

Zero Discharge of Biological Pollution in the Great Lakes from Ballast Water by 2011

Whereas in 1999 Great Lakes United passed a resolution calling for the establishment and implementation by 2005 of “scientifically defensible standards for ballast water discharge that will eliminate the risk of new introductions of exotic species,” which went unheeded by the United States and Canada, and

Whereas more than 180 non-native species have entered the Great Lakes, altered the ecosystem, disrupted the food web and threatened the fishery, and

Whereas it is estimated that one new non-native aquatic invasive species enters the Great Lakes on average every eight months, and

Whereas the number-one pathway for non-native aquatic invasive species to enter the Great Lakes is through ballast discharge from oceangoing vessels originating from foreign ports, and

Whereas more than fifteen years after the zebra mussel invaded the Great Lakes through ballast discharge, no clear ballast water standard has been set to prevent damaging aquatic invasive species introductions and establishments, and

Whereas the adoption of the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act (NAISA) by the United States Congress would put in place greatly improved programs and regulations to reduce the risk of future invasive species from ballast water, although its passage could be delayed and the current draft could be weakened, and

Whereas the Canada Shipping Act is being modified with the intent of remaining consistent with legislation enacted in the United States, and

Whereas setting an aggressive goal is essential to drive technology, research, and investment, would force governments and shippers to move in a direction and pace different from the status quo, and is appropriate because the Great Lakes are exquisitely sensitive to any further releases of invasive species, and

Whereas the Great Lakes community must adopt policies that go beyond merely managing risks or reducing the number of new introduced species, and

Whereas the Great Lakes community needs a long-term goal of zero new introductions,

Therefore be it resolved that Great Lakes United urges the United States Congress to immediately adopt legislation establishing regulations and programs to reduce ballast water discharge that are at least as stringent as the provisions of S. 770, the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act, as introduced in March 2005, which will set nationwide standards and develop technology and place it onboard ships to prevent releases of non-native invasive species by 2011, which is the preferred national solution, and

Be it further resolved that the governments of the United States and Canada are urged to adopt more stringent policies to completely eliminate releases of non-native invasive species into the Great Lakes from ballast water by 2011, and

Be it further resolved that all options to achieve this goal should be immediately investigated for implementation within the Great Lakes basin, in case national legislation, standards and onboard treatments fail to meet the Great Lakes zero discharge goal by 2011, and

Be it further resolved that all options investigated must ensure that the problem of non-native invasive species in the Great Lakes not be transferred to the St. Lawrence River region, or any adjacent region, and

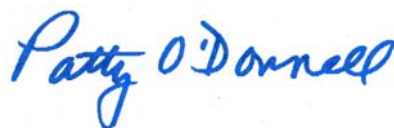
Be it further resolved that research should begin immediately on options that include:

- Closing the Seaway to ocean-going vessels while keeping the Great Lakes region open to commerce with foreign trading partners through the development of transshipment facilities or other strategies.
- Requiring ocean-going vessels to meet a zero discharge standard by either:
 - Requiring ships to discharge ballast water only into shore-based treatment facilities or onto tankers that would hold the ballast water for recycling or release to a shore-based facility at a later time or
 - Require ocean-going vessels to seal their ballast tanks before entering the Great Lakes to prevent any discharge of ballast water, and

Be it further resolved that regulation of ballast water discharge through the United States Clean Water Act and by state and provincial regulation should be encouraged and promoted until adequately protective federal or binational programs are in place, and

Be it finally resolved that foreign vessels should be required to demonstrate that they carry liability insurance that could be used to reimburse costs of rapid response, management and remediation and to provide compensation for damages to the food web from future invasive species that cannot be mitigated.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE TWENTY THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF GREAT LAKES UNITED ON JUNE 9, 2005 IN KINGSTON, ONTARIO.



Patty O'Donnell, President