



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Craig Clark

(616) 550-2736

craig@clarkcommunication.com

**GREAT LAKES ST. LAWRENCE GOVERNORS AND PREMIERS
LAUNCH REGIONAL AGENDA FOR GROWTH**

Québec City, Québec - The region's Governors and Premiers gathered this weekend for their biennial Leadership Summit at the historic Château Frontenac. The Summit's focus on a regional Agenda for Growth, led by the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers (GSGP), included major announcements aimed at growing the region's \$9.3 trillion (US) economy, including:

- New efforts on trade, transportation, and tourism
- Launch of a sustainable agriculture program
- Progress toward the goal of planting 250 million trees
- Expansion of GSGP's 100% Fish initiative

"It has been an honor to chair the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers these past two years – a group that represents 20% of the world's fresh water, and drives billions in economic activity for the millions who live along its shores," **said GSGP Chair Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer**. "Together with our Governors and Premiers, including Vice Chair Governor DeWine, we have launched a new sustainable agriculture program and expanded important work on invasive species, trade, maritime transportation, and so much more. Our region has a great story to tell, and I am excited to continue working with our new Chair Governor Shapiro, new Vice Chair Governor Braun, and all of my fellow Governors and Premiers, to create new opportunities for everyone in our region."

"It was a great pleasure to welcome the Governors of Michigan, New York, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, the Premier of Ontario as well as the heads of delegations of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Minnesota to our beautiful capital, Québec City," **said Québec Premier François Legault**. "Our commitment to collaboration across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region is more important than ever. By working together, we can continue to foster economic growth, strengthen bilateral trade, build a strong maritime future, and protect our natural resources. Québec is proud to play a leading role in this dynamic corridor."

Other officials attending the Summit included:

- New York Governor Kathy Hochul
- Ontario Premier Doug Ford
- Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro
- Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers
- Senior officials representing the other Governors and Premiers

“Pennsylvania’s lakefront is one of our most valuable assets — driving significant economic activity for the Commonwealth, attracting millions of visitors every year, and providing a beautiful destination for Pennsylvanians — and I’m proud that my fellow governors and premiers have elected me as Chair,” **said Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro**. “Together under my leadership and alongside Governor Braun, we will strengthen the bonds between our states and provinces to protect our natural treasures, create jobs and drive economic growth, and position our region as an international leader in innovation, stewardship, and collaboration.”

Indiana Governor Mike Braun said, “The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are incredibly valuable resources for our region and vital maritime transportation connections to the world, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in trade. Indiana’s small but mighty shoreline is home to a national park and the busiest Great Lakes maritime economy in the U.S. I am honored to be elected Vice Chair, and I look forward to working with my fellow governors and premiers across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region to advance shared goals and strengthen this critical transportation network.”

New York Governor Kathy Hochul said, “As a native Western New Yorker who grew up near the U.S.-Canadian border, I know personally that our long-standing partnership has made us all safer, stronger, and more prosperous. That has been made even more clear to me as New York’s 57th governor. Cross-border tourism, economic development, and projects like the Champlain Hudson Power Express hydroelectric transmission line that will deliver 20% of New York City’s power, all of it clean, starting next year, are just some of the things we can build on as this group works to find new and more exciting ways to build on our partnerships.”

“The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Region is an engine of the economy for both Canada and the United States, supporting millions of workers on both sides of the border,” **said Ontario Premier Doug Ford**. “Ontario will keep working closely with our neighbours in both countries so we can end the tariffs that are disrupting trade and investment and protect our workers and jobs by building a stronger, more resilient and more competitive economy.”

"As governors and premiers, we are advocates of the needs of the people and communities we have the privilege of representing, but we are also in the unique position of governing one of our globe’s most vital resources—and that is not a job any one individual can or should do alone," **said Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers**. "As members of GSGP, we are here to champion

how these systems are our shared responsibility, and how supporting their success is vital to our shared vision for the future."

"We all have an important part to play in keeping our beautiful Great Lakes healthy, clean, and thriving, and it is through our continued collaboration that we can make real change in the landscape we call home," **said Ohio Governor Mike DeWine**. "I value the partnership between my fellow governors and Canadian premiers, and I look forward to continuing our work together to protect water quality, enhance trade and economic development, and create even more opportunities for all who live and work in our shared region."

"The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence regions are one of the world's most important natural resources and a driving force for both the U.S. and Canadian economies," **said Illinois Governor JB Pritzker**. "Illinois deeply values our partnership with fellow Governors and Premiers, because now more than ever, collaboration is essential to protecting these waters and the communities that depend on them. Together, we can strengthen sustainable agriculture, expand economic opportunity, and ensure the region continues to thrive for generations to come."

"The Great Lakes region is central to Minnesota's identity, economy, and future," **said Minnesota Governor Tim Walz**. "By working together as governors and premiers, we can protect these waters, expand opportunities for our communities, and ensure this region thrives for generations to come."

During the Summit, the Governors and Premiers announced the following:

Sustainable Agriculture

The Governors and Premiers [adopted a resolution](#) creating a regional sustainable agriculture initiative focused on research and multi-sector collaboration.

Aquatic Invasive Species

A Great Lakes Governors' [letter to the US Congress](#) calls for full federal funding for operations and maintenance of the Brandon Road Interbasin Project which is designed to protect the Great Lakes from invasive carp.

Transportation

The Governors and Premiers [adopted a resolution](#) to guide the future of the region's maritime transportation system. Other maritime features of the Summit program included:

- A demonstration of cutting-edge underwater infrastructure inspection technology.
- A tour of Davie shipyard.
- Celebration of advancements on the new Soo Locks project.

Trees Initiative

As part of the [goal of planting 250 million trees](#) by 2033, more than 27 million trees were planted across the region in 2024. The Governors and Premiers ceremonially planted a tree to commemorate the planting of 500 new trees at le forêt Montmorency in Québec.

100% Great Lakes Fish Pledge

Forty-four commercial fish, aquaculture, and partner companies have signed a pledge committing them to productively use 100% of each fish they handle. Read the pledge online [here](#).

Tourism

[Cruise the Great Lakes](#), the region's cruise marketing program, announced that in 2025 there will have been 150,000 cruise passenger visits on six cruise lines across 700 port stops, resulting in a regional economic impact of over \$230 million (US). The [Great Lakes USA](#) international tourism marketing program continues to grow, with the State of New York and several new destination partners joining the consortium.

Regional Economic Development and International Trade

The Governors & Premiers [adopted a resolution](#) on regional economic development. GSGP plans two [trade missions](#) in the coming year:

- Saudi Arabia and U.A.E., December 5–11, 2025
- Australia, March 15–21, 2026 (optional add-on to New Zealand, March 22–25, 2026)

The [full Summit agenda](#) is available here.

Finally, the Governors and Premiers elected Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro to serve as GSGP's Chair and Indiana Governor Mike Braun to serve as Vice Chair. Governor Shapiro will host the 2027 GSGP Leadership Summit in Erie, Pennsylvania.

GSGP unites the chief executives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Québec, and Wisconsin. The Governors and Premiers work as equal partners to grow the region's \$9.3 trillion economy (US) and protect the world's largest system of surface fresh water.

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