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INTERAGENCY OCEAN POLICY TASK FORCE

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING

OCTOBER 29, 2009

4:00-7:00 P.M.

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PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR SUTLEY: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Great Lakes Regional Public Meeting of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force. I'm Nancy Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and Chair of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force. And I am very glad to be here in Cleveland. And I think I speak for my colleagues on the panel up here, that we're very pleased to be here.

Joining me today, on behalf of the Task Force, are Ann Mills, Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Cam Davis, Senior Advisor to the Administrator for Great Lakes at the Environmental Protection Agency – am I right? Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Captain Byron Black, Senior Maritime Safety and Security Advisor to the Secretary of Transportation; and Rear Admiral Sally Brice O'Hara, Deputy Commandant for Operations of the U.S. Coast Guard.

And I would like to thank and introduce our host, Sean Logan, the Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and ask him to say a few words on behalf of the Governor.

MR. LOGAN: Welcome. And thank you to all the members of the public for participating today. On behalf of Governor Strickland, welcome to Ohio. And I know there will be an official welcome to Cleveland, but we're very proud of the accomplishments that Cleveland has made, and the County of Cuyahoga.

While I hope we realize that — while I hope you decide to stay, I expect that when you do leave that you will realize that Ohio is — what you used to know about it has changed. For the third year in a row, Ohio leads the nation in capital investment projects. Ohio has the lowest taxes in the Midwest. Ohio is ranked fourth in the nation in clean energy job growth, and first for renewable and advanced energy manufacturing. With the recent implementation of Governor Strickland's renewable portfolio standard, we will require that 25 percent of Ohio's electricity sales come from advanced energy production. By 2025, at that 25 percent, with at least half of that of the renewable resources, and of that half, half to come from within Ohio.

So what we're talking about here is the resource, the market, the profitability, and the future of Lake Erie. Lake Erie is, by far, the shallowest of the Great Lakes, but with its wind, it is deep in production with Class 5 and Class 6 winds ready accessibility to the grid at numerous connection points, on shore as well. Further, Lake Erie produces more fish recreationally, primarily along with some commercial fishing, than all of the other Great Lakes combined. We strongly urge, on behalf of the State of Ohio, to have that recognition of what recreational fishing provides, not just to Lake Erie, but to the entire ecosystem basin-wide. And as well as understanding that each lake is so unique and has different characteristics that it develops its own generation of not just ecosystem and conservation and protection, but as well as economic dividends to each of the surrounding states and two providences.

Competitive business can take advantage of Ohio's unique supply chain; industrial and maritime assets, trained work force. We're one of the world's premier manufacturers of wind turbulence. We have identified prime offshore wind sites available for 25 to 50 year leases for serious companies which demonstrate ability in offshore wind development. Our core wind team has put together a seamless strategy to put this resource to work, and to do it fast, and to do it protectively.

However, there are several challenges remain. The western basin of Lake Erie is the eastern branch of the Mississippi flyway for migratory birds. The lack of comprehensive bird and bat and radar surveys in the Great Lakes basin could prove to be an impediment to the sighting of offshore turbulence.

Government can and should play a role in collecting this vital information. Our division of wildlife, in conjunction with the Fish and Wildlife Service is currently conducting an aerial avian survey of the lake, but much work remains. In addition, we're also looking for funding partners to make this an even more robust avian study.

Regulatory and economic initiatives may also create winners and losers in the competition to develop offshore wind in the Great Lakes. Our neighbor to the north, the Province of Ontario, has recently enacted their green energy map, which provides a Feed—in Tariff of \$.19 per kilowatt hour for all offshore wind electricity generated on that side of the lake. Electricity presently sells for about \$.08 a kilowatt in Ohio.

Perhaps more important, the Ontario legislation also streamlines permitting for offshore wind and other renewables in the Province by setting up a six—month shock clock for regulatory review and providing for single window permit filing. The Ontario Feed—in Tariff and their regulatory streamlining plan for renewables has profoundly changed the landscape for offshore wind in the Great Lakes.

If we maintain an attitude of business as usual on the U.S. side, and if wind developers must go through an alphabet soup of ABCs for permitting, the early advantage of sighting, and jobs, and protective environmental and conservation initiatives will clearly go to Canada.

Interagency collaboration among regulators at both the state and federal level is absolutely vital. Our office has been participating in monthly phone conferences with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Official Wildlife Service, U.S. Coast Guard, Ohio EPA to identify and resolve potential obstacles to development. Still, a programmatic environmental impact statement, or a regional — perhaps a regional permit for offshore wind development in the Great Lakes would help facilitate environmentally benign sighting decisions in the lakes. It is strongly encouraged that —strongly recommended that administration consider such a tool in the toolbox to make sure that Ohio — or that the United States side of the Great Lakes is fully considered for wind energy.

So I'm honored to welcome you, on behalf of Governor Strickland, to Ohio and to make it clear that we share your commitment to advanced energy and the overall protection and conservation and wise use of all aspects of the Great Lakes. Thank you for being here.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you very much. I would also like to welcome Andrew Waterson, the Director of Cleveland Office and Sustainability to give us a few remarks on behalf of the mayor of the City of Cleveland.

MR. WATERSON: Thank you. I'll be very brief. On behalf of Mayor Jackson, I want to thank Nancy Sutley and — as chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and the entire Ocean Policy Task Force here today. I also want to welcome everyone here, both from Cleveland and county, and from outside and within the region for coming and listening to the Task Force and providing comments on a very important issue.

Forty years ago from this year the Cuyahoga River burned for the last time. It was 1969; June 22nd, 1969. And that really launched the traditional environmental movement that set off the environmental policies and developed policies to help clean up the river and clean up Lake Erie.

Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River now have become a poster child, I see, as something that — a poster child of what you can do with good regulations in helping to clean up water.

This past summer, Mayor Jackson hosted the Sustainable Cleveland 2019 Summit. The purpose of this summit was to build an economic engine to empower a green city on a blue lake. We brought about 700 people together for three days to design strategic initiatives for our city and our region to not only create an economic engine, to create economic prosperity for everyone here in the region, but also to do that in a way that protects natural resources, regenerates natural resources, and builds a society and a community that really is proud of itself and proud of everyone so that no one is left behind in this process.

But we are, in the process now, taking outcomes that came from those three days to develop a ten—year action plan to build a green city on a blue lake through economic development. We really see sustainability can be the innovation driver for change, with addressing some of our most pressing environmental and social issues. We are seeking to develop this economy so that we could see a future where we have a lake and we have a community where we can play, where we can harness the resources as — in particular, offshore wind, but also a place where we know that our resource is protected.

As the Task Force looks forward, we ask that you look at the challenges of the Great Lakes, in particular. And as you start to focus on and address the climate change, we ask that those challenges that the oceans are facing, our coastal oceans, are quite different than the challenges the Great Lakes will be facing. So as you develop your policy recommendations, we really hope that you will consider the Great Lakes Region as they are, and that they are a unique ecosystem and very different than the coastal regions that you're addressing as well. In addition to that, as Seth had mentioned, that we have a neighbor. And that neighbor is Canada, and then including the neighboring states. But Canada. And its a unique situation that's very different than I think — than most of the policy recommendations that you'll be having for the ocean.

So thank you again for coming to Cleveland. We look forward to hearing the discussion. And I hope you'll enjoy your time here in the next couple of days. Thank you.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you, Andrew. And I think we very much appreciate the hospitality. And welcome. And we're very grateful to be here in Cleveland.

I would like to now give an opportunity for each of the Task Force members to introduce themselves and give a couple of brief remarks before we get into the formal program. I'll start with you, Jane.

DR. LUBCHENCO: Thank you, Chair Sutley. Hello, everybody. It's a great pleasure to be here. Thank you so much for coming. At each one of these hearings we have learned so much about issues in different parts of the country. And so you all have the awesome responsibility of representing the interior coasts. And we look very much forward to hearing what you have to say. On behalf of Secretary of Commerce, Gary Locke, and the 12,800 employees of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 900 of whom live and work in the Great Lakes Region, it's my pleasure to be here in Cleveland, and to participate in this public hearing.

NOAA is a science agency. We study the Earth. We study the Earth from the depths of the lakes and the oceans to the surface of the sun. We generate knowledge about climate, about weather, about oceans and Great Lakes, and about much of the life that lives in them and how people depend on that. We not only generate that knowledge, but we translate that knowledge into services for people. We provide your weather services and weather—related disaster warnings. We provide the navigation charts that you use when you go out recreational fishing. We provide climate services that enable us — enable you to plan better for the changes that are coming. We also take the knowledge that we generate and use it ourselves in our management and stewardship responsibilities where we have management responsibilities for many federal fisheries and protected species, such as marine mammals and a number of endangered species.

NOAA takes a very holistic approach to these issues. We understand the deep and intimate connections between a healthy environment and healthy communities; between the environment and the economy; between the environment and human health and national security. These are the perspectives that we have brought to this Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force who are in partnerships with our other federal agencies, are working very actively to think about how to make the Great Lakes, oceans, and coasts more healthy, more functional for the people that are — that depend on them, but to do so in partnership with local and state governments and, of course, with other countries, which is certainly appropriate to the Great Lakes.

So let me just say that it's a pleasure to be here, and I'm very interested in hearing what you all have to tell us. Thank you so much for offering us your wisdom, your thoughts, your ideas.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you. Let me turn now to Admiral O'Hara.

MS. O'HARA: Good afternoon. Good afternoon. Is it on? Yes. It's great to be here. I'm representing both the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security. Cleveland is the headquarters of our 9th District, and the Coast Guard has a long and deep affiliation with the many users of the Great Lakes

Region. You may be familiar with our services. Hopefully we've never had to go out on a search and rescue case. But that certainly is primary among our missions here on the Great Lakes, facilitating commerce with the aids to navigation and ice breaking services, making certain that laws are upheld, anti-smuggling, fisheries, protection and preservation. Certainly the rules and regulations of insurable oils and chemicals are not spilled into the water. Or when that does occur, to make sure that they are cleaned up effectively. And securing our ports and their infrastructure.

This Task Force has been a wonderful opportunity for the Coast Guard through the listening sessions and through the working groups of the Task Force to understand more holistically what the needs are of the many users and interests of our coastal regions, our ocean, and now the Great Lakes. This is a very unique area here. And we know that there has been a tremendous work already, partnership that spans local communities, NGOs, tribal nations, the relationship with Canada, as well as our federal partners. And the listening session today will provide us with the opportunity to hear your views, your successes, your concerns to better inform us as we move forward to refine our interim report, make it a final report, to get the governing framework in place, and then the piece of work that we're now focused on, marine and coastal spatial planning. Understanding how we can synchronize, harmonize, better integrate the work of the federal government, the whole of government, so that we and our efforts, can have an environment that is healthier and is the quality that will support economics, ecological and human interests, so that we have not only waters that we can enjoy, but waters that will be preserved for the legacy of people who follow along behind us.

So we're all ears. We look forward to hearing from you, and thank you for joining us today.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you. Cam.

MR. DAVIS: Good evening, everybody, and thank you so much for turning out tonight. I know it's always a sacrifice to step away from work or dinner or time with family and friends. So coming out tonight really is a testament to the fact that you care about the waters of the region. And thank you Chairman Sutley for your leadership, the CEQ's leadership on the Task Force.

The Great Lakes are facing some of the most critical issues and problems of our generation; losses of habitat for wildlife and fish. Habitat is part of the proud outdoor heritage that we all share here in the midwest. Toxins that represent a disproportionate threat, the most sensitive among us, such as women of child-bearing age, children and subsistence anglers. Pollution that runs off from land that jeopardizes our fragile coast. Invasive species that are unraveling the fragile food chain that we have here in the Great Lakes. And we have a need for better information and education. And we want to make sure that the next generation of decision makers are prepared to take on some of these issues that we will be working to try to correct, but assuredly we'll be leaving some behind.

To recognize these threats and to secure the resources needed to help tackle them, President Obama proposed a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative earlier this year, and the EPA Administrator Jackson has proposed an action plan under the President's initiative to rehabilitate the Great Lakes and protect them from future harm.

EPA appreciates the work of its 15 federal partner agencies, the states, the cities, the tribes, and the stakeholders who commented on a draft action plan earlier this summer. And we are looking forward to making sure that the work under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is harmonized with the work of this Task Force.

I am also going to apologize to all of you. I have to catch the last flight to Washington tonight, so I'll have to step out a little bit before we close at 7:00. But EPA appreciates the work of the Task Force and its recognition, the importance of the Great Lakes. EPA believes that much of the governance infrastructure are already in place in this region to address these and other critical issues. But we welcome the suggestions for further improvements from all of you tonight. And I'm very much looking forward to learning and listening from everything you have to say. Thank you.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thanks, Cam. Byron.

CAPTAIN BLACK: Thank you very much, Chairman Sutley. On behalf of the Secretary LaHood, thank you very much for the opportunity to be with you here tonight. I look forward to learning about your concerns and the ideas that you have as we work together to develop a national ocean policy that is responsive to the needs of the Great Lakes, the community on the inland coast.

As you know, foreign/domestic waterborne trade is vital to the United States economy, and provides us the resources and the products that we all need and rely upon. Waterborne trade also is directly responsible for over 266,000 jobs, so it's a very important thing. Secretary LaHood also chairs the committee on the maritime transportation system, which is a federal interdepartmental partnership of agencies, through the transportation system responsibilities. The CNPS is pleased to play an advisory role into the development of this Ocean Policy Task Force efforts.

Transportation infrastructure and land use patterns can affect the Great Lakes and the ocean's environmental health. We welcome your input to try and identify ways to minimize any potential negative impacts caused by transportation systems, such as by mitigating storm water runoff, and promoting livable and sustainable communities.

The department of transportation is committed to safe, secure and environmentally sound marine transportation systems. And the DOT believes that enhancing coordination among the federal partners and the states, the locals, the tribal regions, and our international partners, we go a long way towards helping us to work together to solve the problems that we face.

I welcome your ideas and your efforts. Most importantly, thank you all very much for taking the time out of your busy schedules to make a difference by coming up and letting us know, helping us to understand the concerns and the issues you face. I look forward to learning from you all. Thank you.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you. Ann.

MS. MILLS. Thank you, Chairman Sutley. I am thrilled to be here today in Cleveland, the wonderful town — my dad's home town, on behalf of Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Today's public meeting is a tremendous opportunity for USDA and for myself to learn about — from you all how USDA can better work with land owners and other partners to deliver voluntary conservation programs that make a difference. I'm really looking forward to your questions later on; certainly, the panelists' remarks. I just also wanted you to know that the Task Force members had the opportunity to, at the Science Center, view the IMAX film, Mysteries of the Great Lakes, which, for those of you who have not seen it, I highly recommend it. It tells a very powerful story. It's important for us to hear, because it really touches the soul. And I think that I can speak on behalf of my fellow colleagues up here, that there is a passion and a deep desire to make a difference here in the Great Lakes.

What happens on the land matters to our interior coast. Healthy oceans begin in places like Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Minnesota. And Secretary Vilsack is extremely committed to protecting our water resources and making our Great Lakes, oceans, and coasts, and rivers healthier. And he's directed, very pointedly, USDA's multiple agencies to work together to make this happen.

At USDA, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Park Service are taking the lead in this. But we are working closely for our fellow agencies. We're also working very aggressively and closely with our federal family — our federal family members, as well as regional leaders, state leaders, local leaders, and tribes. And we are using science and the expertise of those, particularly at the local level, to identify — to help us in pursuing new strategy. We are identifying key watersheds and critical acres where we can apply the right mix of conservation programs to have the greatest effect, the greatest outcome on the ecosystem.

We're pursuing this new targeted landscape approach in the Chesapeake Bay, and the Mississippi River basin, and we're going to be pursuing it here in the Great Lakes. And this will build on our current work that we're practicing here in the Great Lakes states, including partnerships that we've had over a number of years, such as those in the western Lake Erie basin.

I want to say that we recognize that agriculture plays an enormous role here. And part of the solution, however, is making sure that agriculture stays viable. And so we want to work with these voluntary ag programs and land owners and experts at the local level to make sure that we do our part. So we are committed to working with farmers, ranchers, and forest land owners to deliver results. And we are extremely pleased to be part of this initiative of working with this Task Force to frame a more integrated set of policies so that we can achieve measurable results, and accelerate those results in the coming months and years. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you. I would also like to thank you all for coming today and tell you we found these public meetings to be very valuable. And we look forward to the input, which no doubt, we benefit greatly through hearing from all of you in real life experiences. And your perspectives will help us in our work. We are very much looking forward to the input from all of you, the people who work on, live near, depend on, love and use the resources in the Great Lakes, our inland coast.

We hope that our recommendations will make sense and work in the real world. And we know that there are differences between the oceans and the Great Lakes and that there — that that's not just the difference between salt water and fresh water. But we very much look forward to your views.

I would like just to spend a minute giving you some background on the Ocean Policy Task Force and our work so far. The President created the Task Force on June 12th of this year. It's comprised of 24 senior policy level members from executive departments and agencies across the federal government.

In his memorandum, the President charged us with developing recommendations within 90 days for a national ocean policy for our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes; a framework for policy coordination efforts to improve our stewardship of the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes, and an implementation strategy that identifies and prioritizes objectives that the U.S. should pursue to further this national policy. This portion of our work is available for public comment, and there is an interim report that was issued in September.

In addition, the President also asked us to provide a recommendation for a framework for effective coastal and marine spatial planning by the beginning of December. And that is the focus of our work now.

Let me turn the microphone over to Admiral Brice O'Hara to provide you with some information about the interim report, which we presented to the President on September 10.

MS. O'HARA: Thank you, Chair. For those of you who haven't seen it, the report proposes a national policy for ocean, coastal regions, and Great Lakes; a policy coordination framework for improved stewardship and nine implementation strategies that identify and prioritize a set of objectives the United States should pursue to achieve our national ocean policy. There is a one—page summary of the report. It was among the handouts that were available to you at the front desk. So I hope that you will pick one up if you did not already do that.

That interim report was released for a 30—day comment period. We received a lot of feedback. In fact, we have 1,863 comments that we're still working our way through. Very valuable input. Pursuant to the President's memorandum, we have now entered into the second phase of our work. We are focused on developing a framework for marine and coastal spatial planning. We encourage and welcome your comments both today, or if you have ideas that you don't get across today, you can go online and give us feedback through the website, www.whitehouse.gov/oceans.

And also, you'll find that same address on the handout. So please give us your ideas, your thoughts so that we can consider them and move forward. Thank you.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you. I would like to ask Dr. Lubchenco to give a review of our public engagement efforts.

DR. LUBCHENCO: President Obama is committed to robust citizen engagement. And in his memorandum, Creating the Task Force, he instructed us to involve the public in our work.

We have developed a public engagement plan that includes regional public meetings, like this one today, as well as expert stakeholder meetings, and we have created a website, as Sally just mentioned, to receive public comment.

Today's public meeting allows us to both hear your views and suggestions. And those will inform the Task Force as we develop our recommendations. And it's an occasion for us to tell you about what we're doing, what the issues are that are on our radar screen.

A tremendous foundation for our work was laid by the PEW Oceans Commission, on which I had the pleasure of serving, and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, as well as the following activities of the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative. These commissions undertook a great deal of public and stakeholder input, including holding many public hearings across the nation. So we have been able to reap the benefits of much of the good work done by those commissions. At the same time, we're mindful of the fact that many years have passed since those reports were completed, and there are some areas where important scientific and technological developments have occurred, such as climate change, or offshore renewable energy, just to mention a couple.

We also know that there have been several state and regionally level activities to develop and deploy spatial planning activities. And so while we are building on the good work laid by those commissions, we also are making a significant commitment to public outreach and public engagement so that we can have it be as current and fresh as possible. In this region, we very much look forward to learning more about Great Lakes, restoration initiative, and how it might serve as a model for work elsewhere.

This meeting is our sixth and final public meeting. In addition to these public hearings, we have held 25 expert stakeholder roundtables representing different constituents' interests; for example, commercial fishing, recreational fishing and boating, energy, tribal interests, Great Lakes issues, conservation, human health, science, recreation, business, ports, and shipping. In addition, we have had 14 expert stakeholder roundtable briefings related to marine and coastal spatial planning.

These briefings, meetings, and additional public comment will further inform the members of the Task Force for the final recommendations that we intend to submit to the President in December.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you, Jane. Captain Black will now describe the structure of today's hearing.

CAPTAIN BLACK: Thank you, Chair Sutley. Today's meeting is two parts, which is the same format which we've used in the other public meetings. First we will hear from eight experts on a variety of topics of special importance to the Great Lakes Region. We will then move to hearing comments from those of you who are attending today. We would ask that you limit remarks to three minutes to ensure the maximum number of you have the opportunity to provide those comments. Those wishing to speak are asked to complete speaker cards that are available at the registration table, and turn them in. Our MC will call out the order of those that turned in the speaker cards.

For those of you who prefer to submit your comments online, there are computers in the back of the room that you can use now, or you can submit comments later at the website indicated on the handout you have all received. You may also submit comments in writing today. Please be sure to give your written comments to a staff member.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you.

Cam Davis will now introduce our first group of expert panelists.

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Chair Sutley. We're very fortunate to have all eight panelists here today. I'm going to introduce our first floor. I'm going to introduce them all at once, and then turn the mic over to them to comment.

Our first panelist is Susan LaFERNIER who is the Vice President of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community who will speak a little bit about tribal interests and the past force charge.

Our second panelist is Peter Johnson, a program director at the Council of Great Lakes Governors who will discuss state governance issues.

Our third panelist is Gildo Tori. Gildo is the Director of Public Policy in the Great Lakes and Atlantic Region for Ducks Unlimited. He'll be speaking on issues related to habitat, conservation, and restoration.

And then the fourth panelist, as far as this group, is David Ulrich, the Director — the Executive Director of the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence City's Initiative. And he'll be speaking on public and coastal health and recreational issue. With that, I'll turn it over to Susan. Thank you.

MS. LaFERNIER: Thank you very much. ANIN! And good afternoon, everyone. I am honored to be here today, and our Tribe sends greetings to you and our neighbors near and far in this great country. I especially send our Honorable President Obama greetings, and am truly grateful and appreciative of his commitment to us to care for our Great Lakes, and also to all of you.

Our Tribe is the Lake Superior Band of Chippewa Indians. Our total membership is 3,482, of which 2,400 live in the upper peninsula of Michigan. Our reservation was established with our 1854 Treaty. Not all tribes have reservations, and each tribe is unique.

I will be talking briefly about why the Great Lakes are important to our tribe and to all people that the lakes surrounds. Also a brief history of our tribe. And finally, another serious threat to our waters.

I was born at my parents' home on the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Reservation in the upper peninsula of Michigan. And I am thankful each day for all of the beauty in my backyard. And I am fortunate to be able to live by the shores of Keweenaw Bay and our beautiful Lake Superior. And the moving this morning did tell it all. It was a wonderful, wonderful movie.

The Lake Superior ecosystem and the health of these systems are critical to the health of our community. We are part of the lake, the land, and our survival depends on the lake. We enjoy the lake, swim in the lake, harvest fish. It is part of our ceremonies, and we use it to supply drinking water to our communities. Water is life. We spear walleye and rainbow trout in the spring, and fish for brook trout in our streams. We collect fruits and berries to eat and gather plants for medicines and other purposes. In the fall people travel long distances to harvest wild rice. We also harvest timber to heat our homes in the winter. In our Lake Superior watershed, all of our water flows to our big, fresh lakes and to the other lakes. Do you remember which fish is a survivor in the Lake Superior watershed? And do you know what a watershed is?

We all recognize the essential role that the Great Lakes and the Michigan inland lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater have played in the past, present and future destiny of both the State of Michigan and tribal nations within the state. In a tradition shared with the Ottawa and Potawatomi, the Ojibwa who are nature's people, remember a time when they lived near an ocean, lived along the shores of a great salt sea to the east at the beginning of time. Sometime around 1400 when the climate became colder, these original people started to arrive on the east side of Lake Huron. And so our story begins.

The Ojibwa were the largest and the most powerful Great Lakes Tribe and perhaps the most powerful east of the Mississippi, and quite possibly, the most powerful in North America. To the Chippewa, land was a gift with a Great Spirit; a gift freely given to cherish and protect. In the early 1600s we lived by moving from camp to camp to harvest foods, such a maple syrup, fish, venison, berries, and wild rice, directed by the seasons. According to the government, the Chippewa of Lake Superior had title to the western half of the U.P., and title to the rest of the state had already been purchased by 1840. As settlers came to the U.P. and to the Lake Superior Region in search of timber and minerals, the U.S. Government bought land from the Ojibwa through treaties, which are defined as the supreme law of the land in the Constitution of the United States.

In the 1842 Treaty, the tribes were allowed to remain on their ceded territory, and our leaders retained the right to hunt, fish and gather on these lands that were sold, but our rights were not sold, to ensure future generations' survival. We are determined to continue to preserve and protect our homeland and these rights for at least the next seven generations.

I would like to take a moment of your time to discuss a very serious threat to the lands, all the Great Lakes, natural resources, environment, and sacred places of the Lake Superior Bands of the Ojibwa and to the people of Michigan created by proposed sulfide mining operations in the Lake Superior Territory. Sulfide mining is a term for hard rock mining, and is much different than the traditional oxide rock mining that has historically been done in the upper peninsula. Sulfide mining is not the process used to mine the sulfides, but actually the practice of extracting metals, such as copper and nickel from a sulfide ore body.

Acid mine drainage has been described as the most important and widespread source of pollution associated with the mining industry throughout the world. Currently there are a number of mining exploration companies that are conducting mineral exploration operations in dozens of locations in the central and western upper peninsula, and includes uranium exploration. More mines are likely to be proposed and possibly permitted. Keweenaw Bay Indian Community has been very actively opposed to a proposed sulfide metallic mineral mine that will be located on our ceded traditional lands in Marquette County, Michigan. The Tribal Council frown at the proposed mining for nickel, copper, and other minerals at the headwaters of the Yellow Dog River and Salmon Trout River in the U.P., which flows to Lake Superior, deeply offends the traditional and cultural values of Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. The Salmon Trout River is a pristine river located in the wilderness of the Yellow Dog Plains and is one of the few homes to the coaster brook trout.

According to our teachings: to honor all of creation is to have respect. Water is a gift of life and is sacred. The current global state of water already is in grave danger. Many times in the past we have all turned our heads to the damage to the environment that has been caused by previous mining operations over the past 160 years.

Do you know why the Eagle cries on a mountain high? I would like to add my thoughts on the very fundamental concept of the Ojibwa people. Preservation of our land, our culture, and our way of life require that we act now as guardians for the next seven generations.

Sulfide mining will be the single greatest threat to our water and lands in our lifetime, along with all of the other challenges. I pray to our God and creator of all creation to give us vision and determination to

be responsible for all that we have been given before it is too late. Let us share the responsibility and privilege to care for our Earth and not make anymore environmental mistakes so that we will continue to keep our lands, Great Lakes, coasts and oceans the special places they are. Megwetch! Thank you for listening. We honor the greatness of all of you. Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Chairwoman Sutley, members of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force, thank you for the opportunity to present to you today regarding our shared efforts to protect and restore our water resources. My name is Peter Johnson. I'm the program director of the Council of Great Lakes Governors. The Council is a non—partisan partnership of the governors from the Great Lakes states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The premiers of Ontario, Quebec serve as an associate to the Council.

The governors created the Council in 1983. And its mission is to encourage and facilitate environmentally responsible economic growth. More recently, the Council has been coordinating the Governors' shared efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes. The Governors recognize that this effort is critically important for protecting our environment and promoting our economy, both regionally and nationally. As I think has been said already, and will be said, I'm sure, many more times this evening, the Great Lakes are a treasure of international significance. And as already noted, they differ significantly from our oceans, both hydrologically and in the way they are governed. The Great Lakes contain approximately 20 percent of the world's surface fresh water and 95 percent of North America's. One in 10 U.S. residents depends on the Great Lakes for their water. And more than 35 million U.S. residents live, work, and recreate in, on, or by the waters of the Great Lakes. Eight states and two Canadian provinces border the lakes. Innumerable Tribes and First Nations also have rights and interests related to the lakes. The Great Lakes Regional economy and, indeed, our national economy depend on the Great Lakes. For example, the Great Lakes provide water for 70 percent to the U.S. steel production. The Lakes provide transportation for almost 200 million tons of international and interlake cargo. Water is also used for hydro power on both sides of the international border.

Overall, the region generates nearly 30 percent of our nation's gross domestic product, and about 60 percent of all the U.S. manufacturing. Unfortunately, and despite significant and ongoing investments by all those of government, significant portions of the Great Lakes remain degraded, and all of our waters continue to face a number of different threats.

More broadly, all of our nation's water resources face threats, and many of them promise to increase over time. Therefore, we must work together, if we are to effectively tackle shared threats, and protect and restore our waters. Recent experiences is encouraging based on heightened collaboration both within the federal governments and with governments and other leaders. At the regional level, which Mr. Davis is very familiar with this particular effort, the developments and enactments of the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, which was signed by the Great Lakes Governors and Premiers. And the corresponding Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River

Basin Water Resources Compact between the states serve as examples of how strong, collaborative efforts can result in agreements and programs that will ensure that water resources are available for the use and benefit of the region's citizens now and in the near future.

In recent years, our region has collaborated, as never before, to protect and restore the Great Lakes. In 2003, at the request of the Great Lakes Congressional delegation, the Great Lakes Governors developed priorities for restoration and protection, including promoting a sustainable use of water resources; protecting human health; controlling pollution from diffuse sources; reducing persistent bio—accumulative toxics; stopping the introduction and spread of non—native aquatic invasive species; protecting coastal wetland and wildlife habitats; restoring areas of concerns, that is, toxic hot spots formally identified by a bi—national treaty organization; improving information, collection and dissemination; and adopting practices that protect the environments along with the recreational/commercial value of the Great Lakes.

Using these priorities as the organizing principle, the Great Lakes Governors then joined with representatives of the Administration, Congress, Mayors and Tribes to develop the Great Lakes Protection and Restoration Strategy. Over 1,500 representatives of the wide cross—section of governmental and non—governmental stakeholders participate in creating this strategy resulting in its broad—base support.

We now have priorities that we all agree on, and we have a broadly—supported strategy to realize them. Through the strategy and follow—on, the region is now speaking with one voice and has a collaborative structure to foster further work. It is essential that future protection and restoration efforts, whether stemming from recommendations of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force or others, recognize and build on existing plans and collaborative mechanisms. For the Great Lakes Region, this must include the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration and its strategy, state—based protection and restoration plans, lake—wide management plans, remedial action plans and others.

Significant challenges remain in our shared protection restoration efforts. Funding is a consistent obstacle. Fortunately, President Obama has proposed increased wastewater infrastructure funding, which will help address a critical need in the Great Lakes Region. And, the President has proposed an ambitious new Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Of course, we were very please by the news that came out yesterday from the conference committee for the voting — the \$475 million for the President's initiative. So we very much applaud that.

The Great Lakes Governors continue to work with the Administration, Congress, Mayors, Tribal leaders and other partners to support these proposals while recognizing that, even if successfully funded — and it looks like it will be — much more will need to be done in the coming years. New federal funding, including any that may arise from the recommendations of the Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy will help jump start our efforts, while creating immediate economic and environmental benefits for our region and our country.

There is much in the interim report that we commend. The report recognizes the importance of the continued health of the Great Lakes to the nation's well being. The report rightfully recognizes that we must not simply restore the Great Lakes, but also emphasizes the importance of protecting the gains that we have made. We appreciate the report recognizes and focuses on the problems that have arisen from the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species, and we strongly support efforts to stop such introduction and spread. We also appreciate the focus on better coordination among federal agencies. The difficulty in achieving such coordination has been an ongoing frustration.

As the report is revised and future work undertaken, more emphasis should be placed on recognizing and complementing the work, existing institutions and planning activities that have already been performed in the Great Lakes Region.

And I appreciate the comments that have already been made this evening towards that end. Future actions should enhance and support ongoing work, and care must be taken that they not conflict or undermine such activities.

The Great Lakes face many of the same stresses as our oceans and, accordingly, should be treated equitably in policy and funding recommendations made by the Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy. At the same time, our region and waters are unique and face unique challenges. We, therefore, must implement a flexible framework.

In coming years, we have an opportunity to make significant progress toward our shared goals. The Council of Great Lakes Governors is eager to participate in this effort and appreciates the opportunity to make recommendations to the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force. We look forward to our continued dialogue.

MR. TORI: Chairwoman Sutley, members of the Task Force, we really appreciate the opportunity to present our thoughts on habitat conservation to you and to the audience tonight. Ducks Unlimited has had, as its mission, for the last 75 years, habitat conservation. And we've been active for the last 25 years here in the Great Lakes.

We have approximately 200,000 members in the eight Great Lakes states that are committed to conserving and restoring habitats. The Great Lakes are truly a national treasure, as you've heard and seen today. Obviously, the predominant feature has been the lakes themselves. One—fifth of the world's fresh water, six quadrillion gallons of water — will somebody please tell me of what that means. Well, six quadrillion gallons to fill the Grand Canyon to the brim, and the lower 48 states to a depth of nine feet. But the Great Lakes includes more than the lakes themselves. The entire watershed is unique in a vastly diverse ecosystem, and our scientists tell us that the Great Lakes' ecosystem is on a tipping point. The northern portion of our watershed, we have vast forests of evergreens and hardwoods, huge swamps, and relatively pristine environments, that is, if you don't include the invasive species, the chemical contaminants, the dams, the mine drainage, et cetera.

In the southern portion of the watershed, it's just quite the opposite; a landscape dominated by agriculture, urban and suburban development with pockets of unique state and federal conservation lands, local parks and private land conservation areas. Habitat conservation, which includes long—term protection, restoration of laws and degraded habitats, and three, enhancement and management of existing habitats is critical for the long—term sustainability of the Great Lakes and the entire watershed.

Federal and state agencies working with the Tribes, local communities, and NGOs, such as Ducks Unlimited, have a long history of habitat conservation in the Great Lakes. Some of the most significant habitat conservations occurred through the U.S. Official Wildlife Service working with the states, as equal partners, through programs such as the Federal Aid and Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act. Other key programs in the Official Wildlife Service include the Coastal Program, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, and probably most importantly, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Through this one act, in

the last 20 years, we've conserved over 173 — 173,000 acres here in the Great Lakes, matching each federal dollar with three private and state dollars. Also, since 1985, the USDA environment programs have been crucial here in the Great Lakes in enrolling farm land — marginal farm land into critical conservation land. What is important here in the Great Lakes is a wetland reserve program, conservation reserve, conservation basin reserve, and enhancement program, and equipped [sic]. And in addition, of course, is other key habitat programs administered through EPA, NOAA, the Forest Service, but even more importantly are the conservation programs of the states themselves.

With the advent of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration five years ago, partnerships aimed at protecting and restoring Great Lakes' habitats have been increasing. The Auburn Joint Ventures have been critical implementing NOCA, which I just mentioned, but also now, fish habitat partnerships have been developed, and the Great Lakes basin partnership is right now developing plans to protect and restore key fish habitats in the Great Lakes watershed, including dam removal, spawning and habitat enhancement, and wetland restoration.

And now as we approach the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which should hopefully get us \$475 million soon, will greatly accelerate partnership—based habitat conservation. Here in the Great Lakes we have a wealth of habitat conservation plans, many of which have been developed via partnerships among federal, state, tribal, and local conservation groups, and the public. We have the Great Lakes Restoration Strategy. We have the same wildlife action plans. We have Auburn Joint Venture plans. We have lamps. We have rafts. We have AOC plans. We have plans from DU. We have plans from T and C. We know what to do, where to do it, how to do it. We're ready to go. These are exciting times for the Great Lakes.

But what other critical habitat needs do we have here? As I mentioned, we have relatively pristine areas within the northern Great Lakes watershed. But there are still problems. There are areas that need protected from future degradation and development, either through future acquisition or conservation easements. We need to work on things like mine drainage, and dams, and invasive species, and contaminants. In the southern portion of the watershed, wetland loss has exceeded, overall, 60 percent. But some our coastal colonies, we've lost in upwards of 80 to 90 percent of the wetlands. And there is much that can be done to restore these. In fact, the Great Lakes Restoration Strategy has a goal of one million acres of restored wetlands in both the coastal and inland areas. We have major problems with excess nutrients and sediment entering streams and rivers and the Great Lakes. So the Great Lakes Restoration Strategy has a goal of 1.1 million acres of uplands and repairing areas. Protecting and repairing, restoring buffers and restoring wetlands and flood plains, or moving fish barriers, protecting the 35,000 Great Lakes islands, and controlling and managing invasive species are all key habitat conservation needs here in the Great Lakes.

Who are the beneficiaries? Well, from the 60,000—foot level, it's the Great Lakes and the entire watershed, hopefully returning to a stateable healthy Great Lakes. Second and down, it's the millions of migratory birds that nest, rest and winter in the Great Lakes. As Director Logan mentioned, we're on the eastern portion of the Mississippi flyway, and we're on the western portion of the Atlantic flyway. We are at a crossroads for our nation's migratory birds. It's the tremendous fishery that exists in the lakes, streams, and rivers and the coarse of great biodiversity of fish and wildlife plants and landscapes. But ultimately, wildlife conservation in the Great Lakes benefits the people of the United States. And I do

mean the entire United States. Yeah, we in the Great Lakes are going to reap most of the benefit, but people from all over the country come here to boat, fish, hunt, wildlife watch in the Great Lakes, and it's a \$50 billion industry. Habitat conservation will not only benefit these users, but all of us as we reap ecological goods and services that are generated from habitat conservation efforts, including improved water quality, increased bio diversities, sustained water quantities, and a higher quality of life. All we ask is that CEQ, the Interagency Task Force and all the federal agencies work in collaboration with the Great Lakes communities; the states, the tribes, the local governments, the business, the conservation environmental communities to build upon the great partnership plan and efforts that already exist here in the Great Lakes. Thank you very much.

MR. ULRICH: Again, I'm Dave Ulrich with the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, a group of 70 U.S. and Canadian cities along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, representing over 13 million people who are working together as advocates for protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence ecosystem. Distinguished Task Force, panelists, and distinguished members of the public, it's a real privilege to be here.

I think the historical significance of being here in Cleveland on the shores of the Cuyahoga and Lake Erie should not be lost on us. I think we're at another critical point in history where we have an opportunity to make some real change, perhaps change we can believe in, or not, as the case may be. And I want to pick up on some of the things that — that Gildo has said that I think are especially important. Cities have been forgotten, to a great extent. I think perhaps even more so in this part of the country than others, in the context of protection and restoration of natural resources. In fact, I think it is a big mistake that that has happened. And part of what we are trying to do is change that. In fact, cities along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence are investing over \$15 billion annually in protection and restoration efforts. I haven't been able to get all of the figures from provincial, state and federal governments, but my guess is that local units of government across the basin are probably spending more than the others collectively. A huge amount of that, of course, is in water infrastructure, both drinking and wastewater, but there is a huge investment going on on a continuing basis.

Cities are really where people and the land and the water come together in the largest concentrations. The cities are really defined by their waterfronts. Look at any picture of any city in the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence area, and you'll almost always see a picture along the waterfront. It is really a defining thing. It is part of the economic vitality and quality of life, and really the identity of the cities. People got here originally because of the water. They stayed because of the water, for drinking water and food purposes. As societies developed, whether it was agriculture or industry, the water made it all possible, made it all real. It's why people stay in the cities, and continues to provide the vitality.

I think we're faced with the very fundamental public policy choice now and in the future, as whether or not we're going to move water to people, or move people to the water. I commend the leadership that the states in the basin and the provinces have taken with the compact and agreement with Canada. That, I think, has set the stage for how we should look at protecting the resource and dealing with development in the future. Cities have tremendous water management and land management responsibilities that have huge implications for this resource.

In terms of providing safe drinking water to millions and millions of people — over 40 million people around the basin on the U.S. and Canadian side. If you don't think this is important, ask the people in

Milwaukee who had their drinking water supply contaminated with cryptosporidia. The people of Chicago way back in the 1870s and 1880s learned the hard way about what happens if you put your contamination near where you get your drinking water out. So dealing with providing the drinking water and managing storm water and wastewater, these are huge public health issues that are being dealt with on a day—to—day basis by cities. And I will say, with much support from federal and state government in the past, not as much as is needed and will be needed in the future, but great responsibilities that are there.

In the land management side of things which, again, have tremendous implications for the water resource where parks and public lands are established, how ground fields are being redeveloped, again, the concept that originated right here in Cleveland in terms of reconverting land back into much more productive use.

Planning and zoning responsibilities: Again, a very significant quality of life issues that cities are responsible for and directly translate into coastal health issues and public health issues. Beaches: Very, very centrally important, again, to the quality of life. And unfortunately, some exposures occurring on beaches, whether it's through E—coli that might be developed from a variety of sources, or other exposures that might occur, is a continuing public health concern. Fish contamination and the advisories associated with it, particularly for tribal populations and, quite frequently, low—income populations where fish is a larger part of peoples' diets. These are real day—to—day life public health issues that must be dealt with more effectively in the future. For those of us who have the opportunity to enjoy some of the recreational things that are provided on the Great Lakes, it is really a tremendous resources; whether it's fishing or recreational boating, bird watching, water fowl hunting, a whole range of things that contribute tremendously to the economy and to the quality of life.

Just a couple of very quick specific examples of things happening in cities from all around the Great Lakes. The Duluth waterfront has a viable and vital area for recreation and public enjoyment right next to the largest port on the Great Lakes. Superior, an excellent cleanup under the Great Lakes Legacy Act of the Hog Island, and recent designation of a nationally significant estuary on the St. Lewis River. Bayfield Wisconsin, an international eco city. Ashland, Wisconsin on the threshold of a major 50 to \$100 million superfund cleanup that can transform the waterfront and clean up long—standing contamination. Milwaukee, which has been — gotten a real black eye for combined sewer overflows is taking one of the most creative approaches to managing in its entire watershed with green infrastructure and traditional gray infrastructure that can bring about tremendous changes. In Chicago itself, revitalization of Penguish Marsh from funding from the Fish and Wildlife Service. Millennium Park, another waterfront revitalization activity. And in the true spirit of quick action at the local level, the city was able to transform a 96—acre airport along the lakefront into a wonderful publicly accessible park overnight. Grand Rapids, Michigan, you can fish downtown Detroit, the International Wildlife Refuge and River front Conservancy working hand in hand.

So these are the kinds of things that are happening. What needs to happen now — and I hope that this — what comes out of the work of the Task Force and the ultimate report are things that really can build on what has been done. The time is to move forward with action. We don't need a lot more plans. Gildo talked about all of them that are out there. We've got to look at ways that we can accelerate real action, on the ground and in the water, as I've heard someone say very eloquently in the past.

Again, this is critical to cities. It's critical to states. It's critical to tribes. It's critical to the federal government. So I hope that what comes out of this Task Force really can be in that spirit of moving forward and making real things happen. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you all very much. Ann Mills will now introduced the second group of panelists.

MS. MILLS: Yes. Thank you all for those excellent presentations. I now have the honor of introducing the second panel. We will start with James Weakley who is President of the Lake Carriers Association who will speak about ports and shipping. James will be followed by Joseph Koncelik, the Ohio lawyer and attorney at Frantz Ward, LLC. He will be speaking on the issues of toxics and pollution in the Great Lakes. He will be followed by Dr. David Lodge who is a professor at the University of Notre Dame. And he will be speaking on the issues related to the aquatic invasive species. And finally last, and certainly not least, our last panelist is John Watkins, Director of Ohio Coastal Management Program within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. And Mr. Watkins will speak on energy development issues.

MR. WEAKLEY: Thank you, ma'am. I'm going to focus my comments on one simple, but important concept, and four simple, but very important words from the Presidential Memorandum. My name is Jim Weakley. I'm the President of the Lake Carriage Association. I represent U.S. flagships on the Great Lakes, primarily moving iron ore, coal, and limestone.

I'm also here today as a representative of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, more than 80 members, stock ownership owners, labor unions. It's the broadest Task Force associated with the Great Lakes Maritime Marine Navigation System.

The simple concept: Quality of life. I believe quality of life begins and ends with one thing, a job. Without jobs, we will not have a vibrant economy. We will not be able to afford the important, expensive, and very necessary environmental restoration projects. Jobs are very important, and I don't have to tell the people in this room how scarce they are in the Great Lakes Region. We lead the nation in unemployment. We need jobs. Navigation systems and the ships that I represent make many jobs in the Great Lakes Region possible.

The four simple words in the Presidential Memorandum directs this panel to preserve our maritime heritage. "Preserve our maritime heritage." The best way to do that is to preserve our maritime future. It's not just about history. It's about maintaining the status quo and improving upon it, not only for our members, but also for the customers and for the regional and the national economy.

It's no coincidence or no mistake that every major city in the United States, with two exceptions, is located on a major waterway. Our nation was settled by affordable, lean transportation, and the industries and the region's economies developed around that transportation mode. The marine mode of transportation consumes less horse power, consumes fewer energy, emits fewer pollutants than other modes of transportation. The horsepower per ton ratio for a ship is .25 — .25 horsepower per ton of cargo moved. In the rail mode of transportation, it's a one—to—one ratio. And if you're going to move cargo by trucks, it's between 12 and 20 horsepower for the amount of tons that you're going to move. If you could use our horsepower and ratio in a truck, you could literally move a diesel truck with a five

horsepower lawn mower engine. The 200—million tons of cargo that we move on an annual basis, 120 from the U.S. flag, 60—million tons from Canadian flag, and 20—million tons of what we call the salty traffic, the international cargos moving in and out of our region on ocean—going ships make possible 70 percent of the North American steel manufacturing, 70 percent of the U.S. and North American auto manufacturing, and 60 percent of the heavy manufacturing takes place in the Great Lakes Region, primarily because of the affordability of movement of raw materials on our ships. We provide stone for the construction industry, iron ore for the steel industry, and coal for the electrical production, as well as cement, salt and other commodities that make the region move.

With regard to spatial planning, I would like to point out that as we pave the way for future uses; wind power, much of which we've heard already, and we'll hear more about, we need to make sure that we don't displace current and historical views of the waterways. The Great Lakes Region and the Lake Carriage Association pioneer traffic separations. We were literally the first place in the world to segregate inbound and outbound vessels. We have recommended horse lines that have been adopted by NOAA and placed on the NOAA charts. Those were years in developing. They're recommended course lines. They're are not mandatory. There are a lot of places that we go. There are some places that we go on occasion. And then there are other places that we rarely go. We worked with several states already so that they're focusing their wind turbine development in those areas that we rarely go and are working with the marine industry.

It's a good model. It's worked with the State of Ohio. It's worked with other states within the Great Lakes. I think it can continue to work elsewhere. A unique aspect of the Great Lakes Marine Navigation System is we name our ships after people. You saw several of them in the movie today, the Roger Blough, the James R. Barker, the Leacher Group, Dorothy Ann, just to name a few. I think it's the only place in the world where we do it that way. We do it for a reason. We name them after our heroes. Our heroes of industry. We name them after our family. They're important to us. They're our friends. They make life sustainable. They create jobs. They create quality of life. Not just for the members that I represent, but for our customers, for the region, and for the nation.

Quality of life is about one thing, a job. How do we preserve that? We preserve our maritime heritage by ensuring a maritime future. Jobs. Jobs. Jobs. Thank you.

MR. KONCELIK: Chairwoman Sutley, Task Force members, my name is Joe Koncelik. As indicated, I'm a Cleveland environmental attorney. But the reason I was asked to speak on this panel is that I'm also the chairperson for the Cuyahoga River Action Partnership, which is responsible for restoration of the Cuyahoga River, and also, in my past life, I was the past director of Ohio EPA and worked on the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration.

I'm going to focus my remarks specifically based on experiences that I've had in both of those areas related to the RAP and related to the GLRC on contaminated sediment. I understand today that the Task Force's job is to establish a very broad, national policy. From my time in state government and working under the GLRC strategy, broad national policies, broad state policies are great at establishing a vision, but the real reality of day—to—day progress happens in the implementation on the ground, and what our policies do to shape the programs that flow from them. And that's what I want to talk about today with respect to contaminated sediment.

To give you a flavor of the issue of contaminated sediment, just about an hour up the road here is the Ashtabula River, which is one of the areas of concerns on the Great Lakes — one of the 31 areas of concern on the Great Lakes. About four years ago, five years ago, I was privileged enough to take a boat ride down the Ashtabula River. In that boat ride there was about a narrow — while the river may have been 300 yards wide, there was about a five—yard strip in the middle that you had to take your boat down because so much contaminated sediment had built up in the Ashtabula River over the many years that could not be dredged due to the level of contamination, that it made navigation extremely tricky, and eventually would have prevented navigation up that channel.

The Ashtabula River has turned into a major success story. It is one of the largest, if not the largest contaminated sediment removal projects on the Great Lakes using the Great Lakes Legacy Act and an amazing engineering feat of pumping thousands and thousands of cubic yards into a hazardous waste landfill that was built adjacent to the river to contain the contaminated muck that had built up over many years. While I have started with this success story, I also wanted to highlight that, unfortunately, we don't have enough success stories on the Great Lakes relative to contaminated sediment. There was recently an inspector General EPA report that came out that estimate — these are based on EPA numbers, but there are some 75 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment in the various areas of concern spread out throughout the Great Lakes.

While we have been working on, for years, removal of contaminated sediment, progress has been slow. The concept of the Legacy Act was to accelerate removal of that contaminated sediment, and using the Ashtabula as one example, there has been success. However, under the act right now, about five projects have been accomplished, removing about 800,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment. That represents about one percent of the problem in the Great Lakes.

At that pace, it's estimated that it would take about 77 years to remove all of the contaminated sediment from the areas of concern throughout the Great Lakes. So how can we accelerate that progress? And several folks commented today about congress's recent action on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which is to be commended, and at some \$475 million potentially directed to the Great Lakes, with a large portion of that to be directed at addressing contaminated sediment under the Legacy Act. However, there has been issues with the Legacy Act in its construction from its inception that folks on the GLRC have identified in its planning process that still remain today.

And I wanted to talk about two of those issues specifically.

One of them is the requirement that for any Legacy Act—funded project, you, at the local or state level, are required to match that project with a 35 percent share of the overall project. So federal government picks up 65 percent of the cost, the state and local government is expected to pick up 35 percent. Well, an estimate for the total cleanup of this contaminated sediment in the Great Lakes is about three billion. That means there's about \$1.25 billion that falls on the state under that kind of formula. There has to be a recognition, when we establish national policies, about what's going on at the local region that those policies are intended to benefit. The Midwest, as has been articulated much today, and the previous speaker did a very eloquent job of talking about the importance of economic development in the Great Lakes, is struggling with high unemployment, loss of jobs.

The idea that we can generate, at the state and local level, the match that's required under the Legacy Act, I think, is a stretch. So while it's great that the federal government is finally stepping up to the plate from this state and local perspective in funding the Legacy Act, there is a very real danger that that money will sit in federal proffers unused because projects around the state, the Great Lakes, will be unable to generate the 35 percent required share.

So while it's understandable of many federal great grant programs, state grant programs have the concept of a shared — portion of the grant being shared, of the project being shared, there has to be a realization of what practically is occurring on the ground. So I would submit that when we look at the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative — and we're pretty far along in the process, so it's probably going to have to be in the future, but amendments be made to the Legacy Act to streamline the process. Allow for the waiver of the 35 percent, if it can be demonstrated it cannot be generated either through responsible parties or the state or local government, or if there is a significant need from a health and safety or damage to the environment standpoint. Establish some criteria that that 35 percent can be waived so that the money can be flowing in these projects and get underway. Otherwise, it's great that we'll have funding, but it's very likely going to sit there.

The second issue that's been identified is interagency and intra—agency cooperation and the implementation — well, you pick your Great Lakes topic, but I'm obviously sticking on AOCs and contaminated sediment. Contaminated sediment, like many Great Lakes' issues, touches on multiple federal agencies, and a lot of times also multiple programs within those agencies. Speaking as a former government person, the more agencies and the more programs that you add to solving the problem, the more difficult it becomes to solve. So we have to look, when we're establishing policies, for practical ways to cut through the red tape and turf battles that can occur between federal agencies, state agencies, and get real action on the ground.

So in the contemplation of the Great Lakes and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, concepts such as a Task Force with real decision—making authority. Not a Task Force that's coordinating and then has to run back to a bunch of senior leaders and their various agencies to try to get approval — that can bog down decision making and slow progress — but a Task Force that had real decision—making to move projects forward. That's the kind of practical implementation that could be established and called for under a national policy. Those are the two areas that I wanted to comment and suggest on how you can move things forward at an accelerated pace in the Great Lakes. If we address contaminated sediment in the Great Lakes, it's a cross—cutting issue that would see major benefits both in terms of recreational use, biological diversity, and aquatic life. Thank you for the opportunity today to speak.

DR. LODGE: Chair Sutley, Members of the Task Force, thank you very much for the opportunity to talk back and fourth about issue of invasive species in the Great Lakes.

First let me tell you a little bit about myself. I'm Director of the Center for Aquatic Conservation and a professor of biology at the University of Notre Dame. I've been an active researcher on freshwater ecology and invasive species, in particular, for the past 26 years. I've led a number of multi—institutional and multi—disciplinary research projects on invasive species. I'm also a past chair of the invasive species advisory committee, which is a federal fact—type committee, which advises the National Council on invasive species.

The reason I mention that is because that Council, that National Council on invasive species has a mission with regard to invasive species that is quite similar in concept to the one proposed in your interim report for the National Ocean Commission. I have read your interim report, and I endorse it strongly. In the minutes remaining, I want to do two things: First I want to talk in general terms about the magnitude of the problem with invasive species in the Great Lakes, and second, I want to offer three recommendations.

Invasive species, as several previous speakers have indicated, are one of the most — one of the greatest threats to the Great Lakes' ecosystems. And not just to the ecosystems, but to human welfare, probably speaking, in the Great Lakes Region, and to the regional economy. There are no comprehensive estimates of the economic costs of invasive species for the Great Lakes Region, but let me give you some examples and a little quantification. Some of the damages are quite obvious, while many remain hidden. But some of the obvious damages include scars on native lake trout that fishermen pull up; scars from invasive sea lampreys. And I'll return to those at the end of my comments. Power plants that are shut down by pipe clogging zebra and coaga mussels; thousands of water birds on Lakes Ontario and Huron killed by botulism linked to invasive round gobies, and increasingly, especially in Lakes Huron and Michigan, very skinny white fish, a very valuable — commercial valuable fish, which are now increasingly skinny and not as valuable to commercial fisheries because they've lost their food source because of invasive species. The low side of the best estimates for regional economic impact of invasive species is on the order of hundreds of millions of dollars annually. One specific example gives you a little hint of the costs that are incurred in either suffering or, in this case, responding to invasive species.

The Army Corp of Engineers, in recent years, has spent 10 to \$15 million developing and implementing a couple of electric barriers in the Chicago sanitary ship canal. These barriers are the last line of defense between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi drainage. And both of those drainages are at threat from invasive species moving in each direction. Those barriers are now the last line of defense for the Great Lakes from Asian Carps, which are quite likely to be highly damaging to the fisheries and many other natural resources in the Great Lakes.

Given the established federal goal of reducing the damages from invasive species, I would like to offer three recommendations. And I believe the recommendations I'm going to offer represent a consensus of the scientific community. In many ways they're simply more specific recommendations from general ones that have been made, for example, by the Ecological Society of America in 2006, and they're very consistent with the EPA's proposed Great Lakes Restoration issue.

My first recommendation is that more effective steps are needed to prevent the introduction of invasive species. It's obvious — painfully obvious now in the region that the most cost effective approach to invasive species is to keep them from arriving in the first place. Now, that means focusing attention on the pathways by which species are introduced. And there are many in the Great Lakes, as there are everywhere else. But I'll mention a couple, in particular. Shipping, for example, has accounted, since the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, for about 70 percent — on the order of 70 percent of the non—native species that now occur in the Great Lakes Region. And the number of non—native species is at least 186.

The second group of pathways, if you will, are those industries that intentionally import and/or sell living organisms, like the aquarium trade, or the water park trade, or the aquaculture industry.

Now, focusing on those pathways implies a couple of policy goals. One, for ship mediated introductions, the new proposed rules for ballast water management proposed by the U.S. Coast Guard are certainly a step in the right direction.

However, it's important to realize that the most important metrics for policy success are unknown, and really, I don't know of any plan to address them. And those measures are these: By what amount must we reduce the discharge organisms from ballasts to achieve a desired policy goal of reducing the likelihood of invasions. Or in other words, what's the current rate of invasions, and how will that rate be affected by these ballast water regulations or any improved ones in the future. For cost—effective policy, a lot more research is needed on those topics, research that is very closely tied to management and policy goals.

The second implication for policy for preventing introduction is for those industries that sell live organisms. Recent research makes it clear that it's increasingly possible to accurately discriminate species that are likely to be harmful from those that are likely to be benign. That means that we can screen species on a voluntary or regulatory basis, or some combination thereof, to hinder commerce as little as possible, while dramatically reducing the future damages from invasive species. Research indicates that implementing such an approach, which has been implemented in other countries, would bring net economic benefits.

My second major recommendation: Better surveillance and rapid responses to eradicate or control new invasions. In the absence of control efforts, invasions grow, spread and cause increasingly large damages forever. They're not like other pollutants, that if you just leave them alone, at least they don't get worse. For invasive species, if you leave them alone, the problem grows, spreads, and get worse. And it's a legacy for our future generations to pay. You can't have rapid response to new invasions if you don't have surveillance. Right now we practically have neither. So early detection is important. It's got to be informed by two key things in which there has been rapid recent scientific progress. The ability to forecast where invasions are likely to happen, and new genetic—based tools to do the surveillance. So — and to sum that up, it's use the science that exists to forecast where invasions are likely to happen, to target surveillance, and use the new scientific tools, especially genetic—based tools, to do surveillance to enable cost—effective responses.

My third recommendation is that while concerns about climate change that are expressed in the interim report are certainly well placed, I want to caution that they should not stall the harvesting of low—hanging fruit on invasive species. But they should not prevent us from using the science and the knowledge that already exists to do the things I've already mentioned: Prevent new invasions, surveil for invasions that do occur, and eradication or control efforts for new invasion.

Let me finish by reminding the Task Force that these solutions that I've suggested, they're possible. The solutions to invasive species are possible, given current knowledge, if policies are improved. The Great Lakes provides one of the greatest success stories for controlling invasive species that I know of. If it weren't for the bi—national effort between Canada and the U.S. every year spending \$16 million to control sea lamprey, we wouldn't have Great Lakes fisheries. The reason it's well worth spending that \$16 million every year to control sea lamprey is because the fisheries that are being protected are far more valuable. And those control efforts, well coordinated by the Great Lakes Fisheries Commissions, have been improved over the decade since they were first started in 1955 by scientific research that continues

in a very powerful management and science partnership. And I think it's a model for future successes. So I thank the Task Force for providing a road map for a strong partnership between science and management and policy for better management of the Great Lakes and other oceans in the future.

MR. WATKINS: Chairman Sutley and Members of the Task Force, thank you for coming to Ohio. We welcome you here. And I would also like to thank the staff, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Coast Guard who are helping hold this event this evening, as well as I would like to personally thank the members of the Office of Coastal Management for their role in helping facilitate this meeting tonight. I also would like to thank people of the Northern Ohio Community that I see here tonight that are involved in environmental issues, jobs, all of the things that make northern Ohio great. I'm looking forward to your comments tonight, and I will make mine brief, because I know that we are a little bit past the time for public comment period to start.

I would like to touch on two items tonight: Renewable energy, and marine spatial planning. As most of us know, renewable energy in the Great Lakes is not a new concept. Since the mid 20th century, over a million homes in Ontario and New York have benefited from the hydroelectric power generated at Niagara Falls.

Today there is a significant interest in the Great Lakes Region in developing another renewable energy source, wind. Wind resources in the Great Lakes are unique and world class. Average wind speeds over water are typically 20 percent higher than nearby locations and turbines that can potentially be located in the lakes have the potential for 50 percent higher energy generations than comparable onshore locations. Offshore wind could be a significant source of clean renewable energy if properly developed in a prudent manner. Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, New York and other Great Lakes states are moving forward with efforts to identify the different users and uses of the lakes, develop the tools to analyze where those uses occur, and identify those areas where wind energy development can occur without adversely effecting the other uses and users of the lakes.

Developing our wind resources will provide jobs, enhance energy security, and offset pollution from other energy sources. Regional bodies, such as the Great Lakes Commission, have led efforts through the Great Lakes wind collaborative to develop guidelines for the optimal siting of the wind energy sites, and have been at the forefront of creating a dialogue amongst the Great Lakes community about wind energy development. Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provide a strong support in helping the states and the region identify the different uses of the lakes and provide tools and resources for the analysis of the information that we have. We especially recognize the role of the federal government in assisting the states and region in the proper development of wind energy. We are excited about the opportunity to have a dialogue with the Obama Administration, and we look forward to the support and participation in the federal agencies.

I have a few comments on marine spatial planning. Both Ohio and Michigan, with specific support from NOAA and other federal agencies have moved forward with developing information about the lakes, their uses, and their users. We are all truly excited about NOAA's partnership in the Great Lakes, especially when it comes to marine spatial planning. While we have a great partnership with the federal agency at the region, we want to make sure it's clear that marine spatial planning is something that should be led by the states and region in partnership with the federal agencies.

As we are aware, the bottom lands of the lakes are owned by the states in a trust capacity, which is different than the oceans, where outside of a three-mile zone that are controlled by the states, development of energy is handled through the mineral management service. Here in the Great Lakes, that will occur through the states.

We look forward to the support of the federal government in working with the states in a partnership role while respecting the roles of the states in controlling development with renewable energy. I encourage the Task Force to recognize the partners that they have in the region from a local, state and regional perspective, and the ability of those partners to help deliver good marine spatial planning and the development of energy resources in the Great Lakes. Thank you.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Let me thank all the panelists. And I appreciate your presentations. And I think we all found them very valuable. And we appreciate you taking the time to share your views.

Now we are going to move things along and turn the meeting over to Tinka Hyde who will lead the public comment portion of today's meeting. And I think, even though we are a little bit behind, maybe if we can ask folks to try to limit their comments to two-and-a-half minutes. We should get to everybody as quickly as possible. Tinka.

MS. HYDE: Thank you.

CHAIR SUTLEY: And if the panelists would like to stay, you're welcome to take a seat in the audience.

MS. HYDE: Good evening. We are going to start taking public comments shortly. First of all, I wanted to thank you all of you for coming tonight. And I very much appreciate the good turnout we have. I had a chance to observe some of the other public hearings and was very much impressed with both the respectfulness of the comments, as well as the thoughtfulness of the comments, so

I'm really looking forward to tonight. My goal today is to continue the trend and to ensure that each of you get an opportunity to speak and provide us your comments. To do that, though, I'm going to need your help. I ask that you each provide your comments within the two-and-a-half-minute time frame, and that you promptly close your remarks at the point at which you see the time keeper has indicated the two-and-a-half minutes are up. And there is a clock down in the front. And it's going to have a green light, a yellow light, and a red light. Red obviously means stop. So hopefully we'll be able to get everybody in. I have no doubt we will.

A couple of other things, I wanted to make sure folks know that the one microphone is in the center of the room. And I will call off the names in three. And one other point is, at the very rear of the room on your left-hand side — back there — there's a flip chart with a list of speakers in order. Okay. So with that, I am going to get started. And I apologize up front if I mispronounce your name. I will try my best.

Okay. First commenter — first three — I'll list the first three, and if you could line up, please, so that we have folks coming right after one another. First is Chad Lord, Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition; the second is Steven Dawson from Wisconsin, a resident there; and the third is Dale Phenicie from the Great Lakes Observing System. Chad Lord, please.

MR. LORD: Hello. My name is Chad Lord, and, as you said, I'm with Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

As you heard, the Great Lakes are great, and it's not just because of their size. They provide us with jobs, food, drinking water, recreation, and tourism opportunities. It's site has shown that if you combine the Great Lakes states' economy with Quebec and Ontario, we have the second largest economy in the world. You add wildlife, lodging, hunting, fishing, boating, billions of dollars to the economy each year, recreational, commercial. Fishing is a \$7 billion a year industry in our region. Groupings Institution showed a couple years ago that investing in the Great Lakes bring a two—to—one economic return in higher property values and an improved way of life. As you saw today, they're not just great because of those reasons, but they're also big. 20 percent of the world's fresh water is stored here, and 95 percent in the United States.

You also heard that some of the problems facing the Great Lakes are not unique; invasive species, habitat issues, non—point runoff, other issues are found in other coasts; however, the way the lakes react to them is unique because this is a closed freshwater system. What goes in these lakes, stays in these lakes. All the tropical water that enters Lake Superior takes over 100 years to exit the same old seaways to the Atlantic Ocean. It's great that you're here.

A couple of things that I wanted to just talk about, given the limited time that I have. We don't need a lot of new or any new planning processes. We definitely want you, in your final report, to integrate the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration and its strategy, as well as its implementation arm, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which Congress will enact the \$475 million this evening. The senate is going to pass that tonight, and it will be its way to President Obama for his signature. We also want that the Great Lakes are more fully recognized in reports. Sometimes it feels like the Great Lakes are being squeezed into an ocean policy in the interim report. And it would be great if you could highlight, in a more meaningful way, the Great Lakes' uniqueness in this report. They're not marines. They're not seas. They are lakes. They are freshwater. And to have that identity more visible, perhaps, is one of the special areas of emphasis, like you did for the arctic. Perhaps that would be one way of identifying that.

Also — and I know my time is up. I just want to finish up here — it would be great, like I said earlier, if this national policy would integrate our current planning processes so we're not handed another effort. We have been working for over five years to get our act together in the region. And we would like to implement what we've been able to do rather than plan more. And then lastly —

MS. HYDE: Mr. Lord —

MR. LORD: — we also want to ensure that the coordination framework includes the Great Lakes in a meaningful way by having the folks from this region serve on the subcommittees and that our — our issues are well placed on the agendas. Thanks for letting me address you today.

MS. HYDE: Next speaker is Steven Dawson.

MR. DAWSON: Good evening. Thanks for the opportunity to bring me here and let me speak to everyone concerned. I'm concerned about the invasive species, in particular, coming up the St. Lawrence River. And I'm trying to pick and choose off my paragraphs here in order to get through in time. But my navel experience has shown, over the years, that there's many more hiding places aboard ships and on the

hauls than just ballast water. And I'm concerned about that statement covering the problem. Other places include sanitary systems, cooling systems, fire fighting systems, salt to freshwater distillation systems, and so on; bilges, covers, anchor chain lockers can all be hiding places for invasive species.

With this in mind, I would like to express my support for the construction of a transfer port on a narrow, fast—flowing stretch of a fresh tide water conjuncture on the St. Lawrence River. The site must be jointly administered by the U.S. and Canada and located at the point dictated by the most advantageous river conditions, rather than geopolitical issues and boundaries, even if the site is totally encompassed by Canada.

At the present time, our economic recovery incentives include public projects. With this project, watershed and millions of people and their governmental agencies would benefit. The United States shipping and ship building businesses on the Great Lakes would benefit. Homeland security could be enhanced by limiting foreign ships access to the heartland and to more complete scrutiny during the process described herein. U.S./Canadians should benefit as well. Trickle-down could be extensive.

As I envision a dual fresh water/salt water port would be built, sea—going ships would dock downstream with gantries, cranes, conveyers and so on, pumping equipment, transferring cargo around the ship blocking construction or barrier. The two Great Lake ships docked up stream for cargo delivery inland and vice versa.

Railheads using existing lines would be included. Another function of the port would provide the monitored inspection station, haul scrubbing, biocide would be recycled, flushing station for tank and system cleaning in a dock, and channel facility around the ship blocking construction on the river.

MS. HYDE: Mr. Dawson, could you please provide us the rest of your comments in writing so we can make sure that everyone gets a copy?

MR. DAWSON: I have copies for everyone who wants one.

MS. HYDE: Great. Thank you.

MR. DAWSON: And I appreciate your time.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next up is Dale Phenicie. And then on deck would be Tim Eder, John Popovich and Frank Lichtkoppler. Sorry.

MR. PHENICIE: Thank you, and good evening. My name is Dale Phenicie. It's my pleasure to serve as a member of the board of directors of the Great Lake Observing System, otherwise known as GLOS. I'm here to provide just a few comments on behalf of the board and our executive director, Dr. Jennifer Reed. The GLOS mission is to provide public access to critical real time and historical information about the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River and interconnecting waterways for use of managing and safeguarding, understanding these immensely valuable freshwater resources. GLOS is just one of the elite 11 regional associations within the integrated ocean observing system that is led by NOAA. But we differ from the others. And as you've heard, this is very much bi—national region. GLOS is a national organization with members and board of directors from both U.S. and Canada. We also cooperate with global earth observing systems or GEOS in order to better incorporate that financial flavor.

The takehome that I would give you about what the policy needs to include is, first of all, GLOS agrees that there is a need for a national policy on stewardship of oceans and coasts, that many of priorities that are described in the interim report are, in fact, being pursued here, as you've heard here this evening, within the Great Lakes Region through existing federal, regional, state, and local programs, and that a new oceans/Great Lakes policy should recognize these programs and the policy achieved through them.

This is not unique to this area. We're sure that other regions are in a similar situation. I personally familiar with the Gulf of Mexico program and the Gulf of Mexico Ocean Observing System. And they've been very effective in coordinating things there and coming up with real—life on—the—ground success. Of special note, also, is this bi—national arrangement in the lakes here really comes to us in a number of forms, diplomatic forms, legal forms, and voluntary forms. So that should be kept in mind.

And then, finally, these processes that we rely on here in the region are very stakeholder oriented. And we would expect and hope that any new process that comes from the Ocean Policy Task Force would be stakeholder driven. And thanks very much for the opportunity to address you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next up is Tim Eder, from Great Lakes Commission.

MR. EDER: Thank you. It's Tim Eder.

MS. HYDE: Eder.

MR. EDER: I'm executive director of the Great Lakes Commission. I appreciate the opportunity to comment today. The Great Lakes Commission is an entity formed by the Great Lakes states back in the 1950s to represent their interests in both environmental protection, as well as economic development and prosperity. We very much appreciate the efforts of the Task Force to develop a more integrated and comprehensive framework for protection of our oceans, coasts, and the Great Lakes. It's highly appropriate that you timed your visit today here at the time that you did. First, you saved the best for last. You came to the Great Lakes last. And you timed your visit to coincide with the imminent announcement of funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

CHAIR SUTLEY: We did that on purpose.

MR. EDER: We're really appreciative of you timing it that way. I was asked to come to —— we were asked to come to two of the meetings of the Task Force when you were meeting this summer. And I came to one of the meetings in early July. And I was asked at the meeting to identify one or two of the top things that could be done by the Task Force. And I'll tell you what two of them were. The first and foremost was to give us an orchestra leader. Give us a single agency in the Great Lakes Region that we can work with on a day—to—day basis to coordinate the entire federal family. And with the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, we believe that we're about to have that with EPA. EPA will have the power of the purse to coordinate the activities of the entire federal family. And we think that's going to be extremely important.

The second thing that I said is that we've got to shut the door on invasive species. All the money in the world won't make a difference without slamming the door on invasive species. And it's an issue that begs for leadership from an entity like the Council on Environmental Quality. We really could use CEQ to bring together EPA with its development of regulations and its special general permit and the Coast

Guard to bring out the best of both of those agencies to deal with this problem for — particularly for ships through new policies, as well as the enforcement regimes. A couple of other points. As regards marine spatial planning, you've heard earlier from Director Logan, the importance of providing some support for our renewable energy development. And one of the things that we could really use in this region is a programmatic environmental impact statement.

Finally, I just want to urge you to recognize the unique legal relationship that the Great Lakes states have. In the Great Lakes Region, we've retained the ownership of the submerged lands throughout the Great Lakes. And that vests us with some significant public trust responsibilities. And we urge you to craft a final policy framework that recognizes that unique relationship with the Great Lakes. Thank you very much.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next up is John Popovich from Greater Cleveland Boating Associations.

MR. POPOVICH: Good evening Chair Sutley and other members of the Task Force. We represent the recreational boater. I would like to touch on two areas. One is the environment.

We've already addressed the exotic species that are being introduced into the lakes. But another area that needs to be talked about is the incidence of algae blooms recently. These massive algae blooms that are being created in the lake, one of which is blue/green algae, which is shown to be toxic to people. I'm sure the marine life also. But possibly from runoff of nutrients from farms and things. But that needs to be addressed, also, besides these species.

The other thing is dredging. It seems to be a very serious problem in all the shallow draft recreational harbors in Lake Erie. They show a huge economic impact. An example is, where I boat out of, which is West Harbor. It's near the Lake Erie islands. There is an estimate of between 3,500 and 5,000 boats in that one harbor. There's been studies that have shown for every 20 docks, that equals one job in the related industries: Marinas, gas docks, restaurants, charter fishing. We have 100 boats just in West Harbor alone providing recreational fishing.

All the shallow draft harbors have dredging backlogs and need to be dredged at project depths.

We have recently experienced — October 7th there was some sustained winds in the area that created a water loss of over six feet of water in the western end of Lake Erie. Since the project depths in our harbor are only ten feet at the entrance and eight elsewhere in the channels, when you lose over six feet of water and you haven't maintained those project depths, you have a real problem with boats being able to navigate in and out.

I'm afraid that if those harbors become unusable, we're going to lose that economy because there's nowhere else for them to go. So we want to make sure that there's adequate dredging, and that it's being done on the recreational harbors as well as the commercial harbors. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next up is Frank Lichtokoppler. I am so sorry. And the folks that are coming after him are Bob England from Erie County Health Department; Penny Jeffrey from The League of Women Voters; and Pamela Davis from the American Great Lakes Port Association. Mr. —

MR. LICHTOKOPPLER: Lichtokoppler.

MS. HYDE: — Lichtokoppler — thank you — is from Ohio State University, Ohio Sea Grant.

MR. LICHTOKOPPLER: Thank you. My name is Frank Lichtokoppler, Ohio State University, Ohio Sea Grant. I've been working in outreach education in northeast Ohio on Lake Erie for Ohio State program for 28 years. And we've been going to boat shows, sport shows all those years. And we get lots of questions from citizens, clientele, stakeholders in the Great Lakes, if you will. We drink the water; one really unique feature for the Great Lakes. But can we safely eat the fish. People want to know. Can we safely swim in the Great Lakes? People want to know. Can we drink the water safely? These are key questions. Additional questions coming up.

Can we get rid of these exotic invasive species, non—native species? Can we build sustainable communities, have jobs, income and a sustainable economy in the Great Lakes? These are key questions the citizens ask me. And if the policies you guys and ladies develop create those situations where we can answer those questions, we would really appreciate it. It would make my job a lot easier.

I would also encourage you to include social science research in your efforts, not only the physical science, biological science, chemical science — very important — but how people react to the water, how they react to the lakes. The social science, the culture, some of the stuff that you've heard already. It's social science. What's it going to cost to pay? How do we pay for it? How do we get these things done?

We have plans. We have great passion up here. I hope you understand and see some of the passion the folks feel for the Great Lakes. And we really hope you can help us protect and preserve and keep these lakes great. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Bob England from Erie County Health Department.

MR. ENGLAND: Hi. I'm Bob England, Director of Environmental Health with the Erie County Health Department. I would be remiss if I didn't speak tonight and represent my county, my health district, and some of the issues that are important to the community in Erie County. Erie County, county seat of Sandusky. You may know Erie County for Cedar Point. It's a huge recreational area. And one of the reasons it's a huge destination for people during the summer is that we have 98 miles of coastline on Lake Erie, and it's a great place to spend your time during the summer in a beautiful location.

During my tenure as Director of Environmental Health with the Erie County Health Department, I have been tasked with prioritizing our major emphasis of time in our department, and then strategizing an approach to address some of the public health instances in Erie County. One of the main problems that I've seen over the years through our beach program, which Director Ulrich spoke about earlier, beachside programs that identify public health nuisances in different areas in the county. One of the main problems is poorly treated sewage from private sewage systems that end up in our tributaries, such as our main tributary, the Sandusky Bay, which then make its way into the Lake Erie. Also, Old Woman's Creek, one of our natural estuaries in Erie County is subject to some of the same contaminants.

In addressing these nuisances, we've looked for viable funding streams to eliminate these concerns. And we're using funds like the U.S. Rural Development Loan and grant opportunities. What I would stress tonight — and I know my time is short here — is that we look for opportunities to compliment the U.S. world Development Loan Grant Fund, which is a great funding opportunity. Under the Obama

Administration, a lot of these funds have increased, and it's become a great opportunity. But if there were more funding opportunities that could compliment these programs, there would be greater opportunity to implement some of these local plans that are already on the shelf. And I appreciate your time. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Penny Jeffrey from the League of Women Voters.

MS. JEFFREY: Thank you. The League has a long—standing commitment to environmental issues and wishes to bring these areas of concern to the attention of this hearing. We are concerned about the plans of the Cleveland Cuyahoga County Port Authority to build a port into Lake Erie at East 55 Street, currently part of the Cleveland Lakefront State Park.

The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers recently released a draft of Cleveland Harbor Dredge Material Management Plan and environmental impact statement which supports using dredged materials to build a combined disposal facility at the site, which would serve as the basis for this proposed port.

This environmental impact statement is incomplete because it does not study the impact of a port on the site, only a CDF. We support the Cleveland Lakefront Water District Plan to move the port for redevelopment of the downtown waterfront. The port is currently utilizing about 100 acres. There is no need to construct one twice the size.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio has taken a position against moving the Port of Cleveland to East 55th Street in a resolution passed at the League of Women Voters Ohio Convention in May 2009. And I'm including a copy of that in my statement.

USAC studied other sites, but vowed to the CCCPA's choice of East 55th Street Marina. It is neither the cheapest nor the most environmentally sound choice. We encourage the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force to protect Lake Erie by opposing this move. The Lake Erie — the League of Women Voters Lake Erie Basin Committee, which is supporting — supported by League of Women Voters groups in the five states that border Lake Erie has studied and taken positions on improving Lake

Erie water quality. Their most recent position is the Lake Erie Basin Committee position on CAFOs. In support of a precautionary moratorium on all new or expanding concentrated animal feeding operations that produce untreated animal waste, and in support of improved and similar waste water transportation, delivery, and treatment systems on each CAFO site within the Lake Erie watershed, equivalent to the state requirements for municipalities producing the same volume of human waste, safe nutrient management practices and disposal of sludge should be included in the requirements in order to maintain adequate water quality standards in ground and surface waters. Their other positions are attached to this document.

MS. HYDE: Ms. Jeffrey, could you provide us the rest as a written comment, please?

MS. JEFFREY: Yes.

MS. HYDE: Thank you very much. Next is Pamela Davis with the American Great Lakes Ports Association. And the three that will follow her are Peter Griesinger from the Ohio Environmental Council; April Mather from the Alliance for the Great Lakes; and Jonathan Cooper from the Alliance for the Great Lakes.

MS. DAVIS: Chair, members of the Task Force, I'm also the environmental and sustainability manager for the Port of Cleveland. Thanks for visiting with us today. I've been asked by American Great Lakes Ports Association to submit comments in writing in total. They've been submitted at the desk. What we would like you to know is that for more than 100 years the Great Lakes Navigation System has provided the upper Midwest with cost effective transportation, enabling the development of critical industries in a robust regional economy. Today the system serves mining, steel, construction, power generation, and agricultural sectors by enabling the transport of large quantities of bulk commodities. These include iron ore, coal, limestone, cement, salt, fertilizers, grains and steel products.

The 2008 analysis by the Army Corp of Engineers determine that the Great Lakes navigation system saves customers approximately \$3.6 billion per year over the next least costly mode of transportation. The same study determined that there are 40,000 — 44,000 U.S. jobs directly dependent on the Great Lakes shipping with tens of thousands in shipping—dependent industries. For these reasons, we urge the Task Force to embrace a much stronger position clarifying the federal policy to ensure that it seeks balance between environmental protection and ecosystem restoration with economic growth and job creation. Like coastal waters, the Great Lakes are a resource used for many purposes, including drinking water, aquatic habitat, recreational boating, commercial fishing, sport fishing, cruise tourism and freight transportation. The interim reports' clear focus on an ecosystem—based management leaves a lot of uncertainty regarding the priority of economic issues. We believe that our own protection and restoration are conducive with economic growth. For these reasons, we urge the Task Force to acknowledge the important role played by the Great Lakes Navigation System.

Each year Great Lakes also operates and transports more than 200 million tons of cargo to and from 60 commercial ports. All of this is done with a lower environmental impact. Our Great Lakes also can transport 700 — can transport the same cargo as 700 rail cars can, or 3,000 truck loads. So for a thousand — one ship, we get more cargo transported.

One of the other things in a short time is we would caution you on applying cautionary principle across the board. There needs to be a just balance between economics and environmental balance. Given the time, comments, again, have been submit in writing.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Peter Griesinger from the Ohio Environmental Council.

MR. GRIESINGER: Yeah. Hi. Peter Griesinger. I've a board member of the Ohio Environmental Council. I'm a local resident.

The Ohio Environmental Council is based in Columbus. I've been asked by our director — our senior director of water resources, Christy Meyer, to attend the meeting. And I — and she will — Ohio Environmental Council will be submitting, I'm sure, written comments to you with the Healing Our Waters Coalition.

This really is a private statement, as well as a board member, I suppose. I'll add that. I was involved in a very big effort here locally to the preservation of the Whiskey Island resource, a piece of 20 acres of land and ten—acre marina. It's the mouth of the Cuyahoga River that comes out into the Lake Erie. And this was all about bringing people close to the water and bringing Cleveland to the water. We had a huge

eight— to ten—year battle to make sure that the economic interests in this region understood the viable ecological interests therein at that property. That was a — a battle that we won.

The role of activism in your deliberations, the wonderful language that you have within your — your reports of ecosystem—based management, the precautionary approach. I disagree with the port authority's opinion on that. I hope you continue with that process. And a healthy functioning and resilient function coastal and Great Lakes systems. I commend you. I thank you for your brilliance and your articulation of these fundamentals. As a film maker, I made some videotapes on ecological economics back in the '90s. And to hear you operationalizing, as Herman Daily would say, this kind of material now is deeply appreciative — appreciated by me and those of us who are working on this.

Another comment on the Ocean Policy Task Force, I really truly hope that you will understand how local this is and how another name that reflects the oceans, the coastal, and the Great Lakes, not just simply oceans, is critical for people to buy into this process. This is our home. The coasts are where we interact with the oceans and the land, and the Great Lakes is home to some 35 million people in all the numbers that you've seen here before. So I hope you can change sort of the monitor of the whole process and include the coasts and the Great Lakes. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is April Mather with the Alliance for the Great Lakes.

MS. MATHER: Hello. Thank you. I'm April Mather, the Ohio outreach coordinator for the Alliance for the Great Lakes. Thank you for letting me speak here today, and thank you also for highlighting the importance of formal and informal education in the interim report.

The Alliance would like to see that commitment carried through to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. We also think that the Task Force should support deployment of a Federal commitment to Great Lakes education as one of its priorities.

I work to bring formal and informal education opportunities to the Ohio Lake Erie watershed, and have seen how important education is to creating stewardship — stewards and stewardship.

In educating the community, we create engaged, involved stewards, not just in grades K through 12, as the report indicate, but we need to reach the whole community.

In terms of education, as the Alliance for the Great Lakes has with its interdisciplinary Great Lakes based curriculum, we've engaged students and educators in service learning, connecting students to their own vital resources in their back yard. But we also engage the whole community through our beach program. The program encourages people to become stewards of their area beaches, and it's for people of all ages, including schools, families, businesses and other community groups.

We train volunteers to measure indicators for healthy and at—risk beaches, to fill out beach health assessment forms and also to remove litter from their beaches. Our teams learn about their beaches, their communities, and then take stewardship actions to improve recurring problems on their beaches. In 2008 we had over 7,000 volunteers in five states engaged with their beaches and learning about how to take stewardship actions. That could be very powerful across the whole Great Lakes basin if we continue to educate people with help from federal support.

Federal support for education, including K through 12, and beyond, about Great Lakes issues creates better stewards and advocates for our coastal resources. Commitments to Great Lakes education from a federal level will help create informed stewards of this unique freshwater resource. Education and stewardship should extend beyond just the Great Lakes basin. As students in the Great Lakes basin learn about oceans, the students in other watersheds should also learn about the Great Lakes. It is important to make way for more programs to actively engage people with the Great Lakes resources and create stewardship on all levels. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Jonathan Cooper with the Alliance for the Great Lakes. And following him will be Rachel Heckel with the Great Lakes United; Eric Unde with the Audubon Ohio; and Katie Swartz with American Rivers.

MR. COOPER: Hi. I'm Jonathan Cooper, and I am on the board. I'm very proud to be on the board of the Alliance for the Great Lakes. And I'm proud to work with April and her educational outreach. And just a little bit about the Alliance for the Great Lakes. It's a 40—year—old non—profit organization that works to preserve that treasure that's outside this building. And if you want a real recommendation for the Alliance for the Great Lakes, the Alliances' proudest son is sitting right up there in the person of Cam Davis.

So this is a story, an effective organization that works to promote the health of the Great Lakes. I live here in Cleveland. We live on the lake. My wife and my family live and play by the lake. We swim in the lake. We drink the water out of the lake. And Sunday night we ate perch from the lake. And I want to leave you with two thoughts: The first is, if you're here long enough, have some lake perch. Have some lake walleye. Because once you do, you'll realize that it is very important to make sure that the Asian Carp do not invade the Great Lakes. Because I haven't had one, but I'm told they're not nearly as good.

Second, I note the name of this Policy Task Force. In the '80s there was a pitcher for the Red Sox. His name was Oil Can Boyd. The Red Sox were playing the Indians down at the old municipal stadium, and it got really foggy. It got so foggy, they started to hit balls to the outfield to see if the outfielders could see them. And they couldn't, and so they suspended the game. And Oil Can Boyd, who was a pretty good pitcher, said, "That's what you get when you build a stadium so close to the ocean." It's not an ocean. Remember that story. There are some differences. There are some similarities.

Obviously, the marine states care about a lot of the same things that we do. But given the differences in the bottom lands laws, given the differences in some of the invasive species issues, we are different. And I would ask you to remember that. Thank you for coming. Thank you for all of your meetings and all of your hard work, and welcome to Cleveland. It was a beautiful day.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Rachel Heckel with the Great Lakes United.

MS. HECKEL: Thank you Chairwoman Sutley and the members of the Task Force. I thank you for this opportunity. I'm Rachel Heckel. I'm here representing Great Lakes United and our 170 member organizations across the region. I have a few brief comments. The first concerns is existing efforts in our Great Lakes Region. You've heard already about our efforts in the Great Lakes Regional collaboration

and also the work we've done over the summer in public meetings on how to implement the strategy of the Great Lakes Initiative.

We applaud and greatly appreciate President Obama's commitment to restoring and protecting the Great Lakes and the health of our oceans and coasts, in particularly, this region.

In addition to the regional collaboration, earlier this summer Secretary of State, Clinton Ad Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lawrence Cannon, announced the renegotiation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement; a long—standing and important environmental pact between U.S. and Canada to protect the waters of the Great Lakes.

In this Great Lakes agreement there exists fundamentals. The precautionary principle, zero discharge, and virtual elimination of toxic chemicals. The water quality agreement renegotiation is an important opportunity for a national policy to harmonize and enhance our existing collaborative efforts to restore and protect the lakes. We hope that the national policy can more clearly recognize that leadership in the international arena does not just apply to the law of the sea. The same level of attention should be given to bi—national agreements, such as the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and treaties that impact the restoration of the Great Lakes, as to the treaties that govern the seas.

The proposal of \$475 million in the Great Lakes initiative is one part of the solution. The other part of the solution is policy reform to ensure that the ecosystem that we restore does not become degraded again. Just to identify a few examples, you can look to invasive species. New balance regulations, new screening regulations for species being imported into the country, and action to stop Asian Carp from invading our center, protecting the ecosystem we are working to restore.

It is our hope this policy can support and promote more applied research to directly solve some of the problems mentioned in the interim report. And we know that the interim report outlines research opportunities, and we commend this. For our region, applied research is the key to solving environmental problems. Thank you for this opportunity. And we'll submit the rest of our comments.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. The next commenter is Eric Unde from Audubon Ohio.

MR. UNDE: Hello Chair and the Task Force. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. My name is Eric Unde. I am with the National Audubon Society, the Ohio office.

Again, thank you for being here. Just seeing the people in the room today, you can see that there is a passion for water and a passion for Lake Erie here in Ohio. Welcome to the freshwater coast, as I like to call it. Water is magic. It renews, it revives, it refreshes, and it is so refreshing, like a splash of cold water in the face, to see an administration in Washington D.C. that is concerned about clean air, clean water, and clean environment.

Clevelanders love Lake Erie. Ohioans love Lake Erie. In my neighborhood, when people say they're going to the beach or going fishing, you know where they're going. They're going to the lake.

This summer you could see the passion when EPA came to town to talk about the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the millions of dollars that are going to be coming to the region. And the room

was packed. There were hundreds of people. This is why it is important that this Task Force emphasizes the Great Lakes.

It is not just oceans. It is Great Lakes. And, again, thank you for bringing forward a national policy that ensures protection of these fresh water resources, and that it is a science—based reasoning and not just hearsay and emotions, but science that you bring to the table. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next commenter is Katie Swartz with the American Rivers. And following her will be Melissa Malott from Clean Wisconsin; Thom Cmar from NRDC; and Harvey Merke from Georgian Bay Association. Ms. Swartz.

MS. SWARTZ: Thank you. My name is Katie Swartz, Conservation Associate of American Rivers in our Toledo, Ohio office. American Rivers is the national voice for healthy rivers and the communities that depend on them. We are working to help communities find the best solutions to prepare for the floods, droughts and water pollution problems that we already are witnessing due to climate change.

The Great Lakes are a unique freshwater resource that needs to be protected. The pollution that travels to the Great Lakes from our rivers and streams from non—point sources stays in the Great Lakes and promotes the growth of harmful algae.

Increasing development and antiquated over—taxed waste water treatment systems mean that when it rains, untreated sewage and polluted storm water pour directly into rivers from sewage treatment plants, dirty streets, and parking lots. This poses a health hazard for people, as well as fish and wildlife. So how must we address sewer overflows and non—point source pollution? In most cases, this means favoring non—structural water management strategies that protect and restore the natural infrastructure that provides clean water, flood control and many other benefits.

In urban environments, we must build green roofs, stream buffers, and other vegetative systems that will manage more extreme rainfall and provide numerous other benefits. Everywhere in the Great Lakes we must preserve and restore wetlands, flood plains, forests, rivers and streams. These approaches often cost far less than the grant structure approaches and can handle a wide range of conditions. A green roof, for example, can help reduce runoff from more extreme storms, but can also reduce air temperature during heat waves.

Furthermore, these decentralized strategies can be scaled up according to needs as conditions change. There are no regretted solutions that will help protect human health and safety in the ecosystems we all rely on. We must begin to make changes. And the creation of Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force makes it clear that there is a huge need for federal leadership, and encouraging real solutions for the Great Lakes on every level of government. So we must choose the most flexible and cost effective solutions if we are able to be successful to preserve and restore the Great Lakes. Thank you for this opportunity.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. While they're fixing the audio, Melissa Malott is next with Clean Wisconsin. My name is Melissa Malott — is this on? My name is Melissa Melott, and I'm the water program director and attorney at Clean Wisconsin. We're a statewide organization based in Madison, Wisconsin. We have 10,000 members across the state. We advocate for clean water and clean energy.

I want to reiterate the message and the feeling that our waters coalition brought here today, that there needs to be a specific analysis and policy for the Great Lakes Region. One example of a need that we have for specific analysis of our problems is with agricultural non—point source conditions. In the Great Lakes basin we have a big problem with non—point and point source agricultural runoff problems. This contributes to algae in our Great Lakes. And we have toxic algae blooms that are making people sick. We have climactic problems that are ruining peoples' enjoyment of the lake and altering the ecosystems throughout the Great Lakes basin. And these problems are specific to our region and need a specific analysis of them and policies to come up with solutions. Some of these solutions require specific coordination between federal agencies and state agencies. For example, in Wisconsin we're working on phosphorous water quality criteria, a numeric standard. And through this process, we're starting to have really amazing conversations on innovative policies potentially under the Clean Water Act that will address non—point source pollution as well. Additionally, many reports have come out of the EPA that there is a total lack of enforcement on CAFO runoff pollution. And we need enforcement, we need monitoring, and we need accountability on this problem.

This phosphorus problem and nutrient runoff problem is just a really good example of why the Great Lakes need a specific policy or solution in this region. And so, just to summarize, we applaud the creation of this Task Force, but we ask that there is a total recognition that the Great Lakes has specific problems and needs specific solutions. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Thom Cmar

from NRDC.

MR. CMAR: Chairwoman Sutley, members of the Task Force, thank you for the opportunity to come in today. My name is Thom Cmar. I'm an attorney in the Chicago office of NRDC, the Natural Resources Defense Counsel. As a native Ohioan, I'm excited to return to my home state and take this opportunity to speak in favor of the national policy that the Obama Administration is creating to ensure protection of the Great Lakes ecosystem within a federal framework that coordinates efforts to restore, maintain and protect our oceans and coastal waters. A national policy is necessary because right now our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes are governed by more than 140 laws and 20 different agencies, each with different goals, and often conflicting mandates.

President Obama is showing historic leadership to create the kind of bedrock and environmental policy necessary to help change this. We need a national policy that allows the federal government to take quick and effective action to address well—known threats to the Great Lakes ecosystem, as well as new problems as they emerge. We are also pleased to see that the report includes a special area of emphasis on water quality and sustainable practices on land.

We hope that this plan will recommend ballast water treatment standards that are as tough as those on the books in California and New York, adopted nationwide, and ships required to install treatment technology as soon as possible to prevent new invasive species.

Remediation of toxic sediments from Great Lakes, rivers, and harbors, vigorous enforcement of the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, to prevent new excess pollution from destroying any progress that's made, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to sustainable levels. Modernization of water

infrastructure, restoration of wetlands and habitats, buffer strips next to farm fields, and rain gardens next to highways to keep excess nutrients from polluting our waterways.

The longer we wait to take action, the more complicated and expensive the problems become. The Great Lakes are a vital resource in the heart of America, and they need to be at the heart of the new national policy that protects all of our waters, and the food, jobs, energy and recreation that they provide. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Harvey Merke from Georgian Bay Association. And following him will be Frank Facat from OSCO, Inc.; David Helluarg from Blue Frontier Campaign; and Julie Wolin from Cleveland State University.

MR. MERKE: Thank you very much. My name is Harvey Merke. I'm here on behalf of the Georgian Bay Association and the Georgian Bay Forever Foundation. I am on the board of the directors of the Georgian Bay Association, and incidentally, the only U.S. Citizen on that board. I want to draw the Task Force's attention to a very serious problem involving the water levels of the central lakes; Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Georgian Bay. Last year the Great Lakes compact was passed, which addresses serious withdrawal of water from the Great Lakes basin. And yet we continue to ignore a very serious withdrawal of billions of gallons of water from the central lakes because there is no central control over the outlet of that water from the — from Lake Huron through the St. Clair River. This study — this problem has been studied to death, like many of the problems here. And there is a very clear solution to it. And that is the installation of controls in the St. Clair River.

The international joint commission back in 1993, we gave a \$20 million report covering the entire Great Lakes. And among their suggestions, which have been ignored both by them and the two countries involved, that remedial structures be put in, and that a control board be appointed.

I urge this Task Force to exert its supervisory control and cause a body to be appointed to control the outlet of these central lakes, as is the situation with Lake Superior, the Niagara River, and Lake Ontario. Thank you very much.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Frank Facat from OSCO, Inc.

MR. FALAT: My name is Frank Falat. It's not Facat. I represent my own business, and we custom design the water purification also for the dentistry with large concern about the bacteria. And latest issue was about the Mercury discharge.

The dental industry purchased over 34 tons of amalgam. Amalgam contains 52 percent of Mercury. Lately we have some compilations down in Cleveland area. We came up that we have infrastructure with 132 gross tons of amalgam sitting in the pipes. If you discharge that to Great Lakes, you have enormous problem with Mercury, and it continues leeching. If you recalculate your 132 gross tons by 42 percent of silver, you have \$27 million to be dumped in Great Lakes. Who wants to pick it up? It is a big problem. Not just in Cleveland. Detroit, Chicago. It's a poor design of vacuum systems in the hospitals and the dental industries. And in order to solve the problem, we need the EPAs to contribute in some kind of a national program. It's — it's enormous. Pretty much sums it up. That's my concern.

MS. HYDE: Thank you.

MR. FALAT: Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Appreciate your comments. Next is David Helluarg from Blue Frontier Campaign.

MR. HELLUARG: Hi. Dave Helluarg. I'm from California. First I'd like to acknowledge there is differences between oceans and lakes. We're, you know, saltier, rustier and have sharks. I've spoke to Task Force before, and wouldn't take up your time now, except for my Uncle Al.

I was raised in New York and spent my summers in Cleveland in Willoughby—on—the—Lake, which was a high point for a while, and then became a low point. I remember specifically one summer we were fishing for sheephead off the U.S. Steel Plant where there's a pipe 20 feet above the lake, spewing this florescent orange water into the lake. The next summer there was a fishery advisory, and we started storing turpentine in the garage because of all the tar balls we got when we would go swimming. Summer after that it was detergent suds and dead fish all over the lakeshore, and we couldn't swim there anymore. And after that the river burned.

So the past — your panels and others have talked about the huge challenges that the Great Lakes still face, but we also saw a tremendous convergence 20 years ago, 30 years ago in the '70s and '80s when public engagement came together with public policy and the national resiliency of a seriously degraded ecosystem. We saw a title change, a sea change in freshwater lakes here. And I think it's a model that we can look, and hopefully that you can use, and also the collaborative efforts taking place, a model that you can use for a very degraded ecosystem, which is our public seas today. And I believe that there is an opportunity here.

I've watched all six of your hearings. I've attended four of them. You had over 1,700 people attend. You've had over 400 public statements and hundreds more submitted in writing. And what I've seen is over 80 percent of the people really wanted you to both take leadership and partnership with local, regional, state groups that are making an effort to turn the tide. And like I said, my last book was on the Coast Guard. It was almost counterintuitive for me to realize here the part of government that works. We've never had a real U.S. Ocean/Great Lakes policy. I'm hoping that you can take something to the president, and that he can give us an executive order to begin moving in that direction.

Without getting political, I've spent many years living in Washington before I got back to the ocean that I love. And it's odd for me to find federal — the federal family members who actually understand the issues and listen to the people. And now the challenge is for you to take the public trusts that's been handed to you and move forward and help us restore the blue in our red, white, and blue. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Julie Wolin from Cleveland State University. And following her will be George Goudreau from the Ohio DNR Coastal Resource Advisory Council; James Bolton from Tangent Company, LLC; and Megan Mackey.

MS. WOLIN: Thank you. I'm Julie Wolin. I'm actually representing citizens within the Great Lakes basin. I am an associate professor at Cleveland State University, and I now reside in Cleveland. But I'm a native of the state of Michigan, so I've grown up around the Great Lakes. My research — I'm an aquatic ecologist, and my research has in Great Lakes issues for quite a while. I would just like to kind of reemphasize some of the points that many people have made today. And also I commend the panel — or the Task Force for their ecosystem—based management policies. But I also want to emphasize the

point that that should be the ecosystem from a watershed approach. So including headwater areas, because especially in urban and urbanizing regions, we find that we're losing, repairing wetlands, we lose headwater streams, and all of those act as further assault on the river systems as they flow into them and into our Great Lakes.

Additionally, that's also a problem in some of the agricultural regions. I would also like to reemphasize the great importance of stopping the invasive species. And you've heard much about the Asian Carp. It's has the great potential to destroy the Great Lakes fisheries if it gets in.

And lastly, just to support the protection of Great Lakes from new threats of contaminated sediments from activities within the basin. And Ms. LaFernier from the Lake Superior Keweenaw Band mentioned about sulfide mining in the Lake Superior watershed. And that would be — I've lived in Pennsylvania for a couple of years and seen what acid mine drainage can do to stream systems. So that is definitely something that can be avoided and should not be allowed to happen, because it's not a short-term problem. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is George Goudreau from Ohio DNR Coastal Resources Advisory Council.

MR. GOUDREAU: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for coming to us in Cleveland. I'm the — I'm a member of the Coastal Resources Advisory Council with the Office of Coastal Management, and I am the past chair of that Council. I also happen to be professionally involved in the home building development business. And I'm a member of the Executive Council and National Association of Home Builders and the immediate past chair of the Land Use Development Committee. I'm a past commenter of the vote club in the west end of Lake Erie, and also a core cabinet of the Great Lakes Cruising Club, so I kind of wear a few hats.

I want to make just a summary statement. I did not prepare for this, and had been writing notes as I sat. Obviously the Great Lakes is somewhat overlooked when we think of the coastal miles that are involved in the Atlantic, Pacific oceans. The Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and the Gulf. Overwhelmingly, they outnumber us tremendously. But the thing remains that we are the largest concentration of fresh drinking water in the world. As we look at some of the things, I think we have to step away in view from many things that you're doing on the coasts. We are a unique environment.

When we talk of quality of life, that takes on a very special meaning here on the Great Lakes. As we've talked, there is about 35 million people, the Great Lakes basin is huge. The watersheds that lead into it come from pristine areas and, unfortunately, from contaminated areas. When we look at quality of life, one of the main things that we're looking at here — and, in fact, we've talked about it nationally at times in diverting some of our natural resources is, pure drinking water, one of the most important things to life.

The second thing is the public health and the quality in the lake itself. Are we having contaminated food products coming out of the lakes.

The third is the conservation of the habitat and the environment. Extremely important. None of these things overshadow one or the other, I think.

And then there is also the responsibility to educate the general public, which I don't think we do a particularly great job in at any level of our — of our governmental bodies. The education of the public is the responsibilities of the stewardship and what they do. When our first nation colleague was speaking here, they took a very different view of the land.

MS. HYDE: Mr. Goudreau —

MR. GOUDREAU: Thank you.

MS. HYDE: — can you provide those comments in writing after that? Thank you. Next commenter is James Bolton from Tangent Company, LLC.

MR. BOLTON: Thank you. Good evening. I come to you tonight as an environmental engineer that has spent over 20 months of my life swimming, camping and piling around on the Great Lakes, and but primarily I spent the last 12 years of my life starting a water treatment, particularly waste water treatment to the point where it can be reused. And one thing I've learned through this is that you need to think of the Great Lakes as a finite deposit of fresh water that the receding glaciers were gracious enough to leave behind. It is an unrenewable resource. It is a bathtub with less than one percent exchange per year. And it's something that we need to manage accordingly.

One thing that you can put in the Great Lakes that can't come out is salt. And you can only pee in the bathtub for so long before it becomes unsavory. So of all the salts, the most important in the fresh water is, in fact, phosphorus. It is the limiting nutrients that allows algae to grow. To drive home the difference, with the marine environment, in the ocean it's nitrogen.

One source of phosphorus that's starting to sort of show up — it's not quite there, but an ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure — is aquaculture. I would like to quote Gary Whelan from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. They do not allow aquaculture because, for three reasons in an e—mail. One, they don't allow public trust waters to be used as a pollution source. Two, they're afraid of invasive species. And three, disease harboring. And that position is generally held by every state on the Great Lakes side, and I support that position. However, that's not the position on the Canada side. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada through the National Aquaculture Strategic Policy, it's nasty. They are funneling millions of dollars into the development of freshwater aquaculture because there's been too much resistance on both coasts. There is a small industry brewing in Lake Huron right now, and they have goals for it to triple in five years.

So also with the emergence of offshore aquaculture that is being developed in the marine environment, I can envision an increased demand for using the Great Lakes for aquaculture.

Clearly, it's an actually unprecedented carving up of public trust waters of space for industrial activity. And I encourage the panel to consider that. And also, I think this can be addressed in what I would like to call a bi—national watershed—wide development plan that accounts for a TMDL, total maximum daily load structure. And hopefully we can use a structure like that to plan for water quality in the future. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Megan Mackey. And after her, the next three will be Missy Hayes from Mar Systems; Tomy Foley from Masters Mates and Pilots Association; and David Spotts from the U.S. Registered Pilots. Megan.

MS. MACKEY: My name is Megan Mackey. I work for a project at the American Littoral Society on Ocean Conservation Issues on the west coast, but I'm speaking today as a private citizen. I consider the Great Lakes Region my home. I grew up here in the Midwest, half in Wisconsin, and half in Chicago. I've spent a great deal of time in the shores of Lake Michigan. And my whole family still lives here.

With both the PEW Ocean Commission and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy recommending the establishment of a coordinating national policy for oceans and Great Lakes, I want to thank this administration for taking this important issue seriously and for all your efforts to ensure that the public has an opportunity to comment in regions across the nation.

I've had the privilege of attending many of these. And I've been really impressed. In order to overcome the enormous challenges faced by both our oceans and Great Lakes, including pollution, habitat loss, over fishing, climate change and basic species, we need one unifying national policy that will protect and maintain and restore the health of our ocean and Great Lakes ecosystems.

I'm looking forward to your final report in December, and urge President Obama to take action soon to issue an executive order that will establish a comprehensive national policy to protect, maintain, and restore our oceans and Great Lakes. Thanks for all your work.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Missy Hayes from Mar Systems.

MS. HAYES: Missy Hayes from Mar Systems. Mar Systems is a company that co—developed a technology with the USEPA to take Mercury, arsenic and other heavy metals out of the water. We come here today not just to support this Task Force, but also to remind the Task Force of a number of technologies already created with the USEPA and how they can address the water quality, specifically in the Great Lakes Region.

We are currently taking that technology and expanding it to address Great Lakes concerns, including industrial water streams, waste water streams, ground water issues, and legacy issues, and ground field issues. We're working with Hiram University, Ohio University, Case Western Reserve and Perdue. We're trying to take a technology that was already developed with us by the government and use that in the same collaborative method this Task Force is doing. We encourage you to continue to support those kinds of initiatives since the development of that was already done, and to continue to fund those projects so that we don't lose those technologies.

Again, we would like to thank you and do appreciate the Task Force work, and continue to encourage you to look at the things that the USEPA has developed with individuals so that we can further that research to address the Great Lakes' concerns.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next is Tomy Foley from Master Mates and Pilots Association.

MR. FOLEY: Good evening. Thanks for your leadership, stewardship on these issues. Congratulations on the funding. That's why, folks, votes matter.

I just want to comment, I've been involved in jobs on both sides of the issue; commercial and environmental. I've got two boys, merchant mariners. They're out on the lakes. They're also up in New York Harbor. I've been involved — two summers ago I worked at Lake Guardian, which runs the five Great Lakes. They're owned by Statia Marine, and they contract out through the different universities; keep an eye on the air quality, water quality, sediment quality. So that's a big, big important issue. I hope that funding continues for that particular vessel and others like it that take care of our Great Lakes.

I love the story about Lake Erie, the guy who thought it was another ocean. My grandmother flew over from Ireland from the Atlantic, and she thought it was another ocean. But it is very important for — I don't know how many millions of families in this area. We drink from it, play in it, and the one gentleman — was it ports and shipping, Mr. Weakley, lasered in on the issue. It's jobs are so tied into these Great Lakes. And I've been involved in those jobs. My family have been. So thanks again for all your work.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next commenter will be David Spotts from U.S. Registered Pilots. And after him, the last three speakers will be Christopher Pestak, from Battell Memorial Institute; Jane Halbedel from the local area, I believe; and David Linchec from Westcreek Preservation Committee. Mr. Spotts.

MR. SPOTTS: Good evening. I'm David Spotts. I'm an Ashtabula resident. I'm a graduate of the United States Merchant Marina Academy. I'm a maritime lawyer. I represent every U.S. registered pilot from Port Colborne to Duluth. U.S. registered pilots bring vessels through the Great Lakes, foreign vessels with foreign crews, a variety of foreign crews from all over the world. These foreign vessels are owned by people that we know sometimes, and sometimes people we don't know. As that vessel transits through the St. Lawrence Seaway, it has a Canadian pilot until it gets to U.S. waters. After that, one out of three there is no U.S. representative aboard.

We are the only country in the world that allow foreign ships into their heartland. We're the only country in the world. They come into our ports. They have one member of the U.S. a pilot. Other than that, they are on their own. When he unloads urea in Ashtabula, by the time he gets to Duluth he's clean, ready to loan grain. Something is happening between then and there. He passes a grain inspection, hauls grain out. I heard about ballasts. And ballast is very important, but regulation is important too.

The only representative aboard the ship is a U.S. registered pilot. In the current homeland security scheme, we focus on two things: Maritime facilities, and ships. But that doesn't take into account the Great Lakes. Because we have this pilot, and no money is available for training for the pilots. And I hope that you'll give that some consideration, if you think, both from a security standpoint and a ballast standpoint. And I've written a paper on it. Thank you very much.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Next commenter is Christopher Pestak from Battell Memorial Institute.

MR. PESTAK: Thank you very much. When implementing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, I just ask that you strongly consider the role that advanced technology can play in the restoration of the Great Lakes and the watersheds that feed them. There are many early and mid—stage technologies in development today that, with proper funding, could significantly improve the environmental health and the Great Lakes basin. I'll give you one example. At my company, Battell, we've developed a system to clean up streams contaminated by acid mine drainage. The system does not just clean up the water, but it

also extracts the contaminants, which can be sold as commodity chemicals. So what you have is a technology that cleans the water while also providing the added benefit of turning waste streams into value streams. We believe that with additional R and D, this acid mine drainage remediation technology can be extended to the problems of agricultural runoff and contaminated sediments and others. Now, this is just one example.

My point is that there are many real technology solutions in waiting, at my company, and at other companies, and at universities, that can totally change the way our society performs environmental cleanup.

We heard about sediment removal and how it was pulled up from the Ashtabula River and put in a hazardous landfill. That's really not cleanup. That's just moving the problem from one place to the other. I hope you'll consider technologies that truly address the problem and return both the water and the sediment to a pristine state. So I hope the Task Force will consider the funding for development of advanced technologies that can lead to solutions for the Great Lakes basin that are both environmentally and economically sustainable. Thank you very much.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. Jane Halbedel, private citizen.

MS. HALBEDEL: I thank you for prioritizing Cleveland for this hearing. My comments are made in conjunction with extraordinary achievements, intrinsic not only to Cleveland that made historic contributions to World War II, but to this great nation of innovation that once again must respond and deploy, with similar urgency, stellar technologies designed to equip our nation with the ability to reduce the mutual peril that the United States and International community now face from unmitigated climate change. You know, the New York Times recently posed significant concerns for the waters of America. Many states have turned a blind eye to reports that show high levels of toxins in drinking water, whether because of lack of resources to take on polluters, because of political interference, and as a result, one in ten Americans have been exposed to water that does not meet federal guidelines for chemical safety, and which may cause cancer and birth defects. That number approximates to 23 million Americans.

Since 2004, polluters, like factories and manufacturing plants self report that they broke the laws more than half a million times. Dumping cancer—causing chemicals or not having reported what chemicals they disposed, state officials only fine or significantly punish three percent of the Clean Water Act violators. This is a travesty for the United States of America that we have been subjected to inordinate levels of toxic agents in our drinking water, given that we have the Clean Air and Water Acts designed to protect American citizens from this level of endangerment.

This article that appeared in the Cleveland Plain Dealer on September 23, 2009 speaks directly to severe and expensive alterations of Lake Erie's water quality that could, if those agents responsible are not properly identified and mitigated at their source, through legislative action and persistent monitoring, these elements will continue to remain hazardous to this marvelous resource, in spite of the millions of dollars our Federal Government has committed to Lake Erie's restoration. NOAA's modis satellite has identified a gigantic portion of algae. And they will continue to monitor it as it approaches water treatment facilities.

As climate change will inflict future detrimental impacts on Lake Erie, it is now imperative that the offending agents that are undermining Lake Erie's water quality are identified and mitigated at their source to secure the protection of our drinking water before more deleterious events unfold.

MS. HYDE: Ms. Halbedel, can you provide those to us in writing, please?

MS. HALBEDEL: Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you.

MS. HALBEDEL: And I just want to say that you have an incredible task ahead of you, but you have the power to position global climate change before our government, and make the necessary changes that are absolutely needed. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. And the last commenter, as far as I know at this point, is Dave Linchec from the Westcreek Preservation Committee.

MR. LINCHECH: Thank you. I'm Dave Linchec with Westcreek Preservation Committee. Westcreek Preservation Committee is a local community—based conservation and watershed organization. We work to improve our local waters and our local habitats through area protection and easement — the conservation easements on natural areas. For example, we do wetland restoration projects and stream habitat improvement projects. In our work, we found that the community is very supportive of efforts to clean our local waterways and to improve our Great Lakes. I would like to definitely communicate to you that we see this over and over again. I also co—chair the Northeast Ohio Watershed Council. There are dozens of local small— and medium—sized organizations and community—based efforts to improve tributaries of our rivers and of Lake Erie, because we realize how important our waterways and our resources are. I would like to thank you all for your attention to the Great Lakes, and specifically to Lake Erie. It's a home to a large portion of our nation's population. It's the water that supports our lives. It supports our livelihoods, our economy, our recreational opportunities. It's our home. But most importantly, it supports our lives. It's the water that probably all of us have drunk water that came out the Lake Erie today. So it's very important. As you've heard, there are a number of challenges and a number of issues facing the Great Lakes. And they're not going to be easy to solve. But one of the things we have to emphasize is actions. As some of your panelists earlier had pointed out, we have many, many plans. We know what a lot of the problems are. We need to emphasize actions. Some of those actions definitely need federal involvement; things like invasive species, contaminated sediments in our rivers. We also all need to work together. And I'd ask you also to emphasize the state efforts and those local efforts, local community efforts, municipal efforts, and efforts of the individual groups, as well as individual citizens, and that everybody needs to know everything we do impacts our waters. And everything that impacts our waters impacts us. Again, emphasizing action. We need action. We need the resources to carry out those actions. And we all need to work together; federal, state, local, and individual. And if we all — we all need to work together because we all need clean water. Thank you.

MS. HYDE: Thank you. I think that was our last commenter. And I want to thank you all for helping to make sure that you provided us very thoughtful and respectful comments. And I will now turn it back to Chair Sutley.

CHAIR SUTLEY: Thank you very much. And thank you all for coming and for sharing your thoughts with us. I think this was very valuable time we spent together. And I just wanted to take a minute to thank — please help me thank Tinka Hyde for doing a great job as our facilitator here. And also to thank — we have a lot of help from a number of agencies. And I want to thank them for doing the setup and putting this all together. So please help me thank them as well. And finally, give yourselves a round of applause, because this was a great hearing, and we really appreciate all of you coming today. Thank you.

The above meeting was reported and transcribed by Katrina Dearborn, Court Reporter and Notary Public in the State of Ohio, Dearborn Reporting Services, 1375 East Ninth Street, Cleveland, Ohio, 44114. 216—298—4888.