**Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council**
**Meeting Summary**
December 13, 2024
Approximately 3:03 p.m. EST

This was a virtual meeting. Remote participation was available to individuals registering at:
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6138758576111720540
Listen only mode is available by calling:
Canada: (647) 497-9429
United States: (213) 929-4221
Passcode: 524-067-955

**Notice:**
Notice of the meeting was provided to the public through the Great Lakes Information Network's distribution list on November 14, 2024. Notice was also posted to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Council (Compact Council) website at www.glslcompactcouncil.org. The notice included an announcement that the meeting agenda, draft resolutions and materials to be discussed during the meeting were available on the Compact Council's website. Call-in information was also posted to the front page of the Compact Council website.

**Call of Meeting:**
3:03 p.m. EST— The meeting was called to order by Karen Stainbrook, Great Lakes Programs Coordinator, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

**Roll Call:**
The following Compact Council members, constituting a quorum, were present:
**Illinois (alternate of Governor J.B. Pritzker):** Loren Wobig, Director, Office of Water Resources, Illinois Department of Natural Resources.
**Indiana (alternate of Governor Eric Holcomb)**: Ryan Mueller, Deputy Director, Indiana Department of Natural Resources.
**Michigan (alternate of Governor Gretchen Whitmer)**: James Clift, Deputy Director, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy.
**Minnesota (alternate of Governor Tim Walz)**: Jess Richards, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
**New York (alternate of Governor Kathy Hochul)**: Karen Stainbrook[1], Director, Bureau of Water Resource Management, Division of Water New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on behalf of James Tierney, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (ret).

[1] Signed proxy forms for individuals participating on behalf of official member designees are available upon request.

**Ohio (designee of Governor Mike DeWine)**: Brad Lodge[1], Water Inventory and Planning Program Manager, on behalf of Mary Mertz, Director, Ohio Department of Natural Resources.
**Pennsylvania (designee of Governor Josh Shapiro)**: Tim Bruno, Chief, Office of the Great Lakes, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
**Wisconsin (designee of Governor Tony Evers**): Adam Freihoefer[1], Water Use Section Chief, on behalf of Steven Little, Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

**Actions Taken**
***Review of June 13, 2024 Compact Council meeting minutes***
Ms. Stainbrook asked for a motion that the June 13, 2024 Compact Council meeting minutes be approved as posted. Mr. Clift moved to approve, and Mr. Wobig seconded the motion. The minutes were approved without objection.

**Reports**
Noting that the Regional Body meeting adjourned immediately prior to the Compact Council meeting, a motion was made by Mr. Mueller to incorporate minutes of the Regional Body reports into the Compact Council minutes. Mr. Wobig seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Pursuant to the approved motion, the following reports are incorporated by reference into the Compact Council's record and re-printed in their entirety below:

***State and Provincial updates on implementation of the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement (Agreement).***

***Without objection, all jurisdictions were granted permission to submit their reports in writing and have them incorporated into this Meeting Summary.***

**New York**

Ms. Stainbrook submitted the following report:

Good morning, I am Karen Stainbrook. I am the Director of the Water Resource Management Bureau in the Division of Water in the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. And I am serving as proxy for Don Zelazny.

NYS's Water Withdrawal Program continues to comply with the Compact & Regional Agreement. The DEC's Division of Water currently regulates by permit or registration all water withdrawal systems with the capacity to withdraw 100,000 gallons per day or more from either surface or groundwater sources within the Basin. For all types of water withdrawal facilities, each permit application requires the submittal of a water conservation plan. The main objective of the plan is to promote implementation of the most environmentally sound and economically feasible water conservation measures.

Components of these plans must include, at a minimum, 1) metering, 2) water auditing, 3) leak detection and repair and 4) outdoor water use management for public water suppliers. All registered or permitted facilities are required to submit an annual water withdrawal report to DEC. This includes over 700 actively reporting facilities within the Great Lakes Basin.

In 2024, DEC has issued 106 water withdrawal permits statewide, with 30 of those permits located within the Great Lakes basin.

NYS has continued to work on improving data quality, and the type of data that is made available to the public. Water withdrawal location information and individual water well information available on an online mapper called DECinfo Locator on the NYS DEC website. The data is also available in various map and tabular formats on NYS Open data.

New York achieved 100% annual water withdrawal reporting compliance for reporting year 2023. Annual reports for 2024 are starting to be collected for certain sectors. We continue to update our database and QA/QC the annual reporting data as necessary.

Earlier this year, DEC funded a New York Drought Summit in partnership with Cornell's Water Resources Institute to bring practitioners together to discuss drought monitoring tools, resources, management approaches, and communications needed to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of future droughts.

And finally, DEC is continuing to work through the rulemaking process for our Part 601 (water withdrawal) and Part 602 (Long Island well) program regulations. The rulemaking seeks to clarify current permitting requirements, definitions, and permitting exemptions. The express terms are currently posted for public comment on the Department webpage through January 23rd 2025.

We look forward to continuing to work with the other jurisdictions on common concerns and issues.

With that, I conclude my report.

**Illinois**

Lake Michigan continues to service almost 8 million people in the state. Illinois water Illinois' Diversion Accounting is managed by the IDNR and is overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Chicago District. The USACE's most recent certified diversion for water year (WY) 2019 (October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019) is **3198 cfs with a 40-year running average of 3066 cfs in accordance with the 1967 Supreme Court Decree amended in 1980 limiting Illinois' diversion to 3,200 cubic feet per second (cfs) based on a 40-year running average.** Illinois has turned its attention to

aging infrastructure water loss reduction and water reuse. Since the last report, the state has reached out to all Lake Michigan water allocation permittees to discuss their water system improvement plans and challenges with water use reporting. In compliance with the Compact, the Department continues to collect potable water supply, consumption, and water loss information from each of its 227 Lake Michigan Water Allocation Program permittees on an annual basis as required by their allocation permits.

***Lake Michigan Water Allocations*** **-** The Illinois Department of Natural Resources – Office of Water Resources issued revised permit allocations to all permittees this summer that reflected generally reduced allocations due to more specific knowledge of historic reported water use, improved water demand forecasts, and only accounting for 10% water loss or less. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) continues to develop new water demand forecasts. New Lake Michigan water allocation orders have now been issued to the Villages of Lemont, Romeoville, Oswego, Channahon, Minooka, Montgomery, the City of Crest Hill, the United City of Yorkville, and the Pekara System in Lake County bringing the total Lake Michigan Allocation orders in Illinois to 227. The Illinois DNR is also in preliminary conversations with 2 additional potential allocatees representing small scale water systems.

***Joliet*** - Joliet, Illinois continues to implement extensive water system improvement measures striving to achieve significant water loss reduction less than 10% by 2030 in accordance with the terms of their Lake Michigan Water Allocation permit. To enhance these efforts and achieve necessary water loss reduction goals, the city has engaged the services of Cavanaugh Solutions. Joliet has also significantly expanded their water use outreach and education efforts associated with smart water and conservation.

***Brandon Road*** In partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the state of Michigan, design of a standalone and functional Increment 1 (aka leading-edge deterrents) including sound and bubble deterrent systems and lowering the engineered channel bottom is complete for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project. The Project Team awarded the first construction contract for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project on November 27$^{th}$ for a portion of Increment 1 (known as 1B). The $15.5 million contract was awarded to Miami Marine Services for site preparation and riverbed rock removal for the engineered channel on that upstream portion of the site already owned by the state of Illinois. Miami Marine will partner with Michels Construction, Inc. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for completion of this contract. Site preparation, including tree removal road access and grading, is slated to begin on or about January 5$^{th}$ with bedrock removal beginning by the end of January. A Groundbreaking ceremony is planned for February 11, 2025 (noon – 1:30pm) at the construction site. A construction contract award for the remainder of Increment 1 construction is anticipated in the Spring of 2025 pending potential acquisition of riverbed land rights by Illinois in January 2025. In accordance with state permit conditions, design efforts have also recently been initiated by the state of Illinois and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to capital and operational

improvements proposed at the Jake Wolf Memorial Fish Hatchery in Illinois to mitigate upstream aquatic species impacts of the project on the Des Plaines River coincident with the start of construction. The states of Illinois and Michigan will take the lead on this component of the project as work-in-kind as part of the 10% non-federal cost share for the project. Illinois has also been advancing required local Thorn Creek storm sewer relocation designs for the project in-house. Illinois is advancing legal enforcement actions to clear private barges from an Illinois lease site in the vicinity of the proposed Increment 1 upstream boat ramp.

An Increment 2 Design solicitation package has been prepared and the Project Team is aiming for approval for Design Contract Solicitation by January 8th. Design of the planned Increment 2 electrical deterrent and right descending guide wall will remain in-house design. The Design team leadership continue to collaborate to address key project challenges including project costs, private land rights, and potentially hazardous waste remediation. The state of Illinois has also executed a Pre-Purchasers Agreement (coincidentally a PPA) with the USEPA that defines potential actions associated with the sampling, testing, evaluation, and potentially hazardous waste site remediation via Illinois EPA's voluntary Site Remediation Program (SRP) in exchange for federal liability protections. An USEPA public meeting seeking public comments related to this agreement is planned January 7, 2025.

In mid-December, Congress released their draft reconciled version of WRDA24 that included changing Brandon Road Project long term operation, maintenance, repairs, remediation, and replacement federal/state cost relationships from 80/20 to 90/10 for a period of 10-years before reverting back to the OMRR&R provisions of WRDA2020 and a 65/35 cost share relationship.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Honorable JB Pritzker, Governor of Illinois, Loren A. Wobig, P.E., CFM

**Indiana**

Mr. Mueller provided the following report:

Thank you, Madame Chair and good afternoon everyone. I'm Ryan Mueller, Deputy Director for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, representing Governor Eric Holcomb.

Today I'll provide a brief summary of water use in Indiana's portion of the basin for reporting year 2023

- Currently there are 1066 Significant Water Withdrawal Facilities (SWWF) registered in the Basin.
- SWWF has the capacity to withdrawal 100,000 gallons a day.
- Water use in the Basin for 2023 totaled approximately ~467 billion gallons

  - With groundwater accounting for 37 BG
  - And surface water accounting for 430 BG
- There has been a decrease of about 250 billion gallons of use over the last 5-10 years, mainly driven by Energy Production/Industrial users that have implemented conservation measures or that have ceased operations
- Staff have updated the DOW website with 2023 withdrawal data and have begun collecting water use data for the 2024 reporting year.

Recently, DNR released an RFP and accepted a vendor to complete upgrades to the Division of Water database. Specifically, upgrades to the Significant Water Withdrawal database and the water rights and use program will be addressed. These upgrades will increase efficiency and accessibility by water users and the public.

Thank you and this concludes my report.

**Michigan**

Mr. Clift submitted the following report:

**5-Year Program Review**
Michigan submitted its draft five-year Water Management and Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Review in June and the final version earlier this week. Michigan's program continues to fulfill Michigan's Compact requirements. There are no major changes to the program since the 2019 report. Since 2019, significant state investments have been made to enhance Michigan's Water Use program, especially in data collection and management, and agencies and partners have expanded and diversified outreach and engagement programming and activities to promote water conservation and efficiency.

In addition to early input meetings reported in June, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) held a formal government-to-government consultation with Michigan's federally recognized Tribal governments on September 17, 2024. The draft five-year report was also open for public comment for 45 days ending August 29, 2024, and EGLE accepted comments from Tribes and members of the Water Use Advisory Council (WUAC) until October 14, 2024.

**Implementation of WUAC Recommendations**
Michigan's Water Use Program continues to work with the WUAC to advance and improve Michigan's Program. The WUAC continues to play a key role in water management and water conservation and efficiency in Michigan.

The Michigan Legislature approved approximately $1.2 million to fund the WUAC's 2022 Biennial Legislative Report recommendations. EGLE management is currently identifying funding priorities to address the 2022 WUAC recommendations.

Work funded by the Legislature's appropriation of $10 million for implement the WUAC's 2020 recommendations is ongoing. Two of the funded recommendations were put forward by the council's Water Conservation and Efficiency Committee. Michigan State University Extension hired two additional educators focused on increasing educational programming on water conservation and efficiency for the agricultural sector and expanding programming to include animal industries. EGLE's Office of the Great Lakes awarded a grant to the Alliance for Water Efficiency for a project to identify innovations and technological advancements in water conservation best practices that can benefit Michigan's water sectors with a focus on business and industry sectors. This project will be co-funded by the WUAC's funding and the Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund.

**Water Infrastructure Investments**

Investing in water infrastructure remains a priority for Michigan. Governor Whitmer announced in April 2024 an additional $290 million to be split between the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). As part of this plan, through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, EGLE issued financing agreements to 72 projects for a total of $1.05 billion in low-interest loans in Fiscal Year 2024. Michigan was also one of only two states to receive an 'A' grade from the National Resources Defense Council equity report card for state revolving fund programs.

EGLE launched the Affordability and Planning grant program for water infrastructure. This program is part of Michigan's Clean Water Plan designed to provide funding to address water infrastructure needs across the state and assist communities in addressing affordability and planning needs. EGLE provided $5.7 million in funding. All grants have been awarded and projects are ongoing.

EGLE has partnered with Michigan Saves, the nation's first nonprofit green bank, to offer financing for the replacement of failing or near-failing septic systems through the Septic Replacement Loan Program (SRLP). The program provides low-interest financing options for loans up to $50,000 to Michigan homeowners looking to replace their septic systems. The program is accepting applications and has garnered a lot of public and media interest.

**Michigan Water Use**

To date, in calendar 2024, there have been 330 new large quantity withdrawals (LQW) registered or permitted. Program staff members conducted 125 reviews of these withdrawal requests or permit applications, and 205 were self-registered via the Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool.

For 2023, Michigan reported water withdrawals totaling 7,254 MGD, representing a more than 8 percent decrease from 2022 withdrawals. The largest water use was for the

self-supply thermoelectric power production (once-through cooling) sector which withdrew about 73 percent of Michigan's total withdrawal. Almost half of Michigan's withdrawals come from the Lake Michigan watershed. The decrease in overall withdrawals is primarily due to the decommissioning of two power plants in the Lake Erie watershed. Michigan also saw an increase in self-supply irrigation withdrawals with the addition of over 100 threshold facilities reporting in this sector in 2023.

**Data Collection, Data Warehouse, and Models**
Work continues to develop an agency-wide groundwater data warehouse. This will provide a common location and format for environmental data submitted by EGLE staff and external parties. The data warehouse system will be expanded in the future to include other types of environmental data (e.g., geologic, surface water, sediment, soils, soil gas). EGLE and the contractor are meeting regularly to advance the development of the system. Advancements in data collection and management are highlighted in the five-year review.

**MI Healthy Climate Plan Implementation**
Michigan continued to implement the MI Healthy Climate Plan and its goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. Among the many initiatives launched by the plan, EGLE offices and divisions are working together to develop and promote programs that reinforce the link between water conservation, energy conservation, and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. Grant programs also put an emphasis on underserved communities and environmental justice. The MI Healthy Climate Plan annual report will be released later in December.

**Outreach and Education**
EGLE continues to organize multiple events to address Michigan's education and outreach goals to promote water sustainability and stewardship. EGLE is working on a third phase of the From Students to Stewards Initiative that will include funding to cover field trip expenses to bring students to the Great Lakes for hands-on learning opportunities; to launch student-led, community-based water stewardship projects; and to organize and share statewide educational programming and resources in an online, searchable database. EGLE is currently developing this third phase for a launch in early 2025.

**Minnesota**

Mr. Richards submitted the following report

**Overview of Water Use in Minnesota's Lake Superior Basin**

- At the time of this report, there are 142 active water appropriations in Minnesota's Lake Superior Basin (18 fewer than at the time of the 2023 report).
- All facilities complied with the requirement to report water use.

- Total water withdrawals from the Basin excluding in-stream hydroelectric water use were 1,656 MGD in 2023. This represented a 12% decrease from 2022 water use.
    - 1,454 MGD were used for off-stream hydroelectric power production, the sector with greatest withdrawals.
        - This sector was the primary driver of decreased water use.
        - This decrease represents an 11% decrease from 2022 water use, primarily due to normal fluctuations.
    - 110 MGD were used for once-through cooling.
        - The increase here is due to normal energy production fluctuations at two plants.
    - 150 MGD were used for self-supply industrial activities.
- Consumptive use was 20 MGD, the same as in 2022.
- Total interbasin diversions were 12 MGD, and almost exclusively for self-supply industrial activities.
- While public water supply represents a small fraction of water use in the Basin, 10 of the 15 public water suppliers serving over 1,000 people within the Basin provided a water conservation report for 2023.
    - Minnesota has work to do to ensure that municipalities have effective rate structures and conservation ordinances in place, and we will address this in the upcoming 10-year water supply planning cycle.
    - Most conservation projects reported related to leak detection, water main repair, and meter repair or calibration.
- A majority of commercial, industrial, and institutional and agricultural water uses did not participate in the optional water conservation reporting system.

**Natural Resources and Conservation**

- The 2024 Minnesota Technical Assistance Program intern program sponsored 9 young professionals to work on water conservation or wastewater loading reduction projects.
- Minnesota DNR continues to make progress toward delisting the St. Louis River as a Great Lakes Area of Concern (AOC) by completing large-scale habitat restoration projects and coordinating the AOC program with our partners at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
    - As of 9/30/2024, 78.8% of all Minnesota and Wisconsin actions are complete.
    - The next goal for removing beneficial use impairments is 2028:
        - Beach closings and body contact restrictions
        - Restrictions on dredging
        - Loss of fish and wildlife habitat.

**Education Programs**

- The Minnesota DNR coordinates Project WET outreach for a wide variety of audiences, reaching over 6,700 students and educators with hands-on water stewardship programming through water festivals, field days, and more.

**Ohio**

Mr. Lodge submitted the following report:

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources ("ODNR") collected and compiled data on Ohio's 2023 Lake Erie Basin water withdrawals, consumptive uses, and diversions. ODNR staff submitted this report to the Great Lakes Commission for the Great Lakes Water Use Database. 100 percent of registered Water Withdrawal Facilities within the basin completed and returned their annual water use reports.

Registrations and permitting for 2024:

- Eight new Water Withdrawal Registrations were approved within the Lake Erie Basin.
    - Seven for agriculture irrigation, one temporary pond fill
- No new Diversion or High-Capacity Withdrawal Permits were applied for or issued within the Lake Erie Basin.
- In January 2023, ODNR introduced its first online application for current registered facilities to report their annual water use electronically. 1,575 of the 2,100 registered active facilities obtained the required login credentials and reported online. New water users may also use the portal to register a new facility or make edits to their existing registration.

In January 2025, ODNR will launch the Water Withdrawal Facility Locator Application. The new tool will allow for all interested parties to easily access Ohio's Water Withdrawal Facility information and their accompanying historical water withdrawal data. Users will be able to export data in various formats, create and print maps, and submit custom data requests.

ODNR's Groundwater Program is completing an almost three-year project to create new, seamless, statewide maps and datasets for Ohio of both anticipated aquifer yield and hydraulic conductivity. The new maps will contain information about primary and secondary aquifer designations, the hydraulic conductivity of the primary aquifer, primary and secondary aquifer yield in gallons per minute, and information about the relative position of the primary to secondary aquifer, when present. These maps are the result of extensive data collection, compilation, and interpretation, much of which was not available when these parameters were last evaluated. This project was partially funded by the Ohio Water Development Authority. Final maps and associated digital data will be released in January 2025.

ODNR is currently installing ten new groundwater observation wells in Willaims, Defiance, and Fulton counties. This project will advance our understanding of the aquifers in northwest Ohio and provide new, high-quality data and opportunities for long-term monitoring of groundwater. In addition to ten new groundwater observation wells, new pumping tests and geophysical logging will be performed. The data from these tests can be used for future groundwater studies, models, and as references for future drilling or withdraws. This project was funded in part by Ohio H.B. 33 as a one-time priority project to determine an estimate of storage capacity and maximum annual yield of the network of aquifers that are north of the Maumee River in Ohio. Final observation well installation will be completed in early 2025 and aquifer testing will occur in Spring 2025.

In December 2023, ODNR and Ohio EPA designed a comprehensive Central Ohio Water Study to assess water infrastructure in the region, and project how both population and economic growth will impact the region's water resources. The 15-county study inventoried water supply and demand and analyzed where improvements can be made to the distribution and discharge of water. Deliverables from the study are expected February 28, 2025. Upon the completion of the Central Ohio Study, it is expected that the study area will expand region by region to complete a full State of Ohio Report.

ODNR continued ex-officio membership with the Concentrated Animal Feeding Facility Advisory Committee. This Committee advises the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) on problems the state faces with large-scale livestock farms. 2024's focus was on manure application rule review. ODNR continues to work with ODA to raise awareness about Ohio's water use rules and regulations. Strengthening the tie between ODNR and ODA's Permitting Programs is beneficial to both Department's missions and helps reach a broader audience.

Water conservation and efficiency continues to be a high priority for ODNR. Conservation and efficiency initiatives for calendar year 2024 include the following:

- Water conservation webpages were updated with current conservation publications and materials.
- ODNR continues its active participation as a member of the Alliance for Water Efficiency.
- In 2025, ODNR will begin accepting submissions for the State of Ohio Water Conservation Awards for Excellence. Targeted at Ohio's 2,100 active water withdrawal facilities, users can now submit their best management practices and/or water conservation initiatives that transcend conventional notions of water conservation and set examples to water users statewide. ODNR will award the facility with the highest score at the end of 2025.
- ODNR became a member of the Ohio WateReuse Chapter – a coalition of utilities and businesses that recycle water and focus on innovation in water reuse. The priority goal of the Chapter and the parent organization is to "advance laws, regulations, funding, and public acceptance for water recycling.

- The ConServe Ohio initiative continues its efforts to integrate sustainability into every aspect of Ohio's State Parks and public lands. ConServe supports Ohio's commitment to the Great Lakes Compact by promoting responsible water use and ensuring the health of watersheds connected to Lake Erie and the Great Lakes Basin. Through the use of JadeTrack, a utility management software, ODNR is expanding its water use monitoring at State Parks to guide sustainable water management.
- Ohio's 2024 Annual Water Conservation & Efficiency Program Review document was compiled and submitted to the Regional Body and Compact Council.

In 2019, ODNR shared Governor DeWine's H2Ohio initiative, which is a water quality initiative to ensure safe and clean water for all Ohioans. The Governor, along with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Lake Erie Commission, and many partners, including the Ohio Agriculture Conservation Initiative (OACI) have worked together to invest in projects across Ohio that will reduce nutrients and provide other long-term economic and water quality benefits to communities and ecosystems statewide. This program is a comprehensive, data-driven approach to improving water quality and is focused on reducing phosphorus, creating wetlands, addressing failing septic systems, and preventing lead contamination. Progress from each participating agency to date includes the following:

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

- Among the latest of ODNR's ongoing efforts is the restoration of a barrier wetland in Sandusky Bay along Lake Erie's coast. Similarly, in Maumee Bay, another endeavor will rebuild the Clark and Delaware/Horseshoe islands. These restoration projects will improve water quality by reducing sedimentation, nutrient loadings, and shoreline erosion. Secondary benefits include creating wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. Additionally, in November of this year, ODNR celebrated its 200th wetland restoration project commencement.

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency:

- In fiscal year 2024, Ohio EPA awarded more than 300 communities across the state a total of $27.5 million in grants for water and wastewater infrastructure, equipment needed to maintain drinking water infrastructure, water reuse projects, and roadway salt reduction grants.

Ohio Department of Agriculture:

- Previously offered only to farmers in Ohio's 24 Western Lake Erie Basin counties, incentives are now being offered statewide. Efforts include:
  - 3,200+ agreements signed by producers to implement best management practices on farms.
  - 22. million acres are now enrolled in voluntary nutrient management plans.
  - More than 22,300 acres of watershed improved by conservation ditch projects

- Created the online application, MyFarm, to make accessing and uploading producer data more streamlined and creates the opportunity for new partnerships in the private sector of the agricultural industry.

Ohio Lake Erie Commission:

- This year, the Lake Erie Commission partnered with ODNR to improve estimates of load reductions from constructed or enhanced wetlands, and with ODA to leverage the MyFarms software to model and summarize field-based nutrient reductions.

H2Ohio's New Rivers Initiative

- In 2023, Governor DeWine expanded the H2Ohio initiative with a program called the H2Ohio Rivers program to focus on improving and maintaining the health of Ohio's large rivers. With funding from the Ohio General Assembly, the H2Ohio Rivers program has launched six new initiatives:
- Statewide survey to measure per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances in its large rivers.
- H2Ohio Chloride Reduction Grant Program – helps communities improve road salt storage and handling to reduce salt runoff into Ohio waterbodies.
- Administering funding for litter cleanup in and along more than 20 rivers across Ohio. ODNR launched the H2Ohio Healthy Rivers Livery Grant Program to help increase volunteer opportunities and purchase equipment needed to collect, haul, and remove large litter items.
- Conducting mussel surveys.
- Removing dams across the state.
- Identifying, acquiring, and preserving high quality riparian areas.

**Pennsylvania**

Mr. Bruno submitted the following report:

Pennsylvania continues to implement the requirements of the Compact and Agreement through facilitating state and local programs on water use. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) submitted the Great Lakes water withdrawal and consumptive use statistics for Water Year 2023 for compilation into the Annual Report of the Great Lakes Regional Water Use Database. Additionally, DEP submitted the questionnaire response for the 5-Year Water Management Program Review to the Compact Secretariat that details how Pennsylvania is meeting the commitments of the Compact and Agreement.

Pennsylvania continues to achieve reductions in overall Great Lakes water use. In Water Year 2023, the total Pennsylvania Great Lakes Basin withdrawal amount was 28.0 mgal/d, an 8.2 percent decrease from Water Year 2022 and the lowest overall water withdrawn since the inception of the Compact and Agreement. The reduction was

accounted for by a 7.5 percent decrease in public water supply use and an 18 percent decrease in water use for self-supply livestock, both associated with normal fluctuations. The majority (25.2 mgal/d or 89.7 percent) of the total withdrawn for 2023 was used for public water supply purposes, followed by self-supplied livestock, with a total withdrawal amount of 2.4 mgal/day, and self-supplied irrigation use of 0.4 mgal/day. The estimated total consumptive use was 3.0 mgal/d, mostly accounted for by public water supply at 83.7 percent of the total. Pennsylvania currently has no diversions within our jurisdiction.

DEP continues to maintain the Great Lakes Program webpages which include information about the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Compact and Agreement. Resources available on the site include Pennsylvania Great Lakes Water Resources Inventory and Reporting document. Interested individuals can view registered water users within the Pennsylvania Great Lakes Basin and view their annual water use from the 2005 Water Year forward. This document and other information regarding the DEP Great Lakes Program can be found at the DEP webpage dep.pa.gov and searching “Great Lakes Program”.

DEP is excited to announce that in February 2025 two new staff positions will be joining the Interstate Water Resources Management Division and their focus will be on Great Lakes policy and projects. These new positions will increase Pennsylvania’s participation on Great Lakes Basin technical and science committees and connecting funding resources to on-the-ground programs and projects to advance water quality improvements and increase water management, conservation, and efficiency efforts. Finally, over recent weeks DEP updated a team of policy, legal, and permitting staff to examine current regulatory methods of implementing the Compact and Agreement in Pennsylvania. A 2025 timeline is being developed for a potential administrative rulemaking process.

**Wisconsin**

Mr. Freihoefer submitted the following report:

<u>Water Use</u>
Wisconsin DNR submitted its 2023 water use data to the Great Lakes Commission for the annual Great Lakes water use report. Wisconsin withdrew approximately 3.7 billion gallons of water per day from the Great Lakes basin in 2023. While Wisconsin’s Great Lakes water use has remained relatively consistent over the past 5 years, certain regions of the irrigation sector saw a sizeable uptick in their 2023 water use due to drought conditions. More details on Wisconsin’s Great Lakes basin water use are part of the Great Lakes Commission annual water use report.

The Wisconsin DNR also plans to release a 2023 Water Use report on the Wisconsin DNR water use webpage. The report will examine the impact of the 2023 drought on the various water use sectors.

Water Management and Water Conservation Program Report

Wisconsin submitted its water management and consumptive use program report on December 11, 2024. The draft report was initially provided to the Regional Body and Compact Council in July 2024 and made available for public comment. The Wisconsin DNR also offered a conference call with Wisconsin Tribes to discuss the draft report. Based on the comments Wisconsin received the draft was updated into a final report.

Water Supply Service Area Plans

As part of Wisconsin's Compact implementing legislation Wisconsin requires communities to develop these plans by December 2025. A water supply service area plan is a general planning document communities use to conduct long-term water supply planning and to demonstrate that a public water supply system can supply an adequate and sustainable amount of water over a twenty year planning period. These plans are required for all communities that serve a population of 10,000 people or more, however Wisconsin DNR review is only required for communities increasing a withdrawal of Great Lakes water or applying for a diversion of Great Lakes water. In July 2024, Wisconsin DNR promulgated a rule to provide guidance on developing the plans. More information on the plans can be found at dnr.wi.gov, search "water supply service area plans" or visit https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WaterUse/ImplementationRules.

**Administrative reports.**

Ms. Stainbrook invited Peter Johnson on behalf of the Regional Body's Secretariat, to give an administrative report. Mr. Johnson reported the following:

- As you know, the Agreement and Compact require the States and Provinces every five years to submit reports on the Water Management Programs as well as their Water Conservation and Efficiency Programs. These reports are then reviewed by the other members of the Regional Body and Compact Council, with a Declaration of Finding as to whether such programs are consistent with the Agreement and Compact or, if inconsistent, what steps should be taken to bring make the programs consistent with the commitments of the Agreement and Compact.
- These reports have been received and will be posted on the Regional Body and Compact Council websites next week. The members of the Regional Body and Compact Council will then be reviewing the reports, with the plan to issue Declarations of Findings next year.

- I would also note that most of the State and Provincial annual water conservation and efficiency assessments have been submitted and are available online. One is still going through reviews and we hope to have it posted shortly.
- An updated Science Strategy was adopted at the Regional Body/Compact Council's summer meeting. The Science Strategy's first year focus will be on Agricultural Water Use and Water Efficiency. We have a session at the 2025 IAGLR conference in Milwaukee focusing on Agricultural Water Use and Water Efficiency in a Time of Climate Change and how policy may be shaped to address these extremes. We encourage individuals to submit a proposal for the session, which are due on Monday, so please move quickly if you haven't done so already.
- The next full Science Team meeting will be a virtual meeting on January 30, and will be open to States, Provinces, Tribes, First Nations and Métis Communities as well as our Advisory Committee. For those who are invited you should have received a link to a calendar invite, but if you are having difficulty accessing please let me know and I can send you a link directly. Recordings of some of the presentations will be posted thereafter.
- On September 10, I provided a "Compact 101" presentation to the non-partisan Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus and its new generation of legislators from across the region. The presentation included an overview of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement and the Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact.
- In late October, I would note that I attended the first in-person meeting of the Board of Advisors for the new Global Center for Climate Change and Transboundary Waters (GCTW) at the University of Michigan. The GCTW will lead innovative research to understand and generate resilience to water crises in transboundary regions. The Advisory Board includes experts in water governance and governmental affairs, Indigenous relations, conservation science and water management, environmental law and policy, and climate change. As an Advisor, I look forward to the opportunity to share my experience developing and implementing the Great Lakes Compact and Agreement, helping to attract large-scale funding for restoration and protection, and insights gained from international partners. This is a great organization, and I encourage folks to learn more about their work at gctwaters.org.
- In addition, on October 23-25, Dave Naftzger and I attended the United Nations' 10th session of the meeting of the partners to its water convention in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The conference focused on transboundary waters and the importance of cooperation to address climate change. It provided a great opportunity to share challenges faced and lessons learned from across the world. It also became clear that the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region is a leader on many

fronts relating to transboundary water management, and we are looking for opportunities to share those experiences while also learning from others where they have knowledge that may be of particular value to us.

- These are just some of our more recent activities and I would be happy to share more information about our work with anybody who is interested in reaching out.
- The next in-person meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 18, 2024 in Chicago, with the Science Team meetings taking place June 16-17, the Advisory Committee meeting taking place on the 17th, and the public meeting the morning of the 18th. Please mark your calendars.

Ms. Stainbrook next invited James Polidori of the Great Lakes Commission to report on the 2023 Water Use Report released by the Great Lakes Commission. Mr Polidori reported the following:

Since 1988, the Great Lakes Commission has maintained a database of water use information in support of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Water Resources Compact and Sustainable Water Resources Agreement.

On behalf of the Commission, I'm happy to present the 2023 annual report of the Great Lakes regional water use database.

This report represents an ongoing collaboration between the Great Lakes Commission, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers, and the state and provincial water managers who submitted their respective jurisdictions' 2023 water use to the database in August.

Commission staff reviewed the jurisdiction reports and held follow up phone calls with each water use manager throughout September to identify and correct any potentials errors in the data. These calls also helped clarify changes in water use from prior years. These changes are noted in the annual report.

Drafts of the annual report were reviewed by the water use managers and a draft of the full report was circulated to members of the Compact Council and Regional Body for review. We received comments in early November and incorporated them into the final report.

Because reported net losses to the basin totaled more than 50 million gallons per day, Commission staff prepared an interim cumulative impact assessment that is appended to the Annual Report.

While reporting compliance rates fluctuated by jurisdiction and use sector, five jurisdictions - Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania - reported 100% compliance in all relevant sectors.

A few highlights from this year's report include:

- In 2023, the states and provinces withdrew 35.4 billion gallons (154 billion liters) per day from the basin. This represents about a 13% decrease from reported withdrawals in 2022.
- The primary water use sectors in 2023 were self-supply thermoelectric power production (once-through cooling), public water supply, and self-supply industrial, which cumulatively represented almost 90% of total withdrawals from the basin.
- The total reported diversion out of the basin in 2023 was 1.06 billion gallons (4.2 billion liters) per day. About 88 percent of the basin-wide outgoing diversion, totaling 915 million gallons (3.46 billion liters) per day, was associated with the Illinois diversion, which diverts water from Lake Michigan into the Mississippi River watershed.
- The reported amount associated with the Illinois diversion decreased by about 5 percent from 2022.
- The largest reported diversions into the Basin were the Long Lac and Ogoki diversions, which divert water from the Hudson Bay watershed into Lake Superior. These diversions contributed about 2.38 billion gallons (8.99 billion liters) per day to the basin in 2023.
- The reported amount associated with the Long Lac and Ogoki diversions decreased by about 38 percent from 2022. Despite this change, both 2022 and 2023 Long Lac and Ogoki diversion amounts are well within the range of flow variability observed from 1944-2015.
- Overall, the net diversion, (or outgoing diversions plus incoming diversions and diversion returns) represented a gain of 1.35 billion gallons (5.1 billion liters) per day, meaning more water was diverted into than out of the basin in 2023.
- The total reported consumptive use - the portion of the water withdrawn or withheld from the basin that is lost from or otherwise not returned to the basin due to evaporation, incorporation into products or other processes - was 1.89 billion gallons (7.16 billion liters) per day in 2023, representing a 2 percent decrease from the total 2022 consumptive use.
- The public water supply sector had the greatest consumptive use, accounting for 33 percent of the basin’s total consumptive use. The self-supply industrial and self-supply irrigation sectors comprised most of the rest of the consumptive uses, accounting for 25 percent and 24 percent of the basin’s total consumptive use, respectively.
- Considering both consumptive use and diversions, the basin lost a total of 545 million gallons (2.06 billion liters) per day in 2023. By comparison, the basin gained a total of 819 million gallons (3.1 billion liters) per day in 2022.

- The increase in incremental water losses to the basin from 2022 to 2023 is due to the decrease in the Long Lac and Ogaki diversions into Lake Superior.

I would like to thank the water use managers for their help throughout the process; this work would not have been possible without their coordination and expertise.

Lastly, I would like to share an update regarding the database and its public-facing website. From winter 2023 to summer 2024, the Great Lakes Commission contracted with the Digital Industry Group (DIG) to release an updated Great Lakes Water Use Database website that is more secure and makes it easier for the public to access water use data.

Upgrades to the site include: a streamlined, more intuitive process for water use data managers to report their jurisdictions' data and metadata; an improved public-facing "create a query" tool that allows users to create charts based on their specific data selections; and enhanced security features to better protect data before it is published.

The report and supporting data have been posted to the updated database website at: www.waterusedata.glc.org

I am happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

**Opportunity for public comments.**
***Members of the public were given an opportunity to ask questions or provide comments.***

No public comments were received.

**New Business.**
*Consideration of Resolution #55 Affirmation of Basin Wide Conservation and Efficiency Objectives*
Ms. Stainbrook stated that the first item of business to be considered is Resolution #55, the Affirmation of Basin-Wide Conservation and Efficiency Objectives. She noted these objectives are reviewed every five years, and after review by the Compact Council members, a Resolution has been drafted to affirm the existing objectives. She also noted that each of the States has developed programs consistent with these objectives, and nothing prevents the individual States from engaging in new approaches in meeting these objectives.

Mr. Freihoefer moved for the resolution to be adopted, and Mr. Richards seconded the motion. The resolution was adopted without objection.

*Consideration of Resolution #56 Election of Chair and Vice Chair*
Ms. Stainbrook noted that the next order of business is consideration of Resolution #56--Election of Chair and Vice-Chair. The resolution would elect the Governor of Illinois to serve as the Compact Council Chair, and the Governor of Ohio to serve as the Compact Council Vice-Chair, beginning immediately after this meeting until the next Annual Meeting of the Compact Council, to be held on or about December 8, 2024. Mr. Mueller moved the resolution, and Mr. Clift seconded the resolution. The resolution was adopted without objection.

*Consideration of Resolution #57—Adoption of Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.* The Chair noted that the proposed budget and the resolution granting approval of the budget were previously distributed to the members and were posted on the Compact Council website. Upon asking for a motion to grant approval of the resolution and a second, Mr. Mueller moved that the resolution be adopted, with Mr. Clift seconding the motion.

Because the vote must be unanimous, a roll call vote of all members was initiated:

Illinois—Yes
Indiana—Yes
Michigan—Yes
Minnesota—Yes
New York—Yes
Ohio—Yes
Pennsylvania—Yes
Wisconsin—Yes
The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote.

**Adjournment**
Ms. Stainbrook invited a motion to adjourn and a second. Mr. Mueller moved and Mr. Clift seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was then passed without objection and the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m. EST.

The full text of the materials discussed at the meeting is available online at www.compactcouncil.org.