



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Welcomes Historic Investments for Great Lakes Stewardship**

**Belleville, ON – September 28, 2023** – Members of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) were delighted to join the Hon. Steven Guilbeault, Canada’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change, as he announced federal funding to safeguard the country’s most important freshwater resource, the Great Lakes. Today’s announcement included a reaffirmation of the federal government’s unprecedented \$420-million commitment for Great Lakes protection and restoration.

"Since its creation twenty years ago, the Cities Initiative has championed the protection and revitalization of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin, in partnership with government leaders, environmental advocates and community stakeholders," said Gino Moretti, Mayor Saint-Anicet, QC and Chair of the Cities Initiative. "This major investment sets up Canada to protect an essential freshwater resource where more than 90 percent of Ontario residents live, work and play. We applaud the Government of Canada for working with local governments and making this historic investment."

Minister Guilbeault indicated that the \$420 million announced earlier this year by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for Great Lakes funding will go towards addressing Areas of Concern, as well as meeting Canada’s phosphorous loading targets for Lake Erie and obligations under the binational Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

"As mayor of a waterfront community, I am pleased to see the Government of Canada finally make a significant commitment to accelerate the protection of the Great Lakes and reverse the legacy of pollution in our basin," said Lucas Cleveland, Mayor of Cobourg, ON. "Through local action by municipalities, Indigenous communities, and conservation groups, we can improve water quality and build up a prosperous blue economy that leverages our vital freshwater resource in a sustainable manner and avoids the mistakes of the past."

"It’s great to see the results of advocacy by mayors, local leaders and the Great Lakes community, including the Cities Initiative, to address freshwater quality in our region," said Steve Ferguson, Mayor of Prince Edward County, ON. "The Government of Canada’s focus on completing the clean-up of the Bay of Quinte Area of Concern as part of its \$420-million investment is truly welcomed by The County and our residents."

-30-

### **About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative**

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational coalition led by mayors and local elected leaders working collaboratively to promote the environmental and socioeconomic health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin for the benefit of current and future generations. With more than 250-member municipalities, the Cities Initiative is the largest municipally-driven organization in the basin.



**For more information contact:**

**Eamonn Horan-Lunney, Canada Policy Senior Director, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative,**  
[eamonn.hl@glscities.org](mailto:eamonn.hl@glscities.org)