Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Alliance des villes des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent

MAKING WAVES

December 7, 2009

Ontario Minister's Annual Report Highlights Cities Initiative Work

Ontario Minister of the Environment, John Gerretsen's Annual Report brought to light work of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. The report highlighted the Canada Ontario Agreement Memorandum of Cooperation (COA MOC) and its success in bringing together Mayors, Ministers and the Federal Government. Minister Gerrestsen made note of the hope to extend the COA MOC agreement beyond 2010. The report also highlighted other water agenda items of the Ministry including working with the Cities Initiative on developing water conservation strategies and a planned program to work with the U.S. EPA on toxics strategies for the Great Lakes. The complete report from the Minister can be found at http://www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater/278655.pdf

Chicago Receives Smart Growth Achievement Award

The U.S. EPA announced its four recipients of the 2009 *Smart Growth Achievement Award*. The award focuses on the partnership between housing and transportation development while keeping environmental objectives at the forefront. The Chicago Housing Authority along with FitzGerald Associates Architects and Holsten Real Estate Development Corporation received their "Built City" recognition for the Parkside of Old Town project. The developed site is situated on an old public housing complex that was notorious for crime. The new Parkside of Old Town construction has allowed for redevelopment and reconnection with the downtown area. The mixed-income housing is among new parks, shops and restaurants. The EPA's Smart Growth Program helps many communities achieve their sustainable vision through research, grants and other assistance. More information on the program can be found at the Smart Growth website: www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/.

Thunder Bay Implementing Innovative Water Treatment Methods

In conjunction with Lakehead University, the City of Thunder Bay is implementing a pilot membrane filtration system at the Bare Point Water Treatment Plant. The new filtration system will reduce energy and chemical costs and prolong the life cycles of filtration membranes. The ultimate goal of the program is to lead to a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly water treatment facility. In addition, it will reduce watershed impact by reducing chemical agents and greenhouse gases in energy use. The project was partly funded by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund.

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Strong Ballast Water Standards set in Wisconsin

The state of Wisconsin recently issued a strict permit requiring foreign ships to treat ballast water in hopes of lessening the introduction of invasive species to their waters. The permit adopted by Wisconsin is more stringent than treatment standards outlined by the International Maritime Organization, however still less than standards from the states of New York and California. The U.S. Coast Guard has developed a draft rule on a ballast water treatment standard for U.S. waters, including the Great Lakes, which is currently out for public comment.

Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Barrier Maintenance

The Army Corps of Engineers performed maintenance to Electric Barrier IIA in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC) last week. Along with the scheduled maintenance the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the multi-agency Asian Carp Rapid Response workgroup moved ahead with the application of a fish toxicant, Rotenone, to a 5.7 mile stretch of the canal before the Barrier to prevent further movement of Asian carp towards Lake Michigan. To date only one Bighead Asian carp has been found after the Rotenone application. The Barrier returned to operation late on Friday December 4th and the workgroup continues to monitor areas of both the CSSC and the Calumet-Sag channel (which is located past the Barrier) with testing for Asian carp DNA. For more information on the Rapid Response plan please visit www.asiancarp.org/rapidresponse.

Save the Date – Cities Initiative Annual Member Meeting & Conference!

Mark your calendars - the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative 2010 Annual Member Meeting and Conference will be held June 16-18, 2010 in Milwaukee, WI! Stay tuned for more information on the 2010 Annual Member Meeting and Conference.

Membership

Join the 70 Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative members in protecting and restoring the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River by clicking here for a membership application. If you are already a member, please encourage your neighboring communities to join, and be sure to renew your membership when you receive your notice.

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