

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM31.10	ACTION			Ward:All
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Designating the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Mark Grimes

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Mark Grimes, recommends that:

1. City Council express full support of designating the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.
2. City Council forward this Motion with "the Favour of a Response is Requested" to the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Governors of the Eight Great Lake States, the Premiers of Quebec and Ontario and their respective Ministers of the Environment, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the International Joint Commission, and the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

Summary

The Great Lakes are an incredibly important environmental and economic resource. They contain 22 percent of the world's fresh water, sustaining forty million people in Canada and the United States who depend on water from the Great Lakes for health and economic and social prosperity.

In 2016, Council passed MM27.35, a Motion to support the reinstatement of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-102210.pdf>)

This Motion to designate the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve would send a signal of their international importance. Mississauga and Niagara Falls, New York have recently passed the same motion. If designated, this would be the largest biosphere on earth.

The UNESCO designation process can take up to 10 years. This Motion would get the process started and send an important message to our Federal Government and the government of the

United States that our Great Lakes are a valuable resources to be protected. This is particularly important right now, as funding cuts have left the future health of the Great Lakes uncertain.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM31.10