

**February 6, 2013 – Parry Sound, Ontario**

**Meeting of Mayors, Reeves and Chiefs of Georgian Bay Coastal Communities –  
Resolution regarding Low Water Levels - Georgian Bay in Crisis**

Central Discussion Table Attendees:

Claude Bouffard, Mayor, Municipality of French River  
Larry Braid, Mayor, Township of Georgian Bay  
David Conn, Mayor, Township of Seguin  
Gord Harrison, Mayor, Township of Carling  
Peter Ketchum, Reeve, The Township of The Archipelago  
Gerry Marshall, Mayor, Town of Penetanguishene  
Jamie McGarvey, Mayor, Town of Parry Sound  
Wayne McQuabbie, Chief, Henvey Inlet First Nation  
Chet Patterson, Councillor, Municipality of Killarney  
Dale Robinson, Mayor, Municipality of McDougall  
Gerry Strong, Reeve, Municipality of Central Manitoulin

Audience Attendees (Contributing):

Jennifer Ashawasegai, CAO, Henvey Inlet First Nation  
Harold Duff, CAO, Municipality of French River  
Bob Duncanson, Executive Director, Georgian Bay Association  
Tim Hunt, Director of Public Works, Municipality of McDougall  
Rhonda Gagnon, Anishinabek Nation – Union of Ontario Indians  
Steve Kaegi, CAO, The Township of The Archipelago and the Township of Carling  
Krista Holmes, Assistant to Tony Clement, M.P. Parry Sound-Muskoka  
Sarah Louis, Anishinabek Nation – Union of Ontario Indians  
Rob Mens, CAO, Town of Parry Sound  
Lynn Middaugh, Director, Development and Leisure Services, Town of Parry Sound  
Norm Miller, M.P.P., Parry Sound-Muskoka  
Glenn Robinson, Sec./Treas. Parry Sound Area Planning Board  
Estelle Montpellier Themer, Britt Local Services Board  
Susan Murphy, Councillor, Township of Carling  
Jerry Smith, Manager, Magnetewan First Nation  
Carolyn Tripp, CAO, Township of Georgian Bay  
Ernie Williams, Councillor, Moose Deer Point First Nation  
John Wilson, Chair, Fisheries Committee, Georgian Bay Association

Facilitation Staff

Jackie Boggs, Deputy Clerk, Town of Parry Sound

Ray Hachigian, CBO, Manager, Building and Planning, The Township of the Archipelago

Media

Samantha Johnson, COGECO Cable

Roland Cilliers, Parry Sound North Star Newspaper

James King, MOOSE-FM Radio

The following resolution was proposed and agreed to:

**WHEREAS** the Great Lakes have experienced declining water levels over the past 20 years, and

**WHEREAS** nowhere has it been so obvious as in Georgian Bay, currently the largest fresh water archipelago in the world, and

**WHEREAS** in 2013 water levels in Georgian Bay dropped over 67 cm, and

**WHEREAS** this significant drop of water level is now below any documented historic level, and

**WHEREAS**, the “Ribbon of Life”—wetlands, shorelines, fish and animal habitat—is at risk, and

**WHEREAS** access to residences, viability of business operations, First Nations’ and Municipal infrastructure, are all at risk because of this major change in water level, and

**WHEREAS** the economic prospects for the Georgian Bay watershed communities are in jeopardy given that significant revenues and jobs come from water related activities such as tourism, boating, recreational fishing and cottaging, the latter contributing well over \$100 million annual economic benefit in goods and services purchased and property taxes, and

**WHEREAS** the Chiefs, Mayors, and Reeves whose jurisdictions front on Georgian Bay now declare that Georgian Bay is in crisis, and

**WHEREAS** it seems entirely probable that, under current circumstances, the water levels in the Great Lakes will continue to decline for the foreseeable future, and

**WHEREAS** Federal and Provincial Governments have responsibilities to preserve and protect the Great Lakes, and

**WHEREAS** Federal and Provincial Governments must quickly develop action plans to alleviate the 2012 low water impact on Georgian Bay communities, and

**WHEREAS** Federal and Provincial Governments need not only to accept that Georgian Bay is in crisis but also to consider how to protect the long term viability of the Great Lakes, and

**WHEREAS** Federal and Provincial Governments need to proclaim that they are committed to the preservation of the Great Lakes and need to give the highest priority to taking strong actions to remedy this crisis,

**BE IT NOW RESOLVED THAT** the Georgian Bay Chiefs, Mayors, and Reeves recommend the following actions be included as part of the Federal and Provincial plans to remediate water levels in the Great Lakes and to ensure clean water, with high quality fish and animal habit, alongside healthy and vibrant communities:

- Request the Ministry of Natural Resources develop procedures to facilitate access for Georgian Bay,
- Request the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to develop procedures to facilitate access for Georgian Bay,
- Request financial assistance be provided by the Provincial and Federal governments including adaptive management practices for municipalities and businesses on Georgian Bay,
- Seek the highest level of authority in Canada to bring the issue of low water levels to the U.S. Government directly,
- Request the Provincial and Federal governments to recognize that Georgian Bay is in crisis, now, in 2013,
- Declare a moratorium on dredging in the St. Clair River and implement the inclusion of sills in the St, Clair River,
- Amend the Great Lakes Protection Act to include actions to respond to low water levels,
- Create sustainable development throughout the Great Lakes and stop any intra-transfer of water between all Great Lakes basins,
- Investigate future viability of Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway and the intrusion of over 180 invasive species and low water created as a result of dredging.