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GOVERNORS AND PREMIERS SIGN AGREEMENTS TO PROTECT GREAT LAKES WATER

Milwaukee, Wisconsin – The Great Lakes Governors and Premiers today signed agreements at the Council of Great Lakes Governors’ (CGLG) Leadership Summit that will provide unprecedented protections for the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin.

The historic agreements, which include a ban on new diversions of water outside the Basin with limited exceptions, were approved by the Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and the Premiers of Ontario and Québec.

“The new agreements will improve and protect the health and economic vitality of the Great Lakes region and allow future generations to share the same benefits enjoyed today by millions of families, by businesses and by visitors from throughout the world,” said Ohio Governor Bob Taft, Co-Chair of the CGLG.

“The Great Lakes are an important resource for many varied interests – from the people who fish and canoe its waters to the manufacturers and farmers in the Provinces and the States—and their involvement and suggestions helped ensure that these agreements would be both strong and fair,” said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, CGLG Co-Chair.

The agreements detail how the States and Provinces will manage and protect the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin and will provide a framework for each State and Province to enact laws protecting the Basin.

The agreements include the following points:

- There will be a ban on new diversions of water from the Basin. Limited exceptions could be allowed, such as for public water supply purposes in communities near the Basin, but exceptions would be strictly regulated.
- The States and Provinces will use a consistent standard to review proposed uses of Great Lakes water.
- The collection of technical data will be strengthened, and the States and Provinces will share the information, which will improve decision-making by the governments.

- Regional goals and objectives for water conservation and efficiency will be developed, and they will be reviewed every five years. Each State and Province will develop and implement a water conservation and efficiency program.
- Lasting economic development will be balanced with sustainable water use to ensure Great Lakes waters are managed responsibly.
- The waters of the Basin are recognized as a shared public treasure and there is a strong commitment to continued public involvement in the implementation of the agreements.

“The Great Lakes Governors and Premiers, as well as everyone living around the Lakes, have always been committed to the preservation and improvement of the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin,” said Wisconsin Governor Doyle. “Today, we have translated that commitment into an agreement that provides balanced and practical management of our water for years to come.”

“Together, we have produced agreements that are historic on the one hand and at the same time are rooted in practicality and common sense,” said Ohio Governor Taft. “Our top priority always has been protecting the long-term health of the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin and the availability of that water in the future. Today’s agreements provide the framework for achieving our goal.”

The complete text of the agreements and additional information is available at www.cglg.org.

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