



Action Plan 2030 Protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence

Great Lakes St. Lawrence Collaborative

**Latornell Conference
November 2019**

Great Lakes Collaborative

- Launched October 2018, to be completed by Spring 2020
- Expert Panel led by Co-Chairs
 - Gord Miller, former Ontario Environmental Commissioner
 - Jean Cinq-Mars, former Sustainability Commissioner of Quebec
- Received funding from Environment & Climate Change Canada
- Two phases: 1) Great Lakes and 2) St. Lawrence
- Over 75 stakeholder directly involved, over 200 consulted through webinars, summit
- Inspired by U.S. Great Lakes Restoration Initiative - over \$2 billion in federal funding since 2008
- Website: <https://westbrookpa.com/GLSLCollab/>

Why an Action Plan to protect the Great Lakes?

- Action Plan 2030 is a strategy to tackle complex problems facing the Great Lakes region in the 21st century.
- While progress in protecting the Great Lakes has been made over the years, impact of climate change, population growth, and farming/industrial activity demands new approach.
- By targeting sources of pollution having greatest impact, and supporting communities most at risk, Action Plan 2030 proposes more precise interventions using new kinds of collaboration, technologies and big data.

Investment needed to implement Action Plan 2030

Through US Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, US Federal Government has contributed \$300M a year for the last ten years to Great Lakes protection, resulting in a 3:1 ROI.

Need similar leadership and financial investment from Canadian Federal Government.

Calling on Federal Government to invest \$100M a year for ten years to implement Action Plan 2030.

Federal investment will serve as leverage to attract investment from provincial, municipal contributions, and other sources.

15 Key Actions in 4 Areas



A. Protect shoreline communities: Provide direct assistance and funding to municipal and Indigenous communities in new Shoreline Resiliency Priority Zones, hardest hit by extreme flooding and erosion associated with climate change.



B. Reduce Our Exposure to Toxics: Actively identify, investigate and respond to human and environmental exposure to toxics and other harmful pollutants.



C. Accelerate Nutrients Reduction: Harness power of big data to identify nutrient hotspots and work directly with landowners, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and others in priority areas to reduce nutrient runoff causing harmful algal blooms, and to improve health of our water.



D. Make Contaminated Beaches Clean and Safe: Using a risk-based approach, identify beaches with chronic bacteriological contamination problems, and require action to clean up the source of contamination, including untreated sewage.



Accelerate Nutrients Reduction

Nutrients and Algal Blooms

- Nutrient loss from agricultural/urban runoff to get worse with climate change.
- Chesapeake Bay experience: Need to get more surgical in our interventions.
- Precision conservation: use big data to identify specific parcels of land that contribute the most P, provide direct assistance to landowners to reduce or capture P.
- Stormwater optimization: identify which municipalities are contributing the most, optimize



Nutrients: Overview of Recommendations

Desired outcome: to reduce agricultural and urban nutrient runoff in priority areas contributing to harmful algal blooms, and improve health of our waters.

Key actions:

8. GO/GOC: Adopt precision conservation and urban stormwater optimization approaches.

9. GO/GOC: Develop data management strategy and tools to identify priority properties and strategic best practices.

Nutrient Recommendations 2

10. GO/GOC: Create 'Water Quality and Nutrient Management Centre' to support nutrient management through precision conservation & urban stormwater optimization.

11. GO: Designate a 'network' of extension workers with standardized training to provide consistent technical advice on phosphorus loss reduction.

12. GO: Where urban areas are identified as significant contributors of phosphorus loading, require municipalities to develop urban stormwater optimization plan.

Investments

- Great Lakes are a significant asset, with significant benefits, and so require significant investments
- This Action Plan 2030 is a ten year, estimated \$100 million a year strategy, to protect the Great Lakes and those who live by them
- Action Plan 2030 calls on the governments of Canada and Ontario to invest in and implement these 15 recommendations
- We welcome your ideas and thoughts

Next Steps

Following June 2019 release of Action Plan 2030 to Protect the Great Lakes:

- Engage with federal and provincial elected officials and other groups to secure all-party support for the Action Plan.
- Phase 2 St. Lawrence Collaborative process now underway, to be completed by end of 2019, with final integrated Great Lakes St. Lawrence report released in March 2020.

Contact

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