



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

RESOLUTION 04 – 2014M

REDUCING NUTRIENT LOADINGS IN THE GREAT LAKES

WHEREAS, in 2011, Lake Erie experienced record algal bloom growth; and

WHEREAS, as a result of nutrient run-off combined with climate change impacts and the effects of invasive species like zebra mussels, such massive algal blooms are likely to reoccur; and

WHEREAS, algal blooms and so-called toxic blue green algae are also present in Lake Ontario and Lake Huron; and

WHEREAS, such algal blooms have a direct adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, quality of life, and economy including recreation, tourism and property values; and

WHEREAS, under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (WQA), the US and Canadian governments have committed to setting nutrient loading targets by 2016 and action plans by 2018 to reduce nutrient levels in Lake Erie; and

WHEREAS, under Annex 4 of the WQA, a binational subcommittee has been tasked with developing recommendations on nutrient loading targets to meet the 2016 deadline and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is represented on the subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian federal government has committed \$16 million towards research on the causes and possible solutions to the deteriorating quality of Lake Erie as a result of nutrient loadings; and

WHEREAS, in February 2014, the International Joint Commission released a report of the Lake Erie Ecosystem Priority – *A Balanced Diet for Lake Erie: Reducing Phosphorus Loadings and Harmful Algal Blooms*, which includes 16 recommendations for all levels of government in Canada and the U.S. to help address the challenge of deteriorating conditions in Lake Erie, including specific targets for total phosphorus loadings and dissolved reactive phosphorus, a nine year implementation timeline for actions to meet these targets, and specific actions to reduce both agricultural and urban phosphorus sources.



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Federal Governments of Canada and the United States need to respond to the recommendations of the IJC and direct the Annex 4 Subcommittee to evaluate the soundness and feasibility of meeting the IJC's recommended targets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that well in advance of 2016, the Federal Governments of Canada and the United States need to launch a comprehensive awareness raising campaign to inform and prepare the public and specific stakeholders, particularly the agricultural community, residents on septic systems, and municipalities, for the anticipated nutrient targets and the subsequent action plan to reduce nutrient loadings in Lake Erie and beyond; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Federal Governments of Canada and the United States devote substantial financial and other resources to develop and implement short term, no-regrets actions in advance of their 2018 Action Plan commitment under the WQA.

Signed this 18th day of June, 2014

Keith Hobbs, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor of Thunder Bay