

MEDIA RELEASE



International Joint Commission
Commission mixte internationale

For Release: February 10, 1999 at 2:00 p.m.

IJC to investigate water use, diversion and removal policies

The United States and Canadian federal governments today asked the International Joint Commission (IJC) to examine and report on the use, diversion and removal of waters along the common border. The governments noted that "boundary water resources continue to be the subject of ever-increasing demands in the light of expanding populations" and that "proposals to use, divert and remove greater amounts of such waters can be expected."

The request from governments comes in the wake of proposals to export water overseas from Canada and litigation involving the export of water from Canada to the United States. Both governments are concerned that existing management principles and conservation measures may be inadequate to ensure future sustainable use of shared waters.

The need to review the management and use of transboundary water resources was raised by the IJC in a 1997 report entitled *The IJC and the 21st Century*. The IJC said such a review is needed to ensure that water and related are managed a rational, consistent and anticipatory way to prevent transboundary disputes.

"The importance of binational cooperation in addressing these critical issues cannot be overstated," said Leonard Legault, Chairman of the IJC's Canadian Section in response to today's request from the two governments.

"In conducting this investigation, the IJC will consult with federal, provincial and state governments, international and regional organizations, and other relevant sources inside and outside of government," said Thomas Baldini, chair of the IJC's U.S. Section.

The request from the governments asks the IJC to examine, report upon and provide recommendations on the following matters which may have effects on levels and flows of water within transboundary basins and shared aquifers:

1. Existing and potential consumptive uses of water;
2. Existing and potential diversions of water in and out of the transboundary basins, including withdrawals of water for export;
3. The cumulative effects of existing and potential diversions and removals of water, including removals in bulk for export;
4. The current laws and policies as may affect the sustainability of the water resources in boundary and transboundary basins.

The governments have asked the IJC to build on its experience, notably its study of Great Lakes diversions and consumptive uses that concluded in 1985, and to submit interim recommendations for the protection of Great Lakes waters within six months. A final report making recommendations on the broader issue of U.S.-Canada shared waters is requested within six months of the interim recommendations.

As it addresses these matters, the IJC will undertake broad consultations with all interested parties. As a first priority, the International Joint Commission will hold a series of eight public hearings in the first week of March at the locations below:

Chicago	Toronto
Cleveland	Montreal
Rochester, NY	Windsor
Duluth	Sault Ste. Marie, ON

Dates will be announced in local media and on the IJC Web Site (www.ijc.org). The Commission also intends to hold workshops in the eastern and western border regions of the continent to obtain advice on the questions posed by governments, particularly as they might apply to the broader issue of Canada-U.S. shared waters outside the Great Lakes basin.

In addition to the public hearings, the IJC invites all interested parties to submit written comment on this investigation to the addresses below:

Secretary, Canadian Section
100 Metcalfe Street, 18th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5M1
Fax 613.993.5583
Email Commission@ottawa.ijc.org

Secretary, United States Section
1250 23rd Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20440
Fax 202.736.9015
Email Commission@washington.ijc.org

The International Joint Commission is a binational Canada-U.S. organization established by the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. It assists the governments in managing waters along the border for the benefit of both countries in a variety of ways including examining issues referred to it by the two federal governments.

More information, including the full text of the letter of reference, may be found on the Commission's web site, at www.ijc.org.

Contacts:

Washington, D.C.	Frank Bevacqua	202.736.9024
Ottawa, ON	Fabien Lengellé	613.995.0088



International Joint Commission
Commission mixte internationale

MEDIA RELEASE

For Release: February 22, 1999

IJC to hold public hearings on uses, diversions, and bulk exports of Great Lakes water

The International Joint Commission (IJC) will begin a major investigation of how Canada and the United States use the waters along their common border by holding public hearings in eight cities on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Times and locations are provided below.

On February 10, the United States and Canadian federal governments asked the IJC to examine and report on the consumption, diversion and removal of waters along the common border, including removals in bulk for export.

The request from governments comes in the wake of proposals to export water overseas from Canada and litigation involving the export of water from Canada to the United States. Both governments are concerned that existing management principles and conservation measures may be inadequate to ensure future sustainable use of shared waters.

The need to review the management and use of transboundary water resources was raised by the IJC in a 1997 report entitled *The IJC and the 21st Century*. The IJC said such a review is needed to ensure that water and related resources are managed in a rational, consistent and anticipatory way to prevent transboundary disputes. In their letters of reference to the IJC for the new investigation, the governments repeat the concern that proposals to use, divert and remove greater amounts of such waters can be expected.

The request from the governments asks the IJC to examine, report upon and provide recommendations on the following matters which may have effects on levels and flows of water within transboundary basins and shared aquifers:

1. Existing and potential consumptive uses of water;
2. Existing and potential diversions of water in and out of the transboundary basins, including withdrawals of water for export;
3. The cumulative effects of existing and potential diversions and removals of water, including removals in bulk for export;
4. The current laws and policies as may affect the sustainability of the water resources in boundary and transboundary basins.

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The governments have asked the IJC to build on its experience, notably its study of Great Lakes diversions and consumptive uses that concluded in 1985, and to submit interim recommendations for the protection of Great Lakes waters within six months. A final report making recommendations on the broader issue of U.S.-Canada shared waters is requested within six months of the interim recommendations.

The eight public hearings will be held from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on the dates and at the locations listed below:

March 17, 1999 Cleveland Wyndham Cleveland Hotel Ballroom Level 1260 Euclid Avenue Cleveland, Ohio 216.615.7500	March 17, 1999 Montréal Marriott Château Champlain Caf' Conc' Room 1 Place du Canada Montréal, Québec 514.878.9000
March 18, 1999 Chicago Palmer House Hilton Wabash Room 17 East Monroe Street Chicago, Illinois 312.726.7500	March 18, 1999 Toronto Crowne Plaza Hotel Ballroom A 225 Front Street West Toronto, Ontario 416.597.1400
March 22, 1999 Sault Ste. Marie (ON) Ramada Inn & Convention Centre Centre Ballroom 229 Great Northern Road Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario 705.741.0316	March 23, 1999 Windsor The Cleary International Centre Room Dieppe A 201 Riverside Drive West Windsor, Ontario 519.252.8311
March 24, 1999 Duluth Radisson Hotel Duluth Harborview Great Hall 505 West Superior Street Duluth, Minnesota 218.727.8981	March 25, 1999 Rochester (NY) Marriott-Rochester Airport 1890 West Ridge Road Salon A Rochester, New York 716.225.6880

All interested persons and organizations are encouraged to submit comment. Due to time constraints, speakers may only have the opportunity to summarize their comments (five minutes) during the public hearing. Written comment may also be submitted at the public hearings, or the the IJC offices during the course of this investigation:

Secretary, Canadian Section
100 Metcalfe Street, 18th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5M1
Fax 613.993.5583
Email Commission@ottawa.ijc.org

Secretary, United States Section
1250 23rd Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20440
Fax 202.736.9015
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