



PRESS RELEASE

Mayors call for Summit on the St. Lawrence River

Cities express concern over increases in resource extraction, and spills preparedness on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence

Québec City, December 10, 2010 – Today, mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) proposed a summit to launch a new collaborative relationship between the province, municipalities, and other local organizations to protect the St. Lawrence river. The Cities Initiative, along with Stratégies Saint Laurent, have proposed the summit to Québec Environment Minister Pierre Arcand and look forward to his response.

“We believe this could be a very promising relationship between the Province, the cities, and other key stakeholders that will benefit the St. Lawrence and all communities along the River,” said Denis Lapointe, Mayor of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield and Chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

At their meeting, the mayors passed resolutions pledging action on a series of important issues associated with the risk of spills on the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes and resource extraction in the region. These include issues such as improved preparedness and response to maritime spills in the face of increased volumes and changes in materials being transported, protection for communities from the negative effects of shale gas exploration, and opposition to the transportation of radioactive waste through the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence.

“We must find effective ways to work together to respond to the new emerging challenges on the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, to ensure the protection of the largest source of fresh water on earth, “ said Brian McMullan, Mayor of St. Catharines Ontario and Vice-Chair of the Cities Initiative.

At their meeting, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative also saluted Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, founder of the organization, for his inspirational leadership in founding the organization and supporting it over the last seven years. Mayor Daley has announced that he will be stepping down as mayor next Spring after twenty-two years of exceptional civic service.

“It has been an honour for me to work with Canadian and United States mayors to protect and restore the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence,” said Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley. “Today’s meeting highlights the fact that mayors are the most effective advocates for action and results that improve our environment and quality of life of our residents.”

The meeting also gave the mayors the opportunity to select the host of the Cities Initiative’s 2012 Annual Meeting and Conference. The Québec Metropolitan Community (CMQ) was chose as the host city.

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Denis Lapointe, Mayor of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Chair
Richard M. Daley, Mayor of Chicago, Founding United States Chair



“I am delighted that the Québec Metropolitan Community has been chosen as the next host of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative conference,” said Mayor Régis Labeaume, president of the Québec Metropolitan Community and Cities Initiative board member. “It will be our pleasure to welcome mayors from across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence to our city and region in 2012.”

The full text of resolutions adopted by the board at its mid-year meeting, as well as photographs of the event, may be found at www.glslcities.org .

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a bi-national coalition of over seventy mayors and other local officials that works actively with federal, state, tribal and First Nation and provincial governments and other stakeholders to advance the protection, restoration and promotion of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin. To learn more, please visit www.glslcities.org .

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