the procedures to review future diversion proposals.

The meeting agendas as well as the materials discussed and approved are available at http://www.glslregionalbody.org and http://www.glslcompactcouncil.org/.
Recruitment is open for a multi-sector trade mission to Mexico. From February 25 to March 3, 2018, the mission will visit Mexico City and Monterrey. Participating companies will receive a customized B2B meeting schedule provided by the GSGP Mexico Trade Office. Market research and appointment schedule will be tailored to each company’s export goals. In addition, participants will benefit from networking events, a high-level country briefing, assistance with drivers and interpreters, logistics, hotels and ground transportation. Many States offer grant funding opportunities to qualifying companies to offset the trade mission fees and travel costs.

For more information on GSGP Trade Missions please click HERE.

In November, Great Lakes USA attended World Travel Market, the UK’s largest travel trade fair, with partners from all six member States. During the fair, GLUSA launched its new UK consumer guide. More information on Great Lakes USA is available HERE.