



International Joint Commission UNECE Regional Preparatory Presentation

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International Joint Commission



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Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909

- The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 created the International Joint Commission for the purpose of settling and preventing transboundary water disputes between the United States and Canada.
- Creation of the Treaty was necessitated by population growth, increased agricultural activity and emerging transboundary issues related to water quantity and quality.
- The Treaty pioneered general principles for North American water management that are still in use over 100 years later.
- The Commission's work focuses on the entire transboundary with considerable emphasis on water apportionment and flood mitigation programs.





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Apportionment and Flood Mitigation

- The shared waters of the St. Mary and Milk River basins was a primary factor in the creation of the 1909 Treaty, and Article VI marked the beginning of the IJC's rich history of water apportionment issues.
- Flood mitigation is an important aspect of international water management, especially due to the changing climate.
- Watershed Boards utilize the concept of Adaptive Management to monitor and review international water regulation plans across the transboundary.
- IJC's structure of transboundary watershed boards support the sustainment of watersheds, provide a focus on the changing climate and ensure sustainable international water resources – goals that we share with UNECE.





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The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement turns 50

- Early successes in addressing water quality issues led to an expanded binational effort and the 1972 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).
- The Great Lakes contain one-fifth of the world's fresh water and the priority of use is for domestic and sanitary purposes.
- The goal of the 50th anniversary review of the GLWQA is to envision ways of supporting health of the Great Lakes well into the future.
- The “Great Lakes Horizon” project will identify the factors that will impact the Great Lakes ecologically, economically, socially and culturally over the next 30+ years.
- Work in 2022 is underway toward developing a Great Lakes Manure Management Framework, which supports the objectives of the International Water Action Decade and SDG 6.





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Great Lakes Manure Management Framework

- The 2021 Great Lakes Water Quality Board's report on manure management included research from a very diverse group of stakeholders from agriculture, nutrient research and water treatment organizations.
- Subsequently, a Phase 1 report from the Health Professionals Advisory Board provided the framework for a basin-wide fecal pollution tracking study utilizing new technology to compare bacterial sources and trends.
- The focus of this research has been extended beyond the Great Lakes to include connecting waters.
- The 5-year study will determine near-shore point sources, changes in microbial populations, and their associated health risks.





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Project Next Steps

- The Board is actively developing its Phase 2 work plans for implementing the research activities of this project.
- Partnerships are key to establishing implementation plans. Collaboration and resource-sharing is being accomplished with regional governmental agencies and institutions
- IJC will act in its historical role as a leader and convenor, providing a space for the many talented and advanced researchers to share knowledge.
- The framework and specific study included in these activities directly support the Sustainable Decade Goal 6, and the overall 2030 agenda.



Thank you

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