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GOVERNOR DANIELS SIGNS HISTORIC GREAT LAKES PROTECTIONS

Indianapolis, Indiana– Governor Mitch Daniels today signed legislation ratifying an interstate compact that will create unprecedented protections for the Great Lakes--St. Lawrence River Basin.

“The State of Indiana has renewed its commitment to protect Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes. Many people worked closely to support this compact through its development and approval, and I'm grateful to all who have brought us to this day,” said Governor Daniels.

“I applaud Governor Daniels and the State of Indiana. This action is a reflection of the tremendous momentum and growing consensus in support of the compact. I look forward to the State of Wisconsin similarly enacting these protections,” said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, Council of Great Lakes Governors Chair.

In December 2005, the Governors of New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin reached agreement on the Great Lakes -St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact – a comprehensive management framework for achieving sustainable water use and resource protection. Governor Daniels’s action today formally enacts the compact in Indiana State law. The eight Great Lakes States reached a similar, good faith, agreement with Ontario and Québec in 2005, which the Provinces are using to amend their existing water programs for greater regional consistency.

To become law in the States, the interstate compact must be approved by each of the State legislatures and Congress must give its consent. Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty and Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich signed the compact into law in 2007, and bills are pending in Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Introduction of the compact in the Wisconsin legislature is expected in coming days.

The interstate compact legislation signed today by Governor Daniels includes the following points:

- Economic development will be fostered through the sustainable use and responsible management of Basin waters.
- The States will ensure that authority over Great Lakes water uses is retained in the region.
- Regional goals and objectives for water conservation and efficiency will be developed, and they will be reviewed every five years. Each State will develop and implement a consistent water conservation and efficiency program.

- The collection of technical data will be strengthened, and the States will share comparable information, which will improve decision-making by the governments.
- There is a strong commitment to continued public involvement in the implementation of the compact.

The five Great Lakes comprise the world's largest surface freshwater system. Through the compact, the Great Lakes States have worked to develop a program to carefully manage and protect this world-class resource. The complete text of the compact and additional information is available at www.cglg.org.

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