

Are there champions for the Great Lakes in the Houses of Parliament?

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Canadian Great Lakes advocates are looking for friends in high places - political champions who will stand up for protecting the Great Lakes.

Why? Because the Great Lakes are a national treasure that creates our electricity, brings in tourists and provides drinking water for millions of people in Canada. Yet, there is no organized political voice for the region in Canada, Ontario or Quebec. There are 40 Members of Parliament representing ridings in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin and 42 Members of Provincial Parliament in Ontario and 29 in Quebec. While there is a concerned public constituency struggling to work for the restoration and protection of the Great Lakes, we need to find the elected representatives who will join us in this work.

Are we polluting and draining the Great Lakes of its significance as the largest body of freshwater in the world containing a fifth of the world's supply? Are we pulling our weight as stewards of this shared resource? What are the consequences of inaction?

Three organizations - the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, the Canadian Environmental Law Association and Great Lakes United - have produced these Fact Sheets on the challenges facing the Great Lakes Region in the 21st century, and the actions that we need to take. The fact sheets consider:

- *What are the Emerging Issues in the Great Lakes Ecosystem?*
- *What will it take to control water withdrawals in the Great Lakes Basin?*
- *Is the Canada-Ontario Agreement working?*
- *Will Canada strengthen the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement?*
- *Will Canada increase its commitments to the Great Lakes like the US?*

Questions for Reflection

What legacy will we leave in the Great Lakes for future generations?

The United States Congress is discussing a new effort - a restoration plan for the Great Lakes. Will Canada renew its commitment and promote a binational program to restore the Great Lakes?

Are our institutional arrangements in the Great Lakes adequate to meet the challenges for the region in the 21st century?

The time is now for unprecedented cooperation among leaders in Ottawa, Toronto and Quebec City to plan together for an improved Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. Only a collective effort will make it possible to meet these challenges for our region.

Great Lakes for the Future



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