

**February 16, 2010 – Negotiations of amendments to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement formally commenced on January 27, 2010**

On January 27, 2010, senior officials from Environment Canada, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency successfully concluded the first formal negotiating session for amending the *Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement*.

At this first negotiating session, Canada and the U.S. reached agreement regarding the binational structure and process for negotiations. Both countries have agreed to a tentative timeline that targets December 2010 for completion of the process, while recognizing that timelines may need to be adjusted as negotiations proceed.

The first issue to be addressed in negotiations will be governance. Governance discussions will focus on the purpose and scope of the Agreement, vision and principles, the management framework and provisions for future reviews and amendments to the Agreement.

The Governments of Canada and the United States are committed to engaging the public at key stages of the negotiating process. At this stage, the public was invited to comment on governance issues until February 15, 2010. Comments will be considered by both governments as they discuss and deliberate on governance aspects of the agreement.

A second negotiating session is scheduled for April 2010, at which time progress on governance issues will be reviewed and the focus of negotiations will shift to specific environmental issues.

For the most up-to-date information on the negotiation of amendments to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, please visit [www.binational.net](http://www.binational.net), which will be updated regularly during negotiations.