

Minister
of Foreign Affairs



Ministre
des Affaires étrangères

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0G2

JUN - 9 2005

The Right Honourable Herb Gray, P.C., C.C., Q.C.
Chair
Canadian Section
International Joint Commission
234 Laurier Avenue West, 22nd Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 6K6

Dear Mr. Gray:

Pursuant to Article IX of the Boundary Waters Treaty, I propose that the International Joint Commission assist the Parties in the Review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement by carrying out a series of public meetings on the Review in accordance with the attached paper.

Public consultations are a critical and delicate element of the Review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. I am confident that the efforts of the International Joint Commission will ensure that concerns are heard as the process advances.

I understand that a similar letter is being sent to your colleague, Mr. Dennis L. Schornack, Chair of the United States Section, by the State Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pierre S. Pettigrew", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pierre S. Pettigrew

Enclosure

Canada

Review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement: Role for the International Joint Commission

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) requires the governments of Canada and the United States (the “Parties”) to undertake a comprehensive review of the operation and effectiveness of the Agreement every six years. This requirement was formally triggered with the release of the International Joint Commission's 12th Biennial Report on September 13th, 2004. The review of the GLWQA is an opportunity to ensure that the Agreement continues to be a visionary statement that will guide and foster shared-commitments throughout the Great Lakes Basin to the Great Lakes’ continued protection and restoration. The International Joint Commission’s institutional strength and record of bi-national impartiality is a vital part of the United States’ and Canada’s management of their shared environment. The U.S. and Canada believe the Commission is uniquely qualified to carry out the following consultations on the operation and effectiveness of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The Commission and the Parties recognized that these public consultations will not be the sole source of public input into the review process; the Parties have identified additional opportunities for further public involvement during the formal review.

Regional Public Meetings

Five regional public meetings should be held across the basin to educate the public about the Agreement and its review and to engage in an interactive discussion of the issues.

The goals of these consultations are as follow:

To provide an early opportunity for public input into the upcoming GLWQA Review.

2) To inform the public about the GLWQA.

In addition to the initial Biennial meeting in Kingston, Ontario, four meetings should be organized in geographically diverse regions of the basin. The IJC may wish to utilize the Kingston meeting to gather initial input from Great Lakes stakeholders, review and analyze the information obtained, then reframe the issues for the later meetings in the autumn.

Suggested additional regional public meeting locations:

Chicago -Toronto
Detroit-Windsor
Duluth - Thunder Bay
Sault Ste. Marie

Where possible, the Commission is encouraged to make arrangements so that each public meeting can be simultaneously moderated on the Internet. This will provide those who can not travel or attend the meeting the opportunity to participate and comment through the use of a live, moderated chat room.

Background materials and materials presented at the public meetings will be developed jointly by the Commission and the Parties to each others satisfaction. Where possible, the material should be posted on the Commission's Internet site.

These documents should provide an executive level summary of the goals and objectives of the agreement, key changes to the Agreement since 1972, a very brief summary of the articles and annexes, and a summary of past triennial reviews of the Agreement.

Report

The Commission shall provide the Parties with a complete record of the public meetings. In addition to this record, the Commission shall submit to the Parties a synthesis of the views presented at the public meetings. The synthesis report will outline the issues identified at the public meetings and organized to be of greatest utility, for example by annex, theme or issue.

The Commission is asked to submit to the Parties the unedited record and the synthesis report by January 2006 to ensure that this information can be incorporated into the Parties review.

The Parties acknowledge that the Commission through its Great Lakes Boards, Council and Regional Office, may provide additional advice to the Parties on the review of the GLWQA. However, this advice will be separate from the unedited record and synthesis report requested by the Parties.

Estimated Cost:

The Commission has projected the following costs to undertake this reference:

CDN \$125,000 or US \$93,750 USD (based on an exchange rate of .75) for travel of Commissioners and staff, facility rental and other logistics such as interpretation and transcription.

CDN \$35,000 or US \$26,250 (based on an exchange rate of .75) for publication both in English and in French.

Total

CDN \$160,000 or US \$120,000 (based on an exchange rate of .75)

The Governments shall seek in equal shares the funds identified above to provide the Commission with the resources needed to discharge the obligations under the reference.