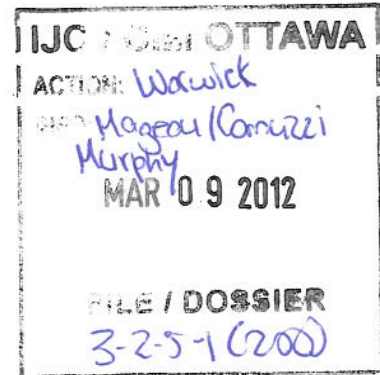




March 6, 2012

The Honourable Joseph Comuzzi  
Chair, Canadian Section  
International Joint Commission  
Canada and the United States  
234 Laurier Avenue West, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6K6

Ms Lana Pollack, Chair  
United States Section  
International Joint Commission  
2401 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Fourth Floor  
Washington, DC 20440



Dear Chair Comuzzi and Chair Pollack:

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I am writing to express my appreciation for the International Joint Commission's Fifteenth Biennial Report. This report is a valuable and timely contribution to our Government's current efforts to amend the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). The Fifteenth Biennial Report - and its specific recommendations on a nearshore framework, eutrophication, beaches and recreational water quality, groundwater, chemicals of emerging concern, fish consumption, aquatic invasive species, and independent IJC reviews - will be considered in the broader context of the negotiations to amend the GLWQA.

As demonstrated through our continuing efforts to strengthen and modernize the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, ensuring that it addresses current and emerging threats to Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health - as well as by our recent related efforts to extend and amend the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA) - Canada remains strongly committed to ensuring a healthy and sustainable Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. In addition to extending COA to June 24, 2012, six new commitments were added to address harmful pollutants; spills prevention and response; nearshore framework; binational cooperative monitoring programs; stewardship activities; and the Aquatic Invasive Species Complete Prevention Plan.

Canada appreciates the valuable work of the Commission and the advice provided to the Parties related to restoring and protecting the Great Lakes. Through the Government of

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Canada's close collaboration with the Commission and the United States Government, significant environmental progress has been achieved in the Great Lakes Basin. We are confident that this close working relationship will continue to support environmental progress in the years ahead under an amended Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The Government of Canada appreciates the tireless work of the Commission and its contributions toward restoring and protecting the Great Lakes.

Sincerely,



Stéphane Jobin  
Director  
U.S. Transboundary Affairs Division