



May 9, 2007

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**Subject: The proposed 2007 Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the
Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA)**
Per Canada Gazette Part 1 March 17, 2007, Vol. 141, No. 11
Also per EBR Registry Number: 010-0063

Dear Ms. McKay & Ms. O'Neill,

The Bi-national Public Advisory Committee (BPAC) for the St. Clair River Area of Concern would like to provide the following comments regarding the proposed COA agreement.

- First, we would like to acknowledge that Annex 1 of the COA re-affirms the ongoing and active commitment of both Federal and Ontario governments to the goal of environmental restoration and delisting in all AOC's. We fully support the essential nature of this commitment.

However, the COA will not achieve its goals as outlined in Annex 1 unless there is a commensurate commitment to fund the activities required. We encourage both levels of government to ensure adequate funding is provided to implement this agreement.

- The commitments under Result 2.5 of Annex 1 recognize the need for support to RAP implementation groups, but do not mention the Public Advisory Committees (PAC's). We strongly believe PAC's have a vital



role to play in achieving the intended result of "Informed, effective collaboration amongst government, communities, and individuals to prioritize and complete actions required for delisting..."

We ask that the COA recognize a need for support to the PAC's in addition to the RAP implementation groups.

- Under result 2.1 of Annex 1, we are encouraged by the agreement that investments supportive of delisting will have priority under infrastructure funding programs. We recognize that such infrastructure programs are managed by departments and ministries less familiar with the RAP process. We therefore ask that both Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment take the lead to ensure that this commitment to prioritize such investments is effectively communicated to and implemented by those branches of the governments overseeing the infrastructure programs. In particular, we strongly support a high priority for support to investments by municipalities for the elimination of Combined Sewer Overflows, which are critical to the achievement of delisting goals in a reasonable timeframe.

We look forward to continuing to work with both levels of Canadian government in achieving our shared goal of restoration and delisting of the St. Clair River Area of Concern.

Sincerely,

Bela Trebics

Canadian Co-Chair

Bi-national Public Advisory Committee for the St. Clair River Area of Concern

Janice Littlefield

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