



GREAT LAKES UNITED

November 22, 1989

Mr. Ron Shimizu
Environment Canada
55 St. Clair Avenue, East
Seventh Floor
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M2

Ms. Carol Finch
Great Lakes National
Program Office
US EPA Region V
230 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604

RE: Draft Canada/United States Framework for Lakewide
Management Plans for Critical Pollutants

Dear Ms. Finch and Mr. Shimizu:

The following comments have been prepared in response to the request of the parties for quick review and commentary on the document Draft Canada/United States Framework for Lakewide Management for Critical Pollutants.

Great Lakes United strongly supports the need for the development of Lakewide Management Plans as outlined in the 1987 Protocol revising the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1978 (GLWQA). These plans should provide a necessary framework for achieving and evaluating the progress made towards the goal of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.

Great Lakes United recognizes that the Framework for Lakewide Management Plans, as it is currently written, restricts the Plans to a focus on toxic chemicals and critical pollutants in particular. As you are aware, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement calls for an ecosystem approach to management of the lakes. An ecosystem approach necessitates that issues such as toxic chemical pollution cannot be dealt with in isolation from other issues. It is therefore imperative that the introduction to the Framework of the Plans state clearly the importance and necessity of ensuring the compatibility and coordination of the critical pollutants plans with other lakewide efforts embodied in the Agreement and activities such as the Lake Plans of the Fishery Commission. To ensure that the critical pollutant plans

"An international organization dedicated to conserving and protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River"

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are not confused with overall ecosystem management plans, it may be necessary to rename them as Lakewide Critical Pollutant Plans. This would ensure a public perception that these plans are only one component of an overall Lakewide Management Plan.

As we discussed at the workshop in Toronto on November 17, it is imperative that it be stated in the introduction to the document that the Critical Pollutant Plans are a framework for understanding, evaluating and promoting additional effort towards achieving the GLWQA's goal of zero discharge of persistent toxic substances. As the document is currently written, it implies a retreat from that goal. In particular, GLU is extremely concerned that, throughout the document, the implied goal of the Plans is to achieve specific water quality objectives as specified by the Agreement. (See Page 2, paragraph 3 and Page 5, item F.) The objectives of the GLWQA are only interim goals towards virtual elimination of persistent toxic substances. The Critical Pollutants plans must therefore strongly reinforce the ultimate goal and not imply a weakened commitment to achieving that goal.

The Critical Pollutants Plans are a framework for evaluating pollution control efforts, and it is necessary that biological endpoints be incorporated into the Plans. The reproductive success of fish and wildlife and tissue concentrations of chemicals must form a major portion of the basis for evaluation and action. As it is currently written, the Framework does not place sufficient emphasis on biological measurements.

The Lakewide Critical Pollutants Plan must incorporate and be a basis for evaluating Remedial Action Plan (RAP) programs. The development of Critical Pollutant Plans must include information on the programs and strategies devised to address local area toxic chemical problems and be a basis for evaluating the impact of those Plans on the overall lake. Communication and cooperation in the development of RAPs and Critical Pollutants Plans is a necessity. A description of how RAPs and Lakewide Critical Pollutants Plans are to mesh should be incorporated into the Framework.

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GLU strongly supports the recommendations in Section VI of the Framework for a variety of mechanisms to incorporate public involvement and input. We feel it is necessary, however, to further define this input and to clarify the key decision points in the process which require public input.

GLU suggests that the development of the Plans be seen as a three-phase process with key decision points at the end of each phase.

Phase 1: Investigation

The information collection phase should involve Steps A, B and C (Pages 4 - 5). At the end of this phase, a broad effort to receive public feedback on the information and the designation of critical pollutants must be made.

Phase 2: Development of Draft Plan

This would include Steps D - F (Page 5). At the conclusion of this phase, a draft plan would be prepared and circulated for public comment.

Phase 3: Implementation Stage

This would include Steps G and H (Page 5). The final plan would be prepared, and implementation responsibilities would be assigned. Again, this is a critical decision point which requires broad public input.

In addition to the three stages listed above, it seems imperative that the Critical Pollutants Plan be constantly evaluated and revised based on surveillance and monitoring. A yearly progress report and evaluation with full public input is necessary.

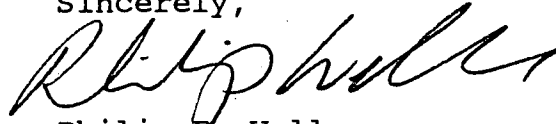
Based on the frustration we feel in seeing permit and development decisions made without recognition of the GLWQA, we would recommend that in each year's annual report, permits given by the agencies in that lake basin should be included as an appendix and the toxic contaminant loads they permit should be summarized in the main text.

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Finally, we wish to convey our concern that, while we support the overall framework outlined for Lakewide Critical Pollutants Plans, we are extremely concerned that adequate personnel and financial resources are not now available to develop and implement the plans. Failure to provide sufficient resources to develop and implement these plans will undermine public confidence and support for the plans. Resources for developing and implementing RAPs are already inadequate; and, if these plans only serve to stretch existing resources further, then the overall clean-up effort in the Great Lakes will be further compromised.

It is imperative that sufficient resources be provided for staff to work on developing these plans and that sufficient resources are available to facilitate effective public input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Weller", written in a cursive style.

Philip B. Weller
Executive Director

PW/hld
cc: GLU Board of Directors