

Dear Great Lakes Basin Stakeholder,

We are pleased to inform you that the review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (the Agreement) is commencing.

The Agreement's purpose is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem. It is an example of a successful Canada-United States partnership on Great Lakes issues, showing that bilateral cooperation is strong, effective and productive. The Agreement provides for consultations between the two governments and periodic reviews (every six years) of the operation and effectiveness of the Agreement. The Review of the Agreement will help to ensure that it continues to serve as an effective key binational instrument to meet common current and emerging Great Lakes objectives well into the future.

The *Guide to the Agreement Review Process*, prepared by the Agreement Review Scoping Committee in 2005 under the Great Lakes Binational Executive Committee, sets out the context for the review; the method by which the review was designed; the scope, objectives and overarching questions to be asked as part of the review process; and the review's organisational structure, including opportunities for public involvement in the review itself and through a 60-day public consultation on the draft review report. The *Guide* also describes the broad timelines for the conduct of the Review, which will span 18 months. The *Guide to the Agreement Review Process* can be viewed on [www.binational.net](http://www.binational.net).

Canada and the United States have committed to an open, transparent and inclusive review process which allows for the involvement of all interested parties. They have established the Agreement Review Committee (ARC) which is responsible for leading and coordinating the review process. The first meeting of the ARC took place on March 23, 2006. The ARC Secretariat has solicited membership from governments and the public to participate on various Review Working Groups, charged with reviewing specific provisions of the Agreement. ARC will meet with Review Working Group co-chairs and members who have indicated their interest in participating in the review in Chicago, Illinois on April 28, 2006.

For those of you who wish to follow the progress of the review, we invite you to visit [www.binational.net](http://www.binational.net). The ARC Secretariat will periodically post meeting and report summaries in English and French. We also invite you to contact the ARC Secretariat if you have any questions concerning the review:

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Yours sincerely,

The Binational Executive Committee co-chairs



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Gary Gulezian on behalf of Thomas Skinner