

Great Lakes Protection Act Updates, Expectations, Ideas

Hosted by the Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance

April 26, 2017

Webinar objectives

- ▶ Updates/Review: *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015* (Act) successes to date
- ▶ Overview: Great Lakes Protection Act (GLPA) Alliance's expectations for implementation of the Act over the next 12-18 months
- ▶ Discussion: ideas you or your organization has for engagement and activation throughout the Great Lakes - St Lawrence River Basin; how you hope to support implementation of the Act

Agenda

- ▶ Roll call - 5 minutes
- ▶ GLPA Alliance: history/goals/objectives - 10 minutes
- ▶ Implementation successes to date - 5 minutes
- ▶ GLPA Alliance's expectations brief - 10 minutes
- ▶ Discussion - 25 minutes
- ▶ Finish up - 5 minutes

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the slide, creating a modern, dynamic feel.

GLPA Alliance: history/goals/objectives

GLPA Alliance: a brief history

- ▶ Policy priority identified (~2007+) - “Ontario Environmental Priorities Group” calling for Great Lakes protection legislation for several years (greenprosperity.ca)
- ▶ Great Lake Protection Act Alliance forms (Dec 2011) - small number of “steering” organizations lead legislative advocacy
- ▶ *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015* - enacted Nov 3, 2015
- ▶ Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance re-envisioned itself to focus on implementation; new governance structure
- ▶ See www.glpaa.ca

GLPA Alliance: current members

- ▶ Currently, these organizations/individuals are working together on implementation of the Act:

Environmental Defence
(co-secretariat)

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Ontario Nature

Ontario Rivers Alliance

Ontario Headwaters Institute

John Jackson

CELA
(co-secretariat)

Nature Canada

Lake Ontario Waterkeeper

Green Communities Canada

Great Lakes Commons

Gail Krantzberg

Sierra Club Ontario

Conservation Ontario

ACER

Freshwater Future

WWF Canada

Peggy Hutchison

GLPA Alliance: what we do

- ▶ Working together to achieve the purposes of the Act by:
 - ▶ Acting as a catalyst in implementing the Act;
 - ▶ Encouraging utilization - by governments, individuals, communities, and public bodies - of the tools enabled in the Act; and
 - ▶ Monitoring and encouraging government progress toward achieving the purposes of the Act.

Purposes of the Act

- (a) to protect and restore the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin; and
- (b) to create opportunities for individuals and communities to become involved in the protection and restoration of the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. (s1(1), [Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015](#))

The Act's Tools: a quick refresher

- ▶ Purposes
- ▶ Great Lakes Strategy
 - ▶ 2012 Strategy, progress report every 3 years, review/revise every 6 years
 - ▶ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-great-lakes-strategy-2016-progress-report>
- ▶ Great Lakes Guardians' Council
 - ▶ Meets (minimum) annually, forum for discussion
 - ▶ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/great-lakes-guardians-council>
- ▶ Targets
- ▶ Geographically-focused initiatives (GFIs)
- ▶ Public can request that a target be set or that a GFI be directed
 - ▶ [Great Lakes Protection Act 2015 - Public Request Form](#)

The background features a complex, abstract design of overlapping, semi-transparent blue polygons in various shades, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. The shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text is positioned on the left side of the white background.

Implementation successes to date

Since the Act came into force on Nov 3, 2015:

- ▶ Two meetings (Mar & Oct 2016) and one gathering (Aug 2016) of Great Lakes Guardians' Council - next meeting: May 2017
- ▶ Meetings of the Council's Knowledge Integration Working Group
- ▶ Set target on Reducing Phosphorus to Minimize Algal Blooms in Lake Erie: 40% by 2025
- ▶ Consulting on proposed Draft Canada-Ontario Action Plan for Lake Erie (comment deadline extended to May 24, 2017)



Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance's expectations brief

Expectations for Implementation

Briefing Note

- ▶ Gathered input during workshop (Sep 2016)
- ▶ Goal: create a document that outlines expectations for implementation
 - ▶ Primary audience is government
 - ▶ Secondary audiences include MPPs, public bodies, indigenous communities, organizations/individuals with interest in Great Lakes - St Lawrence River Basin protection/restoration
- ▶ Almost ready for distribution

Protecting and Restoring the Ecological Health of Our Waters: Implementation Expectations for 2017-18 from the Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance

- ▶ Establish new and innovative community and public engagement model to ensure both purposes of the Act are achieved by 2017
- ▶ Energize and reframe the Great Lakes Guardians' Council to better reflect the engagement purpose specified in the Act by 2017
- ▶ Initiate new target(s) and associated action plans to address specific issues by 2018
- ▶ Initiate Geographically-focused initiatives(s) by 2018
- ▶ Continue to complete and expand work on addressing algal blooms by 2018
- ▶ Commitment to adequate resourcing to implement the Act by 2018

Your turn ...

Discussion

- ▶ ideas you or your organization has for engagement and activation throughout the Great Lakes - St Lawrence River Basin
- ▶ how you hope to support implementation of the Act

Join us ...

- ▶ Membership is open to any organization or individual that is interested in promoting the implementation of the Act and agrees to assist the Alliance in achieving its goals
- ▶ For more information about joining, please contact awallis@environmentaldefence.ca

Appendix: Detailed purposes in the Act

1. (2) The purposes set out in subsection (1) include the following:

1. To protect human health and well-being through the protection and restoration of water quality, hydrologic functions and the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin, including through the elimination or reduction of harmful pollutants.
2. To protect and restore watersheds, wetlands, beaches, shorelines and coastal areas of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.
3. To protect and restore the natural habitats and biodiversity of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.
4. To protect and improve the capacity of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin to respond to the impacts and causes of climate change.
5. To improve understanding and management of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin by advancing science and promoting the consideration of traditional ecological knowledge relating to existing and emerging stressors and by establishing and maintaining monitoring and reporting programs or other actions with respect to the ecological conditions of the Basin.
6. To enrich the quality of life in communities in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin through support of environmentally sustainable economic opportunities, innovation and environmentally sustainable use of natural resources.