

**Prepared Remarks of Governor Jim Doyle  
Great Lakes Regional Collaboration – Chicago, Illinois  
Friday, December 3, 2004**

It's a pleasure being here today.

This is a significant event in the history of our efforts to fulfill our stewardship responsibilities for the Great Lakes ecosystems.

Today's meeting will build on the great work already undertaken by the Council of Great Lakes Governors and the Great Lakes Cities Initiative to identify key, common priorities for these resources that together comprise 20 percent of the world's fresh water.

Today, we build upon our common needs and desires for clean water, unspoiled recreational opportunities, and efficient systems of commerce. Where we have been joined together in the past by geography, we join together today as governments recognizing our shared resources and committing ourselves to the development of a common action agenda.

The issues we face are clear:

Contaminated sediments leach pollutants into our aquatic food chains.

Our beaches are restricted. Nutrients are promoting algae growth that fouls our beaches.

Pollutants from point and nonpoint sources continue to inhibit our abilities to use and enjoy our Great Lakes systems.

Exotic species threaten our ecosystems. Some, like zebra mussels, attack our infrastructure for power generation or water supply systems leading to increased societal costs.

These are not one state's issues or one agency's issues. They are regional and national issues of significance.

This is not something governments can do alone. To that end, we will stress open processes where diverse ideas and opinions will be heard. We will look for partnership opportunities that bring together public and private resources to meet these shared challenges. And we will work together to share data and assessments of our efforts to ensure that our progress can be monitored.

Today, we start on a new path to establish our legacy of environmental stewardship. I look forward to the day when we can look upon our Great Lakes with a sense of satisfaction that the path we are choosing today led us to a brighter and sustainable future.

Thank you.