

Great Lakes Mercury in Products Phase Down Strategy Development Process and Team Structure

Background:

In May 2004, President Bush created a cabinet-level interagency task force call for a “regional collaboration of national significance.” In response the federal [Great Lakes Interagency Task Force](#), the [Council of Great Lakes Governors](#), the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#), Great Lakes tribes (represented by the [Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission](#)) and the [Great Lakes Congressional Task Force](#) moved to convene a group now known as the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC).

The GLRC Collaboration created a [Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes](#) which was released on December 12, 2005. The strategy consists of 5 initiatives that focus on invasive species, toxic pollutants, wetlands, beaches and botulism. In March 2007 the Toxic Pollutants Initiative of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC) released recommendations to restore the Great Lakes with regard to toxic pollutants. The Toxic Pollutants Initiative calls for the creation of a region-wide strategy to reduce mercury in products. <http://glrc.us/initiatives/toxics/index.html>

Mission:

Write a basin wide strategy to phase down mercury use in products in the basin. This effort should produce institutionalized activities to sustain mercury elimination.

The Great Lakes Mercury Strategy Team was established based on recommendations within the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy released in December 2005.

Team:

In February 2005 U.S. EPA Region 5 Administrator Tom Skinner sent a letter to each of the Great Lakes state environmental directors requesting them to designate a representative to serve on the team. A similar letter was sent to the Great Lakes tribes.

The team is comprised of twenty-six (26) individuals, including alternates; from Great Lakes state agencies, U.S. EPA and Great Lakes tribes and Great Lakes cities. The team convened on May 24, 2006. Attached is a list of Strategy Team members.

Process:

1. The Team will meet every three to four weeks via conference call. A face-to-face meeting may be held in the future. It is the goal of the Team to have a draft Strategy ready for initial outside review by December 31, 2006.
2. Initial teleconference to discuss mission and goals. Consensus - The strategy should acknowledge existing work within the region among various agencies and organizations (states, municipalities, tribes, universities, etc.). Including specific recommendations that are actionable and measurable. The strategy should also include a reference table and summary of existing Great Lakes state legislation regulating mercury.
3. Develop a list of priority products and sectors that contain mercury
 - a. Prioritize and identify top 5 in each category to include in initial strategy.
 - b. Identify products and sectors for future work
4. Develop a draft strategy with the following elements.
5. Distribute for technical and public review, then revision.
6. Public release and implementation of recommendations by the tribal, state and local government agencies.

Structure of Strategy:

1. Executive Summary
2. Goals
3. Introduction
4. Background
5. Criteria for Selecting Products and Sectors
6. Priority Products Write-ups
7. Priority Sectors Write-ups
8. Crosscutting Strategies
9. Recommendations for National/Bi-National/International Policy
10. Measure
11. Conclusion

Review Process

The draft strategy will be distributed to a limited group of technical experts from across the country. This list of technical experts can be viewed at <http://www.glrppr.org/glmst/Technical-Reviewers.pdf> and includes experts from the ECOS Quicksilver Caucus, the New York Academy of Sciences, etc. The document will be open for a 30 day technical review period.

A limited number of individuals or organizations who can offer an industrial or regional expertise specific to all or parts of the Strategy will be invited to review and comment on the Draft Strategy prior to the document being submitted to the Great Lakes State Governors, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Board of Directors and representatives of the Great Lakes and St Lawrence Cities Initiative to receive their support. Examples of organizations may include the Council of Great Lakes Industries, technical experts at the American Dental Association, etc. These individuals will be given 30 days to review and comment on the Strategy, which includes revisions based on the technical review comments received.

The State Governor's Environmental Liaison will provide the draft Strategy to the State Environmental Directors and tribal environmental directors for review, with comments due back to the strategy team by June 30, 2007. Team members may choose to send the Draft Strategy to the Environmental Director April 1, 2007, or wait until comments have been received from stakeholders (limited stakeholder review comments are due May 1, 2007). Comments will be reviewed and the Strategy will be revised based on feedback from these groups.

The revised Strategy will then be delivered by the Council of Great Lakes Governors and the Great Lakes Cities Initiative to the Great Lakes State Governors, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Board of Directors, and the Great Lakes and St Lawrence Cities Initiative requesting their "No objection to Distribution for Public Comment" of the document by August 1, 2007. The goal is to receive their support on or before August 31, 2007.

Once we have gained the support of the Great Lakes State Governors, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Board of Directors and representatives of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, state and local interest groups, along with the general public, will be invited to review and comment on the document for 60 days.

The public comments will be reviewed and the Strategy will be revised based on feedback received during this final comment period. The final strategy will be released by November 30, 2007

Goals and Milestones:

1. Draft a Mercury Strategy for review by March 1, 2007.
2. Technical review of Mercury Strategy by technical experts from March 2, 2007 to March 19, 2007.

3. Technical review comments incorporated and revised draft distributed to Strategy team by March 30, 2007.
4. Peer review by limited group of Great Lakes Stakeholders (by invitation only) from April 1, 2007 to May 1, 2007.
5. *Strategy team members* or the Council of Great Lakes Governors will send/deliver a copy of the June 1, 2007 Draft Strategy (attached) to their State Environmental Directors for review, with comments due back to the strategy team by June 30, 2007. Team members may choose to send the Draft Strategy to the Environmental Director during the Stakeholder review period, or wait until comments have been received from stakeholders (limited stakeholder review comments were due May 1, 2007).
6. State environmental directors, tribal environmental directors, and Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities representative comments incorporated and final copy for delivery state representative to be presented to Governor by August 1, 2007.
7. Governor's offices, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Board of Directors Great Lakes and St Lawrence Cities Initiative to review and give "no objection to distribution for public comment" by August 31, 2007.
8. Release for Public Comment on September 1, 2007 for a 60-day public comment period.
9. Release final Strategy by December 31, 2007.