

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Media Statement

Groups React as States and Provinces Commit to Reconvene in May to Continue Debate on Precedent-Setting Great Lakes Water Diversion

“We commend the Regional Body for taking time to thoroughly review Waukesha’s precedent setting diversion request. The request is the first test of the Great Lakes Compact and must be given careful consideration.

We are not opposed to diversions as allowed under the Great Lakes Compact. However, it is critical that any diversion proposal meet the rigorous requirements of the Compact which were developed to safeguard the Great Lakes. We appreciate that the Regional Body is carefully weighing Waukesha’s proposal against the Compact’s requirements.”

Background

Waukesha, Wisconsin’s application to divert water from Lake Michigan is the first test of the Great Lakes Compact, a regional pact banning the diversion of Great Lakes water outside the basin, with limited exceptions.

Under the Great Lakes Compact, any diversion application must be approved by all eight Great Lakes states. The two Canadian provinces bordering the lakes, Ontario and Quebec, are allowed to provide input. Any state may veto the diversion application.

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body includes representatives from each of the jurisdictions, including the states and provinces. At the regional level, the Regional Body is the first step in the decision making process of any diversion request and makes a recommendation to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Compact Council. The Compact Council, which consists of only the governors of the eight Great Lakes states, will meet in the coming months to review the Regional Body’s recommendation and make a final decision on Waukesha’s request.

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