

GREAT LAKES COMMUNITY ORGANIZES AROUND WATER QUALITY FOR THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS

(APRIL 11, 2022) The Great Lakes Ecoregion Network (GLEN) is a new initiative to engage members of the basin-wide Great Lakes environmental community on issues related to the binational Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). As the 50th anniversary of the signing of the GLWQA is celebrated later this week, we call on the US and Canadian federal governments to renew and strengthen their commitment to water quality and ecosystem health in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.

The GLWQA, first signed by President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, on April 15th, 1972, was a groundbreaking step by the two nations to jointly manage a shared resource. It led to strategies to revive Lake Erie and tackle toxic pollution throughout the Basin. Cooperative action is urgently needed now to ensure that both nations address new or renewed threats to the Basin such as harmful algal blooms, climate change, and new toxic substances, as well as to continue to strive to resolve issues that have not had adequate attention over the past fifty years in the Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River basins.

In September, the federal governments of Canada and the United States will host a public forum on the Agreement. This will be a time to celebrate past successes and lessons learned from the past fifty years. More importantly, it will be an opportunity for a public accounting on the current state of the ecoregion and a time to affirm priorities for future action, so the Agreement can continue to drive progress on shared solutions for Great Lakes water quality.

GLEN brings together many of the activists who have played significant roles in influencing changes to the Agreement and its implementation over the past fifty years. We also welcome members with new energy and perspectives as we work together to develop a vision and plan for the next fifty years. GLEN is a mix of individuals and groups who are dedicating themselves to working together in the decades to come to ensure that the goals of the GLWQA are achieved.

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