

# **Tribal and First Nations Great Lakes Water Accord**

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Our ancestors have inhabited the Great Lakes Basin since time immemorial, long before the current political boundaries were drawn. Our spiritual and cultural connections to our Mother Earth are manifest by our willingness to embrace the responsibility of protecting and preserving the land and Waters.

Traditional teachings and modern science combine to strengthen our historical understanding that Water is the life-blood of our Mother Earth.

Indigenous women continue their role as protectors of the Water. Ceremonial teachings are reminders of our heritage, they are practices of our current peoples, and they are treasured gifts that we hand to our children.

When considering matters of great importance we are taught to think beyond the current generation. We also are taught that each of us is someone's seventh generation. We must continually ask ourselves what we are leaving for a future seventh generation.

We understand that the whole earth is an interconnected ecosystem. The health of any one part affects the health and well being of the whole. It is our spiritual and cultural responsibility to protect our local lands and Waters in order to help protect the whole of Mother Earth.

Tribes and First Nations have observed with growing interest that the Great Lakes Basin governments of the United States and Canada have begun to share our concerns about the preservation of the quality and quantity of the Great Lakes Waters.

The eight States and two Provinces of the Great Lakes Basin entered into the 1985 Great Lakes Charter, Annex 2001, and have drafted an Interstate Compact and International Agreement to implement the provisions of Annex 2001. These agreements, however, make no provisions for including Tribes and First Nations as governments with rights and responsibilities regarding Great Lakes Waters. These agreements also assert that only the States and Provinces have governmental responsibility within the Great Lakes Basin.

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Through International treaties and court actions, however, Tribes and First Nations continue to exercise cultural and spiritual rights of self-determination and property rights within traditional territories for our peoples and nations. Tribal and First Nation governments, like all governments, have the duty to protect the interests and future rights of our peoples. Since we have recognized rights and we are not political subdivisions of the States or Provinces, the assertion that the States and Provinces own and have the sole responsibility to protect the Waters is flawed.

Thus, the efforts of the States and Provinces to protect the Waters of the Great Lakes Basin are flawed because these efforts do not include the direct participation of the governments of Tribes and First Nations. This fundamental flaw endangers the interests of all of the inhabitants of the Great Lakes Basin and, ultimately, because of the interconnectedness of the worldwide ecosystem, endangers the interests of the entire earth.

It is thus our right, our responsibility and our duty to insist that no plan to protect and preserve the Great Lakes Waters moves forward without the equal highest-level participation of Tribal and First Nation governments with the governments of the United States and Canada. Merely consulting with Tribes and First Nations is not adequate, full participation must be achieved.

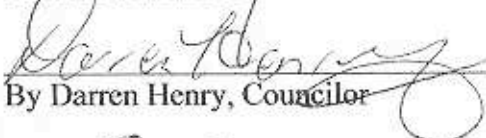
*By this accord signed on November 23, 2004, at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, the Tribes and First Nations of the Great Lakes Basin do hereby demand that our rights and sovereignty be respected, that any governmental effort to protect and preserve the Waters of the Great Lakes Basin include full participation by Tribes and First Nations, and we also hereby pledge that we share the interests and concerns about the future of the Great Lakes Waters, further pledging to work together with each other and with the other governments in the Great Lakes Basin to secure a healthy future for the Great Lakes.*



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AAMJIWNAANG

  
By Darren Henry, Councilor

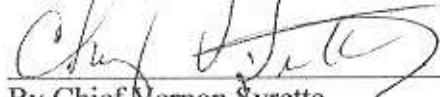
ASSOCIATION OF IROQUOIS AND ALLIED NATIONS

  
By Chief Chris McCormack

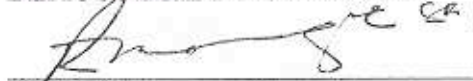
AUDECK OMNI KANING

  
By Peter Nahwegahbow

BATCHEWANA FIRST NATION

  
By Chief Vernon Syrette

BEAUSOLEIL FIRST NATION

  
By Rod Monague, Councilor

BIJITWAABIK ZAAING ANISHINAABEK

  
By Chief Mike Esquega

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO

By Regional Chief Charles Fox

CHIPPEWAS OF NAWASH UNCEDED FIRST NATION

  
By Geewadin Elliott

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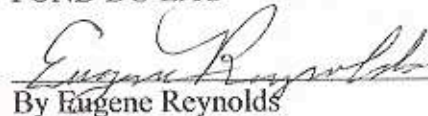
DELAWARE (MORAVIAN) NATION

  
By Denise Stonefish

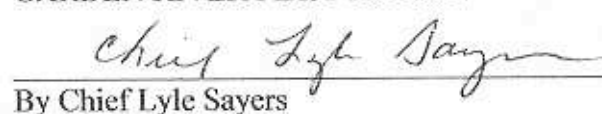
FIRST NATION OF CREES QUEBEC

  
By Daisy Costas

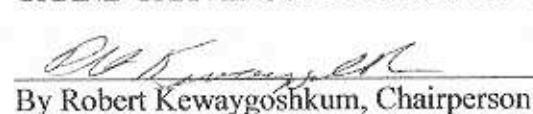
FOND DU LAC

  
By Eugene Reynolds

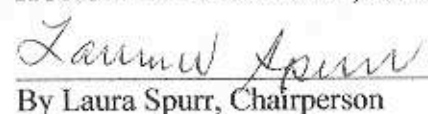
GARDEN RIVER FIRST NATION

  
By Chief Lyle Sayers

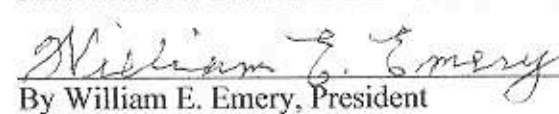
GRAND TRAVERSE BAY BAND OF OTTAWA AND CHIPPEWA INDIANS

  
By Robert Kewaygoshkum, Chairperson

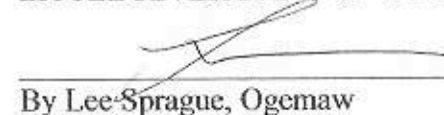
HURON POTAWATOMI, INC.

  
By Laura Spurr, Chairperson

KEWEENAW BAY INDIAN COMMUNITY

  
By William E. Emery, President


LITTLE RIVER BAND OF OTTAWA INDIANS

  
By Lee Sprague, Ogemaw

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LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS OF ODAWA INDIANS

  
By Frank Ettawageshik, Chairman

MAGNETAWAN FIRST NATION

  
By Chief Wilmer Noganosh

MATAWA FIRST NATION

  
By Noah Oshag, First Nation Delegate


M'CHIGEENG FIRST NATION

  
By Chief Glen Hare

MISSISSAUGA FIRST NATION

  
By Chief Bryan LaForm


MOHAWKS OF BAY OF QUINTE

  
By Chief R. Donald Maracle

MOHAWKS OF AKWENSASNE

  
By Chief A. Francis Boots

NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION

  
By Deputy Grand Chief Dan Kooses

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ONEIDA NATION OF THE THAMES

 Biine 'Kwe

By Chief Randall Phillips

POKAGON BAND OF POTAWATOMI INDIANS

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By Dan Rapp, Tribal Secretary

SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK

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By Chief Angus Toulouse

SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE OF MICHIGAN

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By Chief Audrey Falcon

SAUGEEN FIRST NATION

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By Chief Vernon Roote

SAULT STE MARIE TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS

 \_\_\_\_\_

By Aaron Payment, Chairperson

SOKAOGAN CHIPPEWA

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By Tina Van Zile, Tribal Delegate

STOCKBRIDGE MUNSEE

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Robert Chicks, Chairperson




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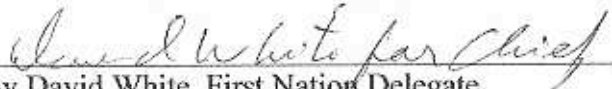
THESSALON FIRST NATION

  
Chief James Wabigwan

UNION OF ONTARIO INDIANS

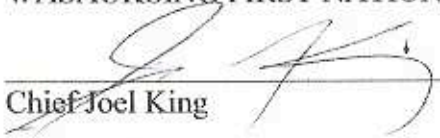
  
By Grand Council Chief John Beaucage

WALPOLE ISLAND FIRST NATION


  
By David White, First Nation Delegate

*Sean Jones*

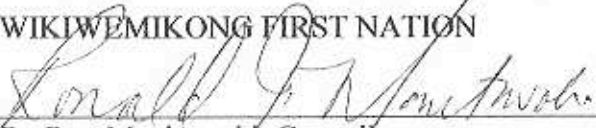
WASAUKSING FIRST NATION

  
Chief Joel King


WHITEFISH RIVER FIRST NATION

  
Esther Osche, First Nation Delegate

WIKIWEMIKONG FIRST NATION

  
By Ron Manitowabi, Councilor

ZHIIBAAHAASING FIRST NATION

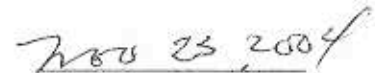
  
Chief Irene Kells

## **Tribal and First Nations Great Lakes Water Accord**

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WHITEFISH LAKE FIRST NATION

  
By Ogema Art Petahtegoose

  
Date