



Ontario Backs Foundation's Call For IJC Reference

Premier McGuinty sends letter of support to the Federal Government

The Province got behind to the Foundation's efforts to institute bi-national coordination for our lake in late January, when Premier Dalton McGuinty sent a letter to Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon supporting the Foundation's request for an International Joint Commission reference for Lake of the Woods water quality. The Premier's letter recommends:

- Formation of a bi-national task force, set up through the IJC, to coordinate nutrient loading research and development of nutrient management plans across all jurisdictions around the lake;
- Expanding the existing IJC Rainy River Water Pollution Board to include Lake of the Woods, to provide long-term monitoring and follow up for the lake.

The Premier also indicated Ontario's intent to strengthen and formalize collaboration on the lake by developing a multi-agency working agreement between provincial, state and federal agencies responsible for Lake of the Woods.

Ontario took this strong stance in support of our lake, following a series of meetings in November and December with the Foundation assisted by the Rt. Hon. John Turner and Kenora Mayor Len Compton.

Multi-Agency Working Group Brewing

Agreement to formalize collaboration on Lake of the Woods nears completion

Over the past few months, the Ontario Ministry of Environment and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency have led the drafting of a multi-agency arrangement formalizing collaboration on science, monitoring and information sharing among all the agencies working on Lake of the Woods. Now in final review stage with the Foundation, provincial, state and federal agencies, this will provide a framework for partners and stakeholders engage in coordinated activities to help protect water quality in Lake of the Woods.

Minnesota Legislature Considers IJC Reference

Bill to support Foundation's request for IJC Reference for Lake of the Woods

On January 29th, Minnesota House Representative David Olin and Senator Leroy Stumpf introduced companion bills into the MN House and Senate calling on the State to support the Foundation's request for an International Joint Commission Reference for Lake of the Woods water quality.

This follows on a similar legislative initiative in Minnesota last year, which passed committee hearing and second reading before the end of the last year's short legislative session.

Once passed and signed by the Governor, these bills will articulate to the US Government the position of Minnesota that IJC coordination is needed to ensure complementary and coordinated efforts basin-wide, analogous to the position recently taken by Ontario.

There appears to be broad recognition building around the basin that the bi-nationally balanced, independent framework of the International Joint Commission is the best mechanism within which to coordinate the required studies and development of phosphorus management plans across all jurisdictions around the lake.

OMOE's "Lake of the Woods Coordinator" Appointed to Top Position in Kenora Area Office

Kelli Saunders Appointed Acting Area Supervisor

In January, the Ontario Ministry of Environment appointed Kelli Saunders to the position of Acting Area Supervisor for the Kenora area office. In addition to leading the Kenora OMOE team, Kelli will continue her former responsibilities as Lake of the Woods Coordinator for the Ministry. Over the past several years, Kelli's efforts on behalf of the lake have helped to raise the profile of water quality protection and also contributed immensely to developing collaborative efforts to protect the lake among government agencies, and public groups such as the Foundation and LOWDPOA. The Foundation applauds OMOE for selecting Kelli for this position, which befits the increased priority and focus on Lake of the Woods by the OMOE.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Please invest in our lake's future.

Donations are tax deductible in Canada. American donors can claim a tax deduction by making a directed gift to LOWWSF via The Winnipeg Foundation USA.



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