



# COMPASS

A REPORT FROM THE GREAT LAKES ST. LAWRENCE GOVERNORS & PREMIERS

JULY 2021

## CHAIR'S LETTER

Thank you for your partnership in our fight against COVID-19. We are making progress and recovering together as a region. Improving our region's resilience is one of our major focus areas.

The Great Lakes Impact Investment Platform showcases our region's many investment opportunities where projects seek to deliver both financial returns and environmental improvements. Green infrastructure, smart water systems, sustainable forests and agriculture help improve our natural systems and their ability to deliver needed services.

Parts of our maritime infrastructure are aging and in need of replacement. This presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to not only rebuild them but to engineer new solutions that can handle greater variability and provide other benefits. We strive to make our maritime system more functional and to include recreational amenities that can make our waterfronts more accessible.

A strong, diverse economy also prepares us for a more prosperous future. The Cruise the Great Lakes partnership is preparing for cruise ships to return to the region in 2022. And our trade promotion program continues to open new opportunities for our small and medium-sized companies so that they can continue to help power our region's economy.



In recent months, we have learned new ways to collaborate. Our successes, and a continued commitment to recover together, will make us stronger still.

— Tony Evers  
Chair, Great Lakes St. Lawrence  
Governors & Premiers  
Governor, State of Wisconsin

## STAYING PREPARED FOR AQUATIC INVADERS



The States and Provinces continue to stay prepared in the fight against aquatic invasive species. In May, GSGP helped to convene a virtual rapid response exercise focused on silver and bighead carp in tributaries of the Mississippi River. Staff from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources organized the exercise, which included participants from the other Great Lakes St. Lawrence States and Provinces, federal agencies, and regional stakeholders.

The Governors' and Premiers' Mutual Aid Agreement was developed to coordinate cooperative response actions and the sharing of staff, expertise and resources between jurisdictions in the event of an AIS invasion. Response exercises help to build capacity and strengthen regional defenses against high-risk AIS.

Four species of invasive carp (bighead, black, grass, and silver) are included among the Governors' and Premiers' 21 "Least Wanted" species. [Click here for more information.](#)



IMPACT INVESTMENT

## GREAT LAKES IMPACT INVESTMENT PLATFORM POWERS TOWARD \$4B

**Building on its successful launch in 2020, the Great Lakes Impact Investment Platform has grown into a powerful engine harnessing impact investment for the benefit of our region.** The Platform now showcases 32 projects representing nearly US\$4 billion in project value. These projects aim to deliver both a financial return to investors and an environmental improvement for our region.

- [A major flood protection project](#) funded by the Ontario Financing Authority's green bond.
- A facility for Montreal's electric bus fleet, funded by the Québec Ministry of Finance's green bond.
- American Farmland Trust's [Farming for Cleaner Water Project](#) uses a market-based approach to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus loss from farmland to improve drinking water for nearly one million people.
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's [green bond-funded upgrades](#) to treatment facilities.
- [Black Fork Wetland Preserve](#), 483 acres of high-quality habitat conserved by Western Reserve Land Conservancy.
- DTE Electric's [\\$1 billion green bond](#) that will fund renewable energy projects across Michigan.

This summer's weather brings renewed attention to our changing climate. The Platform will be hosting a timely webinar on Friday, August 13, at 2:00 p.m. EDT: **Carbon, climate and energy - the challenge and opportunity for the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Region.** We have a terrific lineup to frame these important issues:

Moderator: Liesl Clark, Director, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE).

Speakers:

- Paul Herman, CEO, HIP Investor
- Shawn Patterson, VP of Environmental Management and Safety, DTE Energy
- Sanjiv Sinha, Senior Vice President, ECT

[Please register here.](#)

The Platform was created and is managed by GSGP in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy, University of Michigan and ECT. For more information, please visit the [Great Lakes Impact Investment Platform](#) website.

### CRUISING

## REGION PREPARES FOR RETURN OF CRUISING

**It's full speed ahead** as the region prepares for the return of Great Lakes cruising in 2022. Cruise lines, ports, and other partners remain focused on promoting a safe cruise experience. The Cruise the Great Lakes partnership continues to market the region as a cruise destination and work toward the safe reopening of the system to cruise ships next year. At the same time, progress continues on the regional network of US customs facilities. The facility in Cleveland, Ohio, is ready to welcome passengers. Work is underway on new facilities in Duluth, Minnesota, and Sault Ste. Marie, with completion expected for upcoming cruise seasons.



GREAT LAKES IMPACT  
INVESTMENT PLATFORM

# ACCELERATE YOUR EXPORT SALES WITH GSGP TRADE MISSIONS

Join the GSGP trade mission to Brazil and Colombia from November 8-12, 2021.

The [in-person mission](#) will include stops in São Paulo and Bogotá. A virtual option will take place October 28-29 for Brazil and November 8-12 for Colombia. Each mission participant will receive a customized schedule of B2B meetings with prospective customers and business partners. Mission participants will also benefit from networking events and logistical support provided by the GSGP Trade Offices in Brazil & Colombia.

Brazil continues to be an excellent market for US and Canadian exporters across many sectors. Despite many challenges, the Brazilian economy is expected to grow in 2021. The US is Colombia's largest trading partner and Colombia was the 22nd largest market for US exports in 2019. US exports to Colombia in 2019 were valued at US\$14.7 billion and US\$705 million from Canada.

[More information on the GSGP International Trade Program](#) can be found here.



# REGIONAL BODY AND COMPACT COUNCIL FOCUS ON SCIENCE

The Regional Body and Compact Council continue to spearhead the region's work to sustainably manage our waters. Improved scientific information and decision making continue to be major regional priorities. The regional [Science Strategy](#) is focusing on water quality and improved estimation of regional water budget components in 2021, and water conservation and efficiency in 2022. In May, the Regional Body and Compact Council [hosted a session](#) at the [virtual IAGLR 2021 conference](#). Additionally, an ongoing webinar series focuses on various critical needs like better consumptive use data.

The Regional Body and Compact Council are also beginning work on a comprehensive Cumulative Impact Assessment. The third such Assessment, to be completed by December 2023, will include a wider range of impacts, such as the effects of climate change, and will aim to reduce uncertainty around water budgeting estimates.

Finally, the Regional Body and Compact Council plan to hold public meetings in December in Québec City. Additional information about these meetings will be made available in the coming months.



GREAT LAKES  
ST. LAWRENCE  
GOVERNORS  
& PREMIERS

## MEMBERS

Tony Evers,  
Chair, Governor of Wisconsin

Mike DeWine,  
Vice Chair, Governor of Ohio

Andrew Cuomo,  
Governor of New York

Doug Ford,  
Premier of Ontario

Eric Holcomb,  
Governor of Indiana

François Legault,  
Premier of Québec

JB Pritzker,  
Governor of Illinois

Tim Walz,  
Governor of Minnesota

Gretchen Whitmer,  
Governor of Michigan

Tom Wolf,  
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