



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE
ALLIANCE DES VILLES DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

RESOLUTION 3 – 2008M

GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE BEACHES

WHEREAS, improving and protecting the quality of water is fundamental to maintaining healthy lakes, rivers, beaches, and waterfronts as well as the economic well-being and the quality of life for our communities; and

WHEREAS, under current federal and provincial recreational water quality standards and guidelines, *E. coli* bacteria is used as the indicator organisms, though this may not be the most appropriate organism, and current standard laboratory procedures typically provide results 24 to 48 hours after sample collection and therefore are unable to provide “day of sampling” results; and

WHEREAS, the lack of a reliable indicator organism and the untimely testing process may lead to unnecessary beach closures or beaches remaining open when they should be closed; and

WHEREAS, recreational water quality criteria and sampling protocols are not standardized across the bi-national Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin and are in need of revision in both the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, a federal district court found U.S. EPA in violation of the BEACH Act 2000 and required them to complete reporting to assess pathogens in recreational water and to adopt new or revised recreational water quality criteria; and U.S. EPA has committed to adopting revised criteria by 2012; and the Canadian federal government water safety guidelines are in the process of revision without a set release date; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC), through the Clean Beaches Initiative, encourages the use of standardized beach sanitary surveys throughout the region which were developed by US EPA and federal, state, and local beach partners in response to the GLRC Strategy and data from Great Lakes States that found that 90% of beach closings were from unknown sources; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Beach Protection Act of 2008, which amends the Clean Water Act to authorize states or local governments to carry out coastal recreational water quality monitoring and notification programs, passed the U.S. House of Representatives and currently sits in committee in the U.S. Senate, and is supported throughout the region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative encourages the use of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration standardized beach sanitary survey forms throughout the region so that beach managers become knowledgeable about the sources of contamination at their beaches and explore remediation efforts; and



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative also encourages the U.S. EPA, Canadian government, and provincial and state governments to establish as a high priority, work together, and harmonize to the highest level of protection recreational water quality criteria and standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative encourages the inclusion of tools like standardized beach sanitary survey forms in federal, state, and provincial revised recreational water quality standards and guidelines; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative encourages reauthorization of U.S. federal legislation to continue funding for coastal monitoring and notification programs and to include flexibility for funding to be used for implementation of sanitary surveys as well as contamination remediation efforts; and flexibility in the term “rapid test method” to include laboratory-based test methods as well as predictive modeling; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative also encourages the Canadian federal and provincial governments to dedicate funding for local health departments and communities to implement and maintain coastal monitoring, notification and contamination remediation programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative urges federal, state, provincial, tribal, first nation, and local governments across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin as well as research and academic institutions and public health agencies in the United States and Canada to work together as necessary within a timely manner to:

1. Establish and implement a common and safe *E. coli* standard or other indicator for application at all Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin beaches;
2. Standardize water quality sampling protocols and beach posting protocols;
3. Develop and standardize accurate and timely rapid bio-detection methods to assess beach water quality conditions on the day of sampling; and
4. Identify effective beach management programs that will improve recreational water quality.

Signed this 17th day of July, 2008

Lynn Peterson, Chair
Mayor of Thunder Bay
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative