

News Release

For Immediate Release

Governments of Canada and Ontario sign new Great Lakes Agreement

December 19, 2014 – Toronto, Ontario

The governments of Canada and Ontario have renewed their commitment to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes by signing the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA), 2014.

The five-year agreement commits Canada and Ontario to:

- Take action to address algal blooms, including blue-green algae
- Complete actions to clean up historical Areas of Concern including the Niagara River, Nipigon Bay, Peninsula Harbour, the Bay of Quinte and the St. Lawrence River (Cornwall)
- Help prevent aquatic invasive species from entering the lakes
- Protect the lakes from harmful pollutants
- Conserve important fish and wildlife habitats
- Strengthen collaboration with the Great Lakes community

The Great Lakes are vitally important. They are home to many unique ecosystems and species. The Great Lakes also provide us with drinking water, recreation, energy, transportation, and enhance our quality of life. The 2014 COA is the result of negotiations between Canada and Ontario and engagement with the Great Lakes community.

Both governments look forward to continuing to work with the Great Lakes community to protect the Great Lakes, including First Nations and Métis, municipal governments, conservation authorities, non-government organizations, the scientific community, industrial, agricultural, recreational and tourism sectors, and members of the public.

Quick Facts

- The Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA) builds on a long history of environmental cooperation between Canada and Ontario and is the eighth of its kind since 1971.
- COA establishes shared Great Lakes priorities among eight federal departments and three Ontario ministries.
- COA identifies time-bounded measurable goals, results and commitments and strengthens cooperation.
- The Great Lakes play a vital role in the physical, social, and economic life of Canada, and support almost 40 per cent of Canada's economic activity.
- The Great Lakes directly provide drinking water to more than 10 million Ontario residents.

Quotes

“The Government of Canada is committed to protecting our rich natural heritage. Ensuring the continued health of the Great Lakes is a priority for our Government and collaboration with the province will be important. Through this renewed partnership, our Government is taking action to restore and conserve Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health for the benefit of all Canadians.”

– The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council

“The Great Lakes are vitally important to the people of Ontario. Our vision is a healthy Great Lakes for a stronger Ontario—Great Lakes that continue to be drinkable, swimmable and fishable. This agreement will help us implement Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy.”

– Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change

Associated Links

[Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, 2014](#)
[Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement](#)
[Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy](#)

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