



**United States Department of State**

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

June 8, 2005

The Honourable Dennis L. Schornack  
International Joint Commission  
1250 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW, Suite 100  
Washington, DC 20440

Dear Chairman Schornack:

Following up our October 22, 2004 discussion regarding a possible role for the International Joint Commission (IJC) in the review by the United States and Canada of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), after consideration of an IJC discussion paper on the review and public comments on the review made to the Parties, and pursuant to Article IX of the Boundary Waters Treaty (BWT), I would propose that the Commission assist the Parties by carrying out a series of public meetings on the GLWQA review in accordance with the attached paper.

We hope that at the April 2005 Semi-Annual Meeting there will be agreement that the June 2005 Biennial Meeting in Kingston, Ontario will be the launch of the review.

With respect to the timing of additional public meetings, it may be prudent to schedule those meetings beginning in the autumn given other USG-organized public meetings on Great Lakes issues taking place during the summer and the advisability of avoiding "Great Lakes burnout" in both government officials and Great Lakes stakeholders. The timing of activities related to the review is an issue the Parties would like to discuss with the Commission more in depth. The Parties would like to work closely with IJC staff in the preparation of context-setting materials that might be distributed at the public meetings.

The Parties anticipate the need for further public consultations at later stages in the review process. While a more prominent involvement by governments will be necessary during these consultations, it is conceivable the Parties will call upon the IJC for additional assistance. However,

governments would like to leave discussions on these later consultations for some future date.

Public consultations are a critical and delicate element of the GLWQA Review. I am confident the IJC's efforts will assure that concerns are heard as the process advances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TAB', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Terry A. Breese  
Director, Office of Canadian Affairs

## **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 for the Great Lakes' continued protection and restoration. It is also critical that the GLWQA function as a useful tool for the Parties as they proceed in this undertaking. 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 recognize 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:

- 1) 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, the Commission should organize additional meetings in geographically diverse regions of the basin – perhaps one on each lake. 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 an unedited record of the public meetings. In addition, 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:

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

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

**Total**

\$160,000 CND or \$120,000 USD (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.

