

November 23, 2005

ONTARIO RELEASES DRAFT GREAT LAKES CHARTER ANNEX AGREEMENTS

Government Shares Agreements With Public And Stakeholders During Review Period

TORONTO — The Ontario government is releasing drafts of the Great Lakes Charter Annex implementing agreements that are currently being reviewed by Ontario, Quebec and eight Great Lakes states, Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay announced today.

“We want to ensure the public and stakeholders are fully informed about the contents of the draft Charter Annex agreements,” said Ramsay.

The draft Great Lakes Charter Annex agreements, if signed, would provide:

- A virtual prohibition against diversions
- Basin-wide environmental standards
- Better conservation measures.

Previous drafts of the agreements were released for public comment on July 19, 2004, and June 30, 2005. Since the end of the most recent public comment period on August 25, the 10 jurisdictions have been conducting further negotiations. The agreements released today represent a consensus of all 10 jurisdictions – Ontario, Quebec, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Ontario consulted with an advisory panel of stakeholders during the 2005 negotiations and has shared the current draft agreements with the panel.

“The negotiations have resulted in some changes to the draft agreements,” said Ramsay. “On November 10, the provinces and states agreed to start a 30-day period during which each jurisdiction would decide if they would ratify the agreements. That period ends on December 9.”

The Great Lakes Charter Annex implementing agreements can be viewed at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/water/greatlakes/.

Related Information

NOTE: A technical briefing for media about the Great Lakes Charter Annex agreements will be held on **Thursday, November 24, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**, in the Executive Boardroom, Ministry of Natural Resources, 6 th Floor, Room 6611, Whitney Block, 99 Wellesley Street West, Toronto.

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