



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **PRESIDENT BUSH SIGNS GREAT LAKES COMPACT** *Governors Applaud Historic Action to Protect the Lakes*

Chicago, Illinois—The Great Lakes Governors today applauded President George W. Bush for signing a joint resolution of Congress providing consent to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact. The President's action marks the final step in the Compact's approval process thus enabling these historic protections to become law.

In December 2005, following a nearly five-year negotiation, the Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin reached agreement on the Compact. The Compact provides a comprehensive management framework for achieving sustainable water use and resource protection. The eight Great Lakes States reached a similar, good faith, agreement with Ontario and Québec in 2005, which the Provinces are using to amend their existing water programs for greater regional consistency.

During 2007 and 2008, each of the eight Great Lakes State legislatures ratified the Compact. Legislative approval was completed by the U.S. Senate on August 1, 2008, and by the U.S. House of Representatives on September 23, 2008.

Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, Council of Great Lakes Governors Chair, said, "I applaud President Bush for his action. Together, we have taken a major step to protect the Great Lakes. I am hopeful that this historic cooperation will enable us to accelerate our future efforts."

Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm said, "I thank the President today for signing the Great Lakes Compact into law. His support ensures that the Great Lakes will remain a protected national treasure for years to come."

New York Governor David Paterson said, "I thank President Bush for carrying out the will of Congress and signing this important piece of legislation. I proudly announced the state legislation, earlier this year, that added New York State to the Great Lakes Compact. The Compact will ensure that harmful water diversions are controlled and the Great Lakes ecosystem is protected for future generations."

The Compact includes the following points:

- Economic development will be fostered through sustainable use and responsible management of Basin waters.

- In general, there will be a ban on new diversions of water from the Basin but limited exceptions could be allowed in communities near the Basin when rigorous standards are met.
- Communities that apply for an exception will have a clear, predictable decision making process; standards to be met; and, opportunities to appeal decisions. These processes and standards do not exist under current law.
- The States will use a consistent standard to review proposed uses of Basin water. The States will have flexibility regarding their water management programs and how to apply this standard.
- Regional goals and objectives for water conservation and efficiency will be developed, and they will be reviewed every five years. Each State will develop and implement a water conservation and efficiency program that may be voluntary or mandatory.
- There is a strong commitment to continued public involvement in the implementation of the Compact.

A broad, bi-partisan consensus has been built in support of the Compact. The Compact was developed in collaboration with regional partners who have also played a key role in its implementation. Members of Congress, Mayors, local government officials and stakeholders have all been instrumental.

The Great Lakes are a national treasure—important to our nation and the world as both an environmental and economic asset. Our national economy depends on the Great Lakes for industrial uses, hydropower, maritime commerce, agricultural irrigation and many other uses. The Great Lakes are also a globally unique and important environmental resource. The Compact will ensure that the Lakes are used sustainably in order to continue to provide benefits to us all.

Additional information is available at [www.cglg.org](http://www.cglg.org).

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