

**International Joint Commission Welcome Message**

**Thursday March 02<sup>nd</sup> – Delta Hotel – 6:00 P.M.**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good evening everyone. On behalf of the Office of Mayor and Sault Ste. Marie City Council, I'm pleased to be able to welcome you tonight to this public meeting on the Great Lakes, one that is appropriately titled, "Your Voice: Sault Ste. Marie."

I note that ours is the first public meeting scheduled in 2017 by the International Joint Commission to help assess progress on restoring and protecting the Great Lakes. While I think that is a perfectly natural choice, I do want to express my thanks to the IJC for organizing tonight's meeting and for including Sault Ste. Marie as a location on its roster of public consultations.

I'd also like to thank and acknowledge the members of the International Joint Commission who have travelled to Sault Ste. Marie to take part in this evening's meeting.

IJC Canadian Commissioner Richard Morgan preceded me here at the microphone, but I want to thank all of the commissioners who made the trip and welcome them to our naturally gifted community.

Commissioners, I hope you enjoy your stay.

Additionally, I'd like to thank the presenters who will be participating tonight. We have Catherine Taddo of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michael Ripley of the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority, and Joanie McGuffin of the The Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy. Thank you for donating your time and sharing your expertise.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Gayle Broad of the NORDIK Institute and Algoma University, who will be moderating the public comment period.

And of course, I'd like to everyone from the public who has taken the time to be here tonight.

Sault Ste. Marie is located at the hub of the Great Lakes and we are also a border community, so we are well aware of the importance of the lakes as a shared resource and the need to protect and restore them.

Our own St. Mary's River is listed as an area of concern in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, so locally, we have a vested interest in learning about what both national Governments are doing to protect the lakes, and in offering our input on what we would like to see happen.

I expect that tonight will be an informative and fruitful discussion, and we're glad to have the opportunity to hold it in Sault Ste. Marie.

Thank you again for inviting me to speak, and I wish everyone a pleasant evening.