



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

DAVID A. PATERSON
GOVERNOR

March 27, 2008

Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520-0001

Via Facsimile: (202) 647-2283

Re: International Joint Commission Decision on Lake Ontario

Dear Secretary Rice:

For the past several years, the State of New York has made every effort to work with the International Joint Commission (IJC) to develop a new protocol for the water levels of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. These waters, which form the State's boundary with our Canadian neighbors, are vital environmental and economic resources for New York residents and businesses.

The current protocol for water-level management has had a very negative impact on the ecology of Lake Ontario, severely damaging more than half of the wetlands (33,000 acres) bordering the Lake. We are concerned that the IJC is preparing to soon release a plan that could be as harmful as the current protocol, or even worse. There is a well-developed alternative protocol, known as Plan B+, that would substantially restore the wetlands and fish habitat and benefit the hydroelectric industry and the recreational boating community, while not harming other interests. I respectfully request that the IJC, at a minimum, present this alternative for public comment and consideration (with other draft protocols as appropriate), allowing consideration and discussion of alternatives. After all, the IJC spent five years and \$20 million studying these options. That process was not supposed to result in a set of proposals that are kept from the public.

The alternative protocol, which was developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has garnered broad support in New York State, as well as from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. We request your assistance in convincing the IJC to place this highly beneficial alternative protocol before the public.

If you have any questions, please contact New York State Commissioner of Environmental Conservation Alexander "Pete" Grannis at 518-402-8540.

Our most sincere thanks for considering these concerns. With good wishes,

Sincerely,



DAVID A. PATERSON
Governor



ALEXANDER "PETE" GRANNIS
New York State Commissioner
of Environmental Conservation

cc: New York Congressional Delegation