

Dear Lake Superior Colleague:

This message is to thank you for your participation in the development of the Biodiversity Conservation Assessment for Lake Superior, and to enlist your participation in the development of a Lake Superior Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

The Biodiversity Conservation Assessment is now complete and available at:

<http://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/where-we-work/ontario/our-work/lake-superior-assessment.html>

Background

The Assessment is found in two reports. The first report is a lakewide assessment of conditions and stressors, called *A Biodiversity Conservation Assessment for Lake Superior*. The second report is a regional assessment of conditions and stressors, called *Regional Unit Summaries*.

This work was initiated and managed by the Superior Work Group of the Binational Program to Restore and Protect Lake Superior (which is responsible for preparing and implementing a Lakewide Action and Management Plan). Coordination was provided by the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

The Assessment is the first in the Great Lakes to utilize watershed, coastal zone and water indices in the evaluation of major habitat types. This work was possible because of the science and information available from a number of major initiatives, including the Great Lakes indicators available through the State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference process, the Great Lakes Environmental Indicators project, the Great Lakes Environmental Assessment and Mapping project, and the coastal condition index developed by The Nature Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Next Steps

The next phase of the project begins soon! The Assessment will inform the development and implementation a new Lake Superior *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy*. The development of this Strategy is a commitment under the new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The Strategy development will begin later this year. You will again be invited and encouraged to become involved or follow this collaborative effort to enhance restoration and protection of Lake Superior's habitats and species.

Please feel free to contact us (laplante.elizabeth@epa.gov, laurie.wood@ec.gc.ca) or any of the project Steering Committee members named in the reports if you have any questions.

Thank you again for your time and expertise. We encourage you to forward this information to any colleagues you feel would be interested or able to participate in this work.

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