

Great Lakes Guardians' Council – proposed Statement of Intent

Water connects all living things. Clean, safe, reliable water is essential for our health and for the ecosystems which we share. The Great Lakes and their basin are of fundamental importance to Indigenous peoples as reflected in the Water Declaration of the Anishinaabek, Mushkegowuk and Onkwehonwe, and they are the foundation of the Ontario we all enjoy today. The Great Lakes are a treasure to be protected and enjoyed for all time.

The Great Lakes Guardians' Council is a forum for gathering ideas, sharing information, identifying priorities for action and fostering partnerships.

The Great Lakes Guardians' Council gathers Ontario's Great Lakes leaders to highlight the urgent need to protect them and take action. The Council brings together individuals with different perspectives and expertise who recognize the health of the Great Lakes system, of their waters and of all their living things, is a shared responsibility.

The Great Lakes are in decline, and are vulnerable to the cumulative effects of climate change, growth and development, loss of natural features, invasive species and other stresses. By bringing together western science with traditional ecological knowledge, as well as fostering education and celebration, we can enhance our shared knowledge of the Great Lakes to advance action and reverse this decline.

The Council will take a broad, collective approach to understand and collaborate on actions that are needed now, to ensure our children and theirs inherit a healthy Great Lakes ecosystem for generations to come. The Council will share perspectives, strengthen relationships and focus on priorities for action so that as Ontarians we can do our part to restore and protect this precious ecosystem.