

*Great Lakes Board of State Directors*

*A Call to Action to the Leaders of the Great Lakes Project:*

*A Global Priority in The Nature Conservancy's Campaign for a Sustainable Planet and 2015 Goal*

## Charter Roles and Responsibilities

JUNE 2008

### CONSERVATION IMPERATIVE

The Great Lakes Project is an ambitious new collaborative effort among The Nature Conservancy's eight state programs bordering a global freshwater priority: the Great Lakes. The Nature Conservancy's 2015 goal and vision articulated by the Campaign for a Sustainable Planet compel us to build on and enhance The Nature Conservancy's long history and tradition of site-based conservation through state-based programs, and reach for a new model to meet the needs and demands of one of the world's most important freshwater ecosystems. The Conservancy's unique niche is innovation, science, and market-based strategies, and significant contributions to conservation are taking place through the Conservancy's effort across the region. Yet, without a more coordinated, integrated, and systematic approach to Great Lakes conservation, we will fail to make the best use of our capabilities, fail to address basin-wide challenges that cannot be addressed through state actions alone, fail to achieve the tangible lasting results at the scale required, and ultimately, fall short of our mission. With the important role partners play in our success and our mission, greater commitment to collaboration and integration among the state programs will expand our capability for more meaningful and effective collaboration and co-creation with our partners. Defined and bound by one of the largest freshwater ecosystems in the world, our programs face an opportunity to contribute to needed solutions for freshwater conservation around the world. With five Great Lakes, two countries, and one chance to find a more effective path forward to protect one of the world's priorities, it is imperative we try.

### PURPOSE OF THE BOARD

The Great Lakes State Directors Board's purpose and responsibility is to lead The Nature Conservancy's efforts effectively across political boundaries to assure a healthy and resilient Great Lakes ecosystem where the connection between natural systems and the quality of human life is valued. Working with partners, we will assure the Great Lakes are among the best managed ecosystems in the world. This board shall review and reassess this charter annually. The Board

will establish measures and define progress as well as review, evaluate, and endorse the priorities and strategies associated with a network of protected areas, working lands, priority watersheds, coastal reaches, and large lake basins, and work together to abate threats related to the Great Lakes. The Board will ensure coordination among state programs and our Canadian partners, including the Nature Conservancy of Canada, in a collaborative effort to achieve the goals and priorities for the Great Lakes ecosystem outlined in the Campaign for a Sustainable Planet.

### RESPONSIBILITY

The Board deliberates on key strategic and operational issues that affect the conservation of the Great Lakes and the activities of the state and Canadian programs in support of these efforts. Its considerations are in the best interests of the organization as a whole. The Chair is accountable to the Worldwide Office as a campaign project leader and its associated responsibilities, and for leading the board in developing decision-making processes to fulfill the goals of the campaign. The Board maintains an equitable, cooperative and collaborative process that leads to a consensus position whenever possible. If a consensus position cannot be reached, the Chair and regional directors will determine how and when the issue will be brought to closure. The Board will provide unanimous support at all times of the decisions ultimately made.

### BOARD ACTIVITIES

These are the primary areas of the Board's focus, and to accomplish these activities the Board may create supporting committees or teams as needed:

- Develop, and update as needed, a framework (Objectives, Goals, Strategies, and Plans, OGSP) that clarifies roles and responsibilities of TNC state programs towards achieving an effectively managed Great Lakes ecosystem to assure resiliency, function, and health; and the Conservancy's 2015 goal.

- Develop lake basin plans as a driving organizing principle for state program collaboration, along with region-wide strategic plans for key threats.
- Develop systems and mechanisms for collaboration across primary functional areas that support TNC's conservation work, including policy, science, and philanthropy and marketing.
- Coordinate Great Lakes priorities with other freshwater priorities across the organization, in particular those identified as part of the Campaign for a Sustainable Planet.
- Leverage the learning and success achieved in freshwater conservation and in the Great Lakes to support conservation of other priority large lake and freshwater systems around the world.
- Secure the public and private resources necessary to achieve the results outlined in the Great Lakes OGSP.

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide the Great Lakes Directors in their actions:

- Fulfilling the mission and 2015 goal of The Nature Conservancy;
- Alignment with and furtherance of the 2015 Goal, and the Great Lakes 3-strategy framework;
- The Nature Conservancy's Core Values;
- Particular emphasis on enhancing partnerships that achieve greater leverage of the Conservancy's and partners' unique ability to contribute to Great Lakes and freshwater conservation around the world;
- Effective, high-leverage, and efficient use of resources, particularly financial and human resources; and
- Transparency.

#### COMPOSITION

The Board is composed of the following individuals, collectively referred to as the Great Lakes Directors:

- Eastern and Central Region Directors;
  - Rob McKim, CUSR
  - John Cook, EUSR
- Great Lakes State Directors:
  - Peggy Ladner, Minnesota
  - Mary Jean Huston, Wisconsin
  - Leslee Spraggins, Illinois
  - Helen Taylor, Michigan, Chair
  - Mary McConnell, Indiana
  - Josh Knights, Ohio
  - Bill Kunze, Pennsylvania
  - Jim Howe, Central & Western New York

- Lead staff of Great Lakes Conservation Coordination Currently the representatives for this board position will be Dennis McGrath, Asst. State Director, Michigan and John Andersen, Senior Project Manager-Great Lakes. The representatives will be reconfirmed annually and may rotate with other conservation leadership staff across the basin.
- Ex-officio Canadian partners, including Donna Stewart and Michael Bradstreet, Ontario and Conservation Directors, Nature Conservancy of Canada

Additional staff or other guests may be invited by the Chair to participate in Board meetings.

#### GOVERNANCE AND MEETINGS

The Board is chaired by the Michigan State Director, as delegated by the Central U.S. Regional Director and will meet in person a minimum of two times a year, in addition to conference calls, on an as-needed basis.

#### DELEGATION OF DUTIES

The Board may delegate any or all of its responsibilities to teams or committees of the Board. Currently, four teams will be established as follows, and additional teams may be established in the future:

- **The Great Lakes Public Policy Team**, charged with developing, recommending to the Board, and implementing a regional policy agenda and strategic plan, as well as all Great Lakes legislative policy positions or endorsements
- **The Great Lakes Philanthropy Team**, charged with developing and carrying out protocols for Great Lakes states to raise funds for basin-wide priority projects, individual state projects included in the Great Lakes campaign, and related global freshwater campaign priorities.
- **The Great Lakes Conservation Team**, charged with developing, recommending to the board, and implementing strategic action plans and recommended investments for successful completion of the conservation goals and priorities established by the Great Lakes Project. The Conservation Team will provide oversight of the Great Lakes Basin Teams who are charged with developing lake basin strategic plans and recommended investments for each Great Lakes basin. It will develop strategies to address basin-wide threats including climate change and aquatic invasive species, and establish priority demonstration projects that can be replicated basin-wide.
- **The Great Lakes Finance Team**, charged with tracking Great Lakes Campaign Project philanthropy goals, progress, and costs; and carrying out financial analysis and reporting requirements established by the Worldwide Office.

Each team or committee shall develop and adopt its own charter, and subcommittee charters shall be approved by the Committee.