



NEWS RELEASE

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**Federal Party Leaders have their say on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence protection
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors' survey prompts responses from Federal parties**

Toronto, (October 8, 2008) - Mayors representing over 7 million Canadians in Ontario and Quebec today made public the responses they have received from four of the five federal political parties on their plans for protecting the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. Party responses to the GLSLCI questionnaire are available at www.glslicities.org.

"The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative has made this information public during the election for the one in three Canadians who drink, swim, fish and earn a living from the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence," said Thunder Bay Mayor Lynn Peterson, chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. "Now we all have the information we need to decide which party will best protect this vital lifeline."

Canadian members of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative issued a questionnaire to each Federal party leader on September 22. The Conservative Party of Canada has yet to respond to the questionnaire. The Cities Initiative has sent similar questions to the two U.S. Presidential candidates.

"Given the national and international importance of the largest source of fresh water in the world, it is essential that the next Federal Government make a substantial commitment to protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence", said Toronto Mayor David Miller. "It is equally important that our federal government works closely with the next federal administration in the United States to modernize our bi-national strategy to protect this shared resource."

A report by the Washington-based Brookings Institution concluded that investment in the Great Lakes would result in a 200% return on investment, and would serve as an economic catalyst to an area hard hit by the downturn in the manufacturing sector.

"Investment in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River is essential to the future prosperity of Quebecers and Ontarians," said Mayor Denis Lapointe of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, board director of the Cities Initiative. "This is not simply a local issue, but also a matter of national economic importance."

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a coalition of 60 Canadian and U.S. mayors that works actively to advance the protection of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

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Richard M. Daley, Mayor of Chicago, Founding United States Chair

David Miller, Mayor of Toronto, Founding Canadian Chair