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Renewal of the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

**Lake Erie Millennium Conference
Windsor, Ontario**

**John Lawrence
Environment Canada
April 27-29, 2010**



Purpose

- To provide an update of negotiations for renewal of the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.



The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

- Agreement to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.”
- Commits the two countries to implement programs that manage nutrients and reduce toxic chemicals released by municipal, industrial, agriculture, forestry, and shipping activities.
- Establishes our Areas of Concern and Lakewide management programs.
- Has guided environmental protection efforts for the last 38 years.

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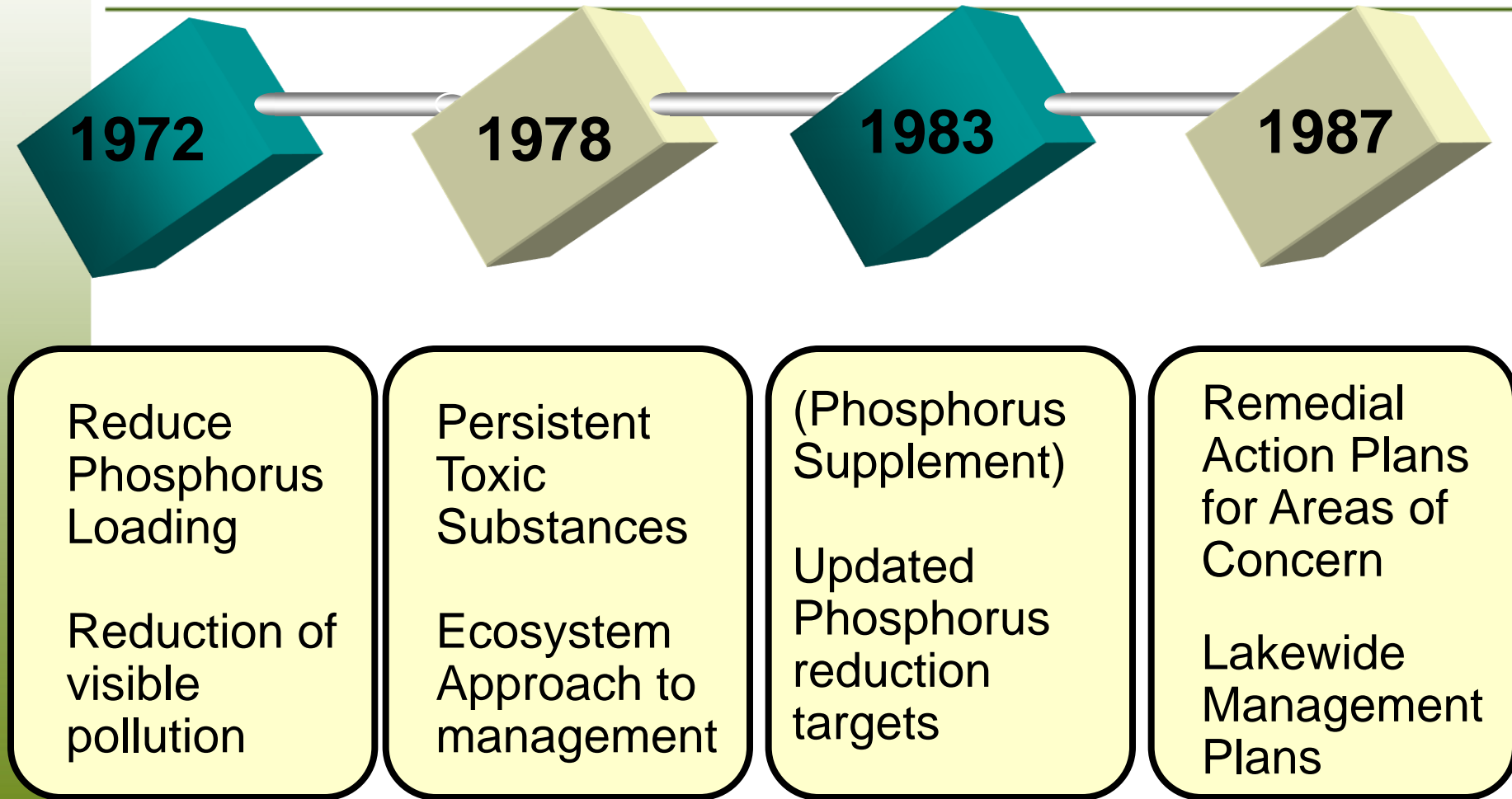


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Previous Agreement Updates



Agreement Review

- IJC Pre-Review Activities (2004 – 2005)
 - Public education sessions (14 sessions; 4100 participants)
 - Report: “Synthesis of Public Comment”
 - Web Dialog (270 participants)
- Agreement Review (2006 – 2007):
 - Over 350 participants
 - Nine binational review working groups conducted an extensive review of the Agreement
 - Co-chaired bi-nationally, with representation from federal, provincial, state and municipal governments, Aboriginal groups, non-government organizations, industry, academia, and the interested public.
 - 2007 Synthesis: Agreement Review Committee Report

IJC Report to Governments

The Commission recommended that the new Agreement:

- *Be a shorter and more action-oriented document, that is reviewed every 12 years*
- *Incorporate “protection” along with restoration and maintenance.*
- *Be based on the ecosystem approach, with a focus on water quality*
- *Specify watersheds as the geographic units to coordinate, integrate and implement programs*
- *Establish a political-level, binational GLWQA Steering Committee and a Binational Coordinating Committee*
- *Require development of a Binational Action Plan*
- *Assign to the Commission, a strengthened role - mandated to submit a triennial report assessing progress*
- *Mandate the Commission to convene a biennial stakeholders’ forum to facilitate communication and cooperation*



Review of the GLWQA – Key Findings

- Extensive review conducted in 2006/07
 - Overall purpose of Agreement still sound
 - Stronger linkages needed between purpose and measures in the Articles & Annexes.
 - Chemical, physical & biological integrity need more focus and integration between them, i.e. ecosystem approach
 - Newer approaches such as watershed management planning, need to be addressed
 - Emerging threats such as climate change, aquatic invasive species, biodiversity and urbanization need to be included
 - Inadequate & inconsistent funding is impacting hampering success of the Agreement and overall governance needs improving
 - Greater collaboration between, and input from, other governments, Tribes, First Nations, NGOs & public
 - Fewer Annexes and better cross-referencing

Negotiation Announcement

- The 2006-2007 Review of the GLWQA as a multi-year effort with U.S., Canada, and the Great Lakes stakeholders, has established a solid foundation to be culminated with the formal negotiation process



Secretary of State Clinton & Foreign
Affairs Minister Cannon
June 13, 2009

GLWQA Negotiations (1)

- Preparatory phase to lay the groundwork for negotiations
- Negotiations began on January 27, 2010
- Negotiations between the two federal governments:



Environment Canada
Foreign Affairs and
International Trade
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Environmental
Protection Agency
Department of State

- Tentative goal of completing negotiations by Dec. 2010

Binational Organizational Structure

Canada

United States

Plenaries

Heads of Delegation
Chief Negotiators
Lead Negotiators on Issues
Negotiations Secretariat

Binational Working Sessions

Lead Negotiators on Issues
Negotiations Secretariat



Stakeholder Input and Engagement

- Wealth of input from Agreement Review
- Domestic engagement mechanisms
- Binational engagement mechanisms
 - Website: www.binational.net
 - Series of webinars scheduled to begin in May
 - Public forums



Work to Date

- First negotiating session held January 27th, 2010
 - Canada and the U.S. reached agreement regarding the binational structure and process for negotiations.
 - Tentative timeline of December 2010 for completion of the process, (timelines may need to be adjusted as negotiations proceed).
 - Governance discussions to focus on the Agreement's purpose, scope, vision, principles, and management framework. Provisions for future reviews and amendments to the Agreement to also be discussed.
- Second session held April 8th, 2010.
 - Progress on governance was reviewed.
 - Discussions on governance broadened to include consideration of place-based approaches such as areas of concern, lakewide management plans, the nearshore, dredging and contaminated sediment, and groundwater.
 - Work began on other specific issues such as nutrients, toxic substances, ship-source pollution, science coordination, aquatic invasive species, habitats and species, and climate change impacts.
 - During coming months, lead negotiators for various issues will work towards recommending directions, elements and suggested approaches for amendments to the Agreement.
- Third session to take place Summer 2010.

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A satellite image of the Great Lakes region in North America, showing the five large lakes (Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario) and the surrounding land. The water is a deep blue, and the land is a mix of green and brown. The text "THANK YOU" is overlaid in the center in a bold, yellow, serif font.

THANK YOU

The Great Lakes from Satellite Aqua - September 17, 2002