



MEMO

GREAT LAKES UNITED

TO: GLU Board Members and Staff

FROM: Mary Ginnebaugh, GLU - Windsor Office

DATE: September 18, 1992

RE: State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference

On September 9th and 10th, the Binational Steering Committee for the State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) held a meeting in Windsor to discuss the SOLEC which is scheduled for April, 1993 in the Detroit area. This conference is being organized and sponsored by U.S. EPA and Environment Canada (the Parties), but is also enlisting the support of industry and NGOs. Because Great Lakes United is viewed as a basin-wide, umbrella organization, GLU - Buffalo was contacted on September 1st and invited to attend this meeting. Although there have been other Steering Committee meetings to discuss the SOLEC, this was the first time GLU was invited to attend.

The co-chairs of the meeting were Paul Horvatin, EPA - Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) and Madelynn Webb, Environment Canada. Other participants on the Steering Committee are Kent Fuller, EPA; Danny Epstein, Environment Canada; Doug Dodge, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; Mike Wittle, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Grace Weaver, Council of Great Lakes Industries; Fred Fleischer, Ontario Ministry of the Environment; Mary Hegan, Health & Welfare Canada; Hank Vanderploeg, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); Charles Zafonte, EPA-Region II; Karen Ralph, Environment Canada; John Cooper, US Fish and Wildlife Service; Bob Burris, Soil Conservation; Al Behm, US Army Corps of Engineers; Mike Donahue, Great Lakes Commission; Joe Koonce, Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, Mike Gilbertson and Bruce Kirschner, IJC.

To get the full picture of the SOLEC, I have also included all of the information that was given to me at the Steering Committee meeting. The most important thing I would like to convey, however, is that the Parties are looking for the NGOs to endorse the Conference and to be considered as part of the planning and execution process. From my observation and minimal participation in this two day meeting, however, I strongly suggest that NGOs not participate in any of the planning processes for this conference. These are my reasons:

(1) This conference is the Parties reporting on their programs for assessing the State of the Lakes. How objective can they really be???

An international organization dedicated to conserving and protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River

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(2) Summarizing the State of the Lakes is an enormous task and I seriously question (as did Mike Wittle) whether there is enough time to adequately collect, interpret and synthesize all the data and hold a conference in less than 6 months. To do a top-notch job, 18 months to two years would be needed.

(3) At the September meeting, the Steering Committee was still determining the focus of the cluster papers (see attached papers) and how they would be organizing all of the information into one integrated report. Questions of who is to review the 'cluster papers', who is to attend the conference and, what are the specific objectives for the conference, remain unanswered.

It is my understanding that the Parties fully intend to go ahead with the plans for this conference, and are making the arrangements with the Holiday Inn in Dearborn, Michigan. The next meeting date for the Steering Committee is November 12th at the Holiday Inn in Dearborn.

While I think a SOLEC could be a very informative, useful endeavor, the manner in which this conference is being organized is very concerning to me. Therefore, I am recommending that the GLU Board make a stand to not be involved with the conference as it is being planned, and to relay that position to other NGOs. In taking this position, GLU could also formally recommend to the Parties to defer the conference until 1994 or 1995 which would ensure adequate synthesis of the current data, allow enough time for participants to review the prepared information and guarantee a conference that would benefit all concerned with the State of the Lakes.

If you have further questions or comments, please call me at (519) 255-7141.

DRAFT - JUNE 9, 1992

LOGISTICS FOR A 'STATE OF THE LAKES' CONFERENCE

A: Date Preferred date April 28 - 30, 1993 (W,T,F)
Option date April 21-23, 1993

B: Place Detroit Area

C: Title "State of the Great Lakes Ecosystem"

D: Theme

- Report on basin-wide "State of Lakes" i.e., their condition in terms of physical, chemical and biological integrity including wildlife/human health.
- Emphasize past (improvements/degradation), present (current action/inaction) and future (expectations, targets, time lines)
- Focus on the interpretation and use of all available data to set priorities and direct programs (what are the basin stressors?, how do we best address them, how fast can we address them?)

E: Objectives

- Provide information on the state of the Great Lakes ecosystem for the purpose of strengthening decision making and management within the Basin.
and research - ID need
- Develop support for an integrated system of environmental information to direct plans and programs.
- Provide information on existing Great Lakes strategies and build cooperative actions needed to, strengthen and implement them.
Integrat,
- Provide a forum for improved communication and network building within the Basin.

• *Tangible products*

F: Approach/Guiding Principles

- The meeting should receive support from and participation of basin stake holders including key managers and action leaders from governmental agencies, NGO's, industry, municipalities, community health organizations, etc.
- The meeting should focus on science and ecosystem management. Scientific information should be assembled and synthesized by experts in each field and be provided in advance of the meeting on those issues relating to the state of the lakes.
- The meeting should be complementary to and not compete with any other Great Lakes wide meetings, especially the IJC biennial meeting in the fall of 1993.
- The meeting should provide temporal trend data for basin indicators as an aid to evaluating problems of the past, present and future and it should update participants on current action strategies (focusing on "cooperative" action, targeted objectives and better public disclosure).
- The meeting should serve to inform and provide a forum for listening, planning and building cooperation among basin stakeholders.
- The meeting should focus on progress and action, identify deficiencies and define targets for future action by basin stakeholders. It should also focus on loadings and measurements and link them to causes and effects.
- The meeting should be developed by a multi-sectoral steering group of basin stakeholders.

G: Participants

- Agencies (federal, state, provincial, municipal)
- Native Organizations
- International Joint Commission
- Great Lakes Commission
- Great Lakes Fishery Commission
- NGO's
- Health Organizations
- Education Groups
- Foundations/Granting Agencies
- Industry Groups
- Etc.

H: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A "State of the Lakes Ecosystem" meeting of 200-300 participants be convened in 1993 to include multi-stakeholder (public's) participation at the management level.
2. The meeting be held April 28-30, 1993 (option date April 21-23, 1993).
3. The meeting be held in Detroit depending on cost and accommodations.
4. The themes, objectives and principles/approaches be adopted.
5. The meeting give rise to published pre- and post-conference products.
6. A Steering Group (10-14 members maximum) be formed and funded to:
 - develop a conference title;
 - develop a conference agenda;
 - develop a timetable for activities;
 - develop a list of invited participants;
 - define what published products may arise.

PROPOSED CLUSTER GROUPS for SOLC
to guide development of
information integration papers

1. Human Health

To address:

- A. Measures of integrity and status
- B. Stresses and Sources
 - Pathogens
 - Toxics

2. Fish, Birds and Other Organism Health

To address:

- A. Measures of integrity and status (including biodiversity)
- B. Stresses and Sources (including exotic species)

3. Habitat/Wetlands

To address:

- A. Measures of integrity and status
- B. Stresses and Sources

4. Chemical Integrity

To address:

- A. Measures of Integrity and Status (concentrations
in fish birds and other organisms)
- B. Loadings and Sources
 - Total Loads and Mass Balance
 - Airborne Deposition
 - Trib Loading / Land Runoff
 - Point Sources
 - Sediment Recycle
 - Groundwater

Water Quantity issues e.g. lake levels, shore erosion, diversions and consumptive use are intentionally omitted as being beyond the scope of this conference.



PROPOSED CLUSTER GROUPS for SOLC
and outline to guide development of
information integration papers

I. Human Health

To address:

- A. Measures of integrity and status
 - 1. Epidemiological studies
 - 2. Contaminants in human tissues and fluids
 - 3. Setting human exposure limits based on animal studies
- B. Stresses and Sources
 - 1. Pathogens
 - a. Swimming/body contact
 - b. Urban runoff/CSO
 - 2. Toxics
 - a. Swimming/ body contact
 - b. Drinking water
 - c. Fish consumption

II Fish, Birds and Other Organism Health

To address:

- A. Measures of integrity and status (including biodiversity)
 - 1. Health of populations/species
 - 2. Reproductive success
 - 3. Organism health
 - 4. Ecosystem objectives and indicators
 - 5. Chemical objectives, criteria and standards for toxics in fish and birds
 - a. Criteria for fish
 - b. Criteria for birds
- B. Stresses and Sources (including exotic species)
 - 1. Status and trends in concentrations of toxics in fish, birds, etc.
 - 2. Exotic species
 - 3. Loadings of toxic substances
(to be addressed under IV B.)



Habitat loss

III Habitat/Wetlands
To address:

- A. Measures of integrity and status
 - 1. Wetland and habitat inventories — Deep, littoral, runni
 - 2. Identification of critical areas
- B. Stresses and Sources
 - 1. Dredging and filling River/upstream issues
 - 2. Sedimentation
 - 3. Development of coastal zone
 - 4. Agricultural runoff
 - 5. ~~Water levels~~ — Land use/practice

IV Chemical Integrity
To address:

- A. Measures of Integrity and Status
(concentrations in water and sediment)
 - 1. Nutrients
 - 2. Toxics
 - a. Developing objectives criteria and standards for water
 - b. Using bioaccumulation factors
 - c. Developing objectives, criteria and standards for sediment
- B. Loadings and Sources
 - 1. Total Annual Loads
 - 2. Airborne Deposition
 - 3. Trib Loading / Land Runoff
 - 4. Point Sources
 - 5. Sediment Recycle
 - 6. Groundwater
 - 7. Mass Balance

Water Quantity issues, e.g. lake levels, shore erosion, diversions and consumptive use, are intentionally omitted as being beyond the scope of this conference.

