



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

RESOLUTION 08 – 2017M

DESIGNATING THE GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE RIVER SYSTEM
A UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Submitted by: City of Mississauga, City of Niagara Falls, NY, City of Montreal, City of Racine, and Québec Metropolitan Community

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin constitute the world's largest freshwater Biosphere; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River have been essential in supporting human habitation within the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin for over ten thousand years; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River provide habitat for thousands of aquatic and terrestrial species critical to the continuation of human existence within the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin; and

WHEREAS, there are ongoing efforts to sustainably manage the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, recognizing the region's industrial past and present, current uses of the system, as well as ecological and environmental significance; and

WHEREAS, despite these efforts, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River remain under constant and imminent threat from invasive species and environmental degradation; and

WHEREAS, the current level of investment and commitment by the US and Canadian federal governments does not match the significance of this system, nor the urgency and need to protect and restore it; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (the Cities Initiative) stated Mission is to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River for future generations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cities Initiative encourages the U.S. and Canadian federal governments to pursue a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve



designation for the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin, the world's largest freshwater ecosystem; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cities Initiative work collaboratively with the Eight Great Lakes States, the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, both the US and Canadian Federal Governments, as well as Governments of Indigenous People and members of the broader Great Lakes and St. Lawrence community to expedite the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve Designation; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution with preliminary background information be delivered to the US and Canadian Federal Governments, the eight Great Lakes Governors, the Premiers of Quebec and Ontario, the Canadian Biosphere Reserve Association, and the US Biosphere Reserve Association.

Signed this 14th day of June 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, is written over a solid black horizontal line.

Denis Coderre, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor, City of Montréal