

Great Lakes Charter
Frequently Asked Questions
About the Working Draft of
Annex 2001

*A Supplementary Agreement to the Great Lakes Charter, circulated
for public comment by the Council of Great Lakes Governors*

What is the working draft of Annex 2001?

The proposed Annex 2001 is a nonbinding agreement between the Great Lakes governors and premiers of Ontario and Quebec on the future management of Great Lakes basin waters. The final Annex 2001 will supplement the Great Lakes Charter. In October 1999, the Great Lakes governors and premiers pledged to develop a new common standard against which water withdrawals will be reviewed and a new agreement which will bind the Great Lakes states and provinces more closely to collectively plan, manage and make decisions regarding the protection of the waters of the Great Lakes. The working draft of the proposed Annex 2001 is a public review draft document to meet the governors and premiers commitment on a new standard and agreement.

What is the Great Lakes Charter?

The Great Lakes Charter is a nonbinding agreement that the Great Lakes governors and premiers signed in 1985. The Charter recommended a framework for managing the waters of the Great Lakes basin and called for several new programs in the states and provinces. The goal of the Charter was to provide a framework to protect the waters of the Great Lakes basin from large-scale diversions of water to areas out of the basin.

What does the Annex set out to do?

Under the Annex, the governors and premiers establish a common standard to be used in reviewing water withdrawals that involve the transfer or export of water out of the Great Lakes basin and, in the future, water withdrawals within the basin. The Annex recommends basin-wide binding agreement(s) for the states and provinces for future management of water uses in the Great Lakes basin.

Why are the governors and premiers doing this?

The Great Lakes governors and premiers have 15 years of experience in dealing with water use and diversion issues pursuant to the Great Lakes Charter. A proposed bulk export project in 1998 made it evident that a review of the governors and premiers authority was necessary.

Which states and provinces are included in the Great Lakes basin?

The eight Great Lakes states are Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin. The two Great Lakes provinces are Ontario and Quebec.

Who does the Annex affect?

The implementation of the Annex is a two step process. The first step will be to apply the standard to water withdrawals reviewed by the governors pursuant to the federal Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and by the governors and premiers pursuant to the Great Lakes Charter.

The second step will be to review Great Lakes basin water withdrawals pursuant to the binding compact that is developed which will require state and federal legislation. This latter action will impact future proposals for water withdrawals in the Great Lakes basin. Existing uses are to be grandfathered but will be required to meet the standard when additional withdrawals or capacity are requested.

Is the Annex immediately enforceable?

The application of the standard for water withdrawals pursuant to the federal Water Resources Development Act can be implemented immediately. The application of the standard to all water