

IJC Recommendations - 1985

Source: A Report to the Governments of the United States and Canada - Reference on Great Lakes Diversions and Consumptive Uses. International Joint Commission, January. 1985. p.ix.

Summary of Recommendations

Based on the foregoing considerations and conclusions, the Commission's response includes the following recommendations, which the Commission believes will assist Governments in effectively addressing future considerations regarding the use of Great Lakes waters:

1. Regarding the general aspects of diversions and consumptive uses --
 - a) Governments establish a bilateral data committee, separate from the Commission, to monitor all existing diversions and consumptive uses in the Great Lakes basin and publish data as appropriate, but no less frequently than biennially. This committee would also recommend appropriate additional research and monitoring efforts that would be necessary to develop the methodology and data to derive a more accurate estimate of existing consumptive uses in the Great Lakes basin. The committee's report should be made public.
 - b) Governments authorize the establishment of a bilateral task force on diversions and consumptive uses, either by a reference to the Commission or otherwise. The task force would be created periodically, but no less frequently than every five years, and would update previous consumptive use projections, assess the impacts of those projections, review the potential for new or changed diversions, and make appropriate recommendations. Governments should agree to consult on each task force report. The task force would use information from the bilateral data committee, as well as other sources, and would build on the existing methodology developed in each country. The task force should have available to it pertinent social, economic and demographic data both within and outside the Great Lakes basin context, but would likely need to concentrate initially on the principal water use sectors of power and manufacturing. Membership on each task force would be determined by the nature of the primary issues at that time.
 - c) Governments institute a co-operative review of current public policies at the federal and state/provincial levels to identify those having an effect on consumptive uses and to examine any that appear to have a significant potential for reducing such use.
 - d) Governments, taking into account the existing and possible future diversion of water into the Great Lakes, consult on the status of waters so diverted.
2. Regarding existing and future small diversions, Governments institute surveys on both sides of the border to identify and quantify existing and proposed small diversions and establish a mechanism whereby information is made available to the bilateral data committee.
3. Regarding the management of existing diversions to ameliorate high and low levels --
 - a) Governments take steps to ensure under present conditions the further management of Great Lakes levels and outflows through the manipulation of existing diversions.
 - b) Governments take steps to ensure that better coastal zone management practices are followed to help reduce flood and erosion damage along the Great Lakes shoreline.
4. Regarding federally, state or provincially sponsored or approved new or changed diversions --
 - a) Governments resolve the questions discussed in Chapter III of this Report.
 - b) Governments engage in a process of notice and consultation before additional new or changed diversions are approved.

5. Regarding the broad aspects of this report, federal, state and provincial governments undertake appropriate measures to inform the public of the results of this study and to initiate an educational effort directed toward better understanding of the nature and effect of consumptive uses.

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