# Implementing the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement: Updates, Challenges and Opportunities

Comments by John Jackson at The St. Clair River Symposium September 18, 2014

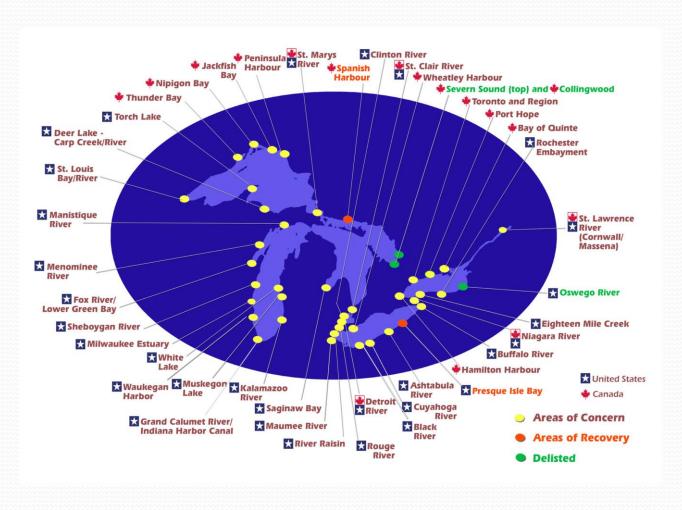
# 1972 Signing of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement



#### **Agreement Amendments**

- 1978 revisions:
  - Persistent toxic substances
  - "Zero discharge"
  - "Virtual elimination"
- 1987 revisions:
  - Toxic hot spots, the 43 basin "Areas of Concern"
  - Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs)

### **Areas of Concern**



#### Signing of Amended Agreement September 7, 2012



# Main Changes in 2012

- Added:
  - Aquatic Invasive Species
  - Habitat & Species
  - Groundwater
  - Climate Change impacts
- Updates include:
  - AOCs
  - Lakewide Action & Management Plans (LAMPs)
  - Nutrients

#### **Partners**

- The Parties
- State and Provincial Governments,
- Tribal Governments, First Nations, Métis,
- Municipal Governments, watershed management agencies, other local public agencies, and
- the Public

#### AOCs – Annex 1

- Main changes:
  - Stages removed
  - Individual BUI designation removals
  - AOC in Recovery designation
  - Removal of AOC designation "when environmental monitoring confirms that beneficial uses have been restored in accordance with the criteria established in the RAP"
  - "Solicit a review and comments from ...." prior to changing designation
  - Triennial Progress Reports

- Annex co-leads:
  - Wendy Carney, Deputy Director, U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office
  - Jon Gee, Manager, Environment Canada Great Lakes Areas of Concern

## **Current AOC Activities: Activity 1**

- 1) Conduct a Situation Analysis including:
  - A review and comparison of U.S. and Canada agency roles and practices;
  - Status of and processes for RAPs, including delisting criteria, BUI removals, AOC delisting and public involvement;
  - Key challenges, targets and objectives; and
  - Recommendations on guidance needs and information sharing.
- Timing: Soon: Hope to approve in December 2014

#### Activities 2 & 3

- 2) Develop AOC Guidance documents:
  - AOCs in Recovery, delisting criteria, delisting with impairments, monitoring, etc.
  - Timing: Soon: Hope to approve in December 2014
- 3) Information Sharing
  - Develop practice or mechanism for sharing information
  - Timing: Get 1 & 2 done first
- Consultation plans

#### LAMPs – Annex 2

- Main changes:
  - Scope broadened substantially beyond "critical pollutants"
  - Lake Ecosystem Objectives
  - Nearshore framework
  - LAMPs include "connecting river systems"
  - 4-stage process gone
  - LAMP for each lake every five years on a staggered basis
  - Every 3 years Progress report

- Annex 2 co-chairs:
  - John Marsden, Environment Canada
  - Chris Korleski, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

#### **Current LAMP Activities:**

- Ecosystem Objectives guidance
- 2. Nearshore Framework guidance
- 3. LAMPs assessment & LAMP content guidance
- 4. Outreach & Engagement

#### **AOCs & LAMPS Connection**

• "Lake Erie, and the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, and the Detroit River"

# The Challenges

Working Binationally

Resources

New legislation, regulations, etc.