



CHAIR'S LETTER

The Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers (GSGP) has recently celebrated several major successes. First, we launched “100% Whitefish” in collaboration with a diverse group of partners. At a public event in Detroit, an executive chef prepared a delicious “head-to-tail” sampling menu to show new ways to use more of the whitefish. Beyond this, we are researching other new food and non-food products which can help use more of each whitefish to drive more revenue and expand opportunities from our fish-based economy.

Great Lakes cruising had its most successful year yet. Pent-up demand coupled with the work of our marketing partnership, “Cruise the Great Lakes,” helped attract a record number of passengers. Those passengers used a new network of U.S. Customs facilities that enable more seamless cross-border travel. GSGP joined with the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation and the American Great Lakes Ports Association to work with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to develop the new four-port customs solution. We project an even more successful 2023 cruise season with continuing improvement in our customs procedures.

Additionally, a delegation from our region recently visited Antwerp, Belgium, to promote shipping via the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. They celebrated a partnership with the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, the naming of Port Milwaukee's Director, Adam Tindall-Schlicht, to the AntwerpXL “40 Under 40,” and future work to move more cargo through our region's ports.



On behalf of GSGP, as always, thank you to everyone who helped make these successes possible.

Tony Evers

Chair, Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers
Governor, State of Wisconsin

GSGP LAUNCHES “100% WHITEFISH” INITIATIVE

GSGP [launched the “100% Whitefish” initiative](#) at a “head-to-tail” whitefish tasting event in Detroit. Dan Eichinger, Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources,

helped kick off the initiative with noted Detroit-area executive chef Doug Hewitt, the Motor City Seafood Company, and the Iceland



Ocean Cluster. The initiative aims to show how whitefish can be used for many purposes beyond food. A 100% fish strategy holds major promise for the region to more completely utilize caught fish, increase economic returns, create jobs and help rural economies.

Dr. Thor Sigfusson, founder of the Iceland Ocean Cluster, and GSGP staff also met with fish processors and representatives of Tribal Nations to discuss how the project can be implemented to the benefit of everyone in the region.



MARITIME

PROGRESS TOWARD A “SMART AND GREEN” MARITIME SYSTEM

As cargo flows increase between North America and Europe, the ports of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are increasingly attractive options for shippers. GSGP and the Port of Antwerp-Bruges have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to support the continued growth of this vital trade lane, including working together on market intelligence and business development. As a part of this initiative, GSGP led a delegation of regional leaders to this year’s AntwerpXL event.

During a recent trip to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, GSGP staff and regional partners had the unique opportunity to see construction progress on the new Soo Lock firsthand. The group also met with representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and heard a presentation by the Axia Institute on its recently released report for GSGP titled “[Potential Impact of Digital Technology Solutions on the new Soo Lock.](#)” Part of the Governors’ and Premiers’ work on “smart shipping,” this report explores how digital and other technologies like hands-free mooring, vessel traffic management, and one-way locking could improve the efficiency of what will be the first dual-lock system on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence.



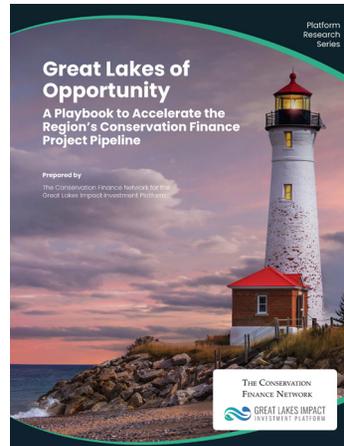
GSGP’s green shipping work

continued to explore opportunities for alternative fuels. “Biofuels could present an exciting opportunity for emissions reduction in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence region,” said Dr. Mareen Thiboutot Rioux, Project Manager for Alternative Fuels at Innovation Maritime. Dr. Thiboutot Rioux is a principal author of a new report with GSGP titled “[Domestic Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Shipping Industry: Transition to Biofuels.](#)” The report explores the potential system-wide impacts of greater biofuel use by vessels operating on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence. The report includes current production and growth predictions, an assessment of biofuels’ greenhouse gas emissions, potential switchover scenarios, economic analysis of biofuels pricing

as well as recommendations to encourage more widespread biofuels use in the region. GSGP and Innovation Maritime will continue biofuels research with Phase II of this report later this fall. ✨

“GREAT LAKES OF OPPORTUNITY” PLAYBOOK TO SPUR ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENT

In August, the [Great Lakes Impact Investment Platform](#) and [Conservation Finance Network](#) (CFN) released a playbook intended to grow the number of conservation finance projects in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Region. In recent years, governments and the private sector have invested billions of dollars to improve the environment in the region. However, a gap of billions still exists to achieve regional goals. The rapidly growing areas of conservation finance and impact investment, which encompass a range of strategies meant to raise, manage, and deploy capital or align incentives for environmental improvements, holds great promise to help close this gap. This playbook outlines a set of strategies to expand the project pipeline and attract investment for regional action.



“Demand for high-integrity environmental outcomes has never been higher. With strong collaboration and leadership, regional practitioners can create incredible opportunities for project and market activity to help address social and environmental needs,” said Leigh Whelpton, CFN Executive Director, and co-author of the playbook.

David Naftzger, GSGP Executive Director, added, “For the first time, we have an action plan to help unlock impact investment in our region. Now begins the hard work where we collectively roll up our sleeves, build new partnerships, and create new projects and programs to benefit our environment and our people.”

[The “Great Lakes of Opportunity” playbook is available here.](#) On November 3, GSGP Program Manager Mike Piskur will join CFN in presenting this work at the Conservation Finance Roundtable in Durham, North Carolina.



Featured Platform project: The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District launched its Reforestation & Wetland Restoration Program in October. This 10-year program harnesses the power of natural climate solutions to reduce flooding, improve water quality and restore habitat while storing carbon. Overall, the initiative aims to plant 6 million trees, restore 4,000 acres of wetlands, capture 350 million gallons of stormwater with trees, and store up to 1.5 million gallons of floodwater in every acre of wetland. Check out the [official program website](#). ✨

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

GSGP TO LEAD TRADE MISSION TO AFRICA IN 2023

GSGP is recruiting regional companies for a multi-sector trade mission to South Africa and Kenya from February 13-17, 2023. Participating companies will receive a customized business schedule to meet with prospective customers and business partners. Regional companies can take advantage of the various State export assistance grants that are available to offset 50-75% of trade mission costs. Let the GSGP Africa Trade Office save you valuable time and resources and maximize your results. [More information on the Africa trade mission is available here.](#)

[More information on the GSGP International Trade Program can be found here.](#) ✨



GSGP IN THE NEWS

100% Whitefish

Detroit News

[Great Lakes orgs team up with Iceland group and others to change how we use whitefish](#)

Crain's Detroit Business

[Whitefish leather and energy drinks? Great Lakes groups pitch using whole fish, guts and all](#)

Mining Journal

[100% whitefish is 100% smart planning](#)

Maritime

Homeland Security Today

[Diverse Research Team to Explore Future Energy Options for Great Lakes Shipping](#)

Marine Log

[New initiative explores low-carbon options for Great Lakes shipping](#)

Cruising

Cruise Industry News

[New U.S. Customs Facilities Help with Great Lakes Cruise Travel](#)

WOOD TV/NBC 8

[Cruise industry rebounds in Great Lakes: 'If you build it, they will come'](#)

GREAT LAKES
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