The Great Lakes connecting channels - the rivers and straits that link up the five Great Lakes and make them a single hydrological and ecological system - create some of the most difficult challenges for environmental science and for management institutions. Like choke points on a highway system, the connecting channels are the places where things come together: nations, people, pollutants and problems. As a result, many of them are among the most degraded areas in the region. To a greater degree than other Great Lakes Areas of Concern, the connecting channels require strong binational cooperation and a basinwide ecosystem perspective for their restoration and protection. In practice, however, those conditions have only rarely been achieved, and proposed changes in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement may impede rather than improve management of connecting channels.

This conference will use the connecting channels as a focal point for considering the scientific knowledge, institutions, laws, and strategies used to manage the boundary waters.

PROGRAM
Screening Room, Center for the Arts,
University at Buffalo, North Campus, Buffalo, NY

8:00 - 8:30  Registration, coffee, tea and muffins

8:30 - 9:30  Welcome and Connecting Channels Overview:
Barry Boyer, Professor of Law, University at Buffalo Law School, SUNY

Rt. Hon. Herb Gray, Canadian Chair, International Joint Commission
and Commissioner Al Olsen, International Joint Commission

Don Zelazny, Great Lakes Program Coordinator, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Part I: The State of the Science
Helen Domske, Sr. Extension Specialist, New York Sea Grant; Assoc. Director, Great Lakes Program, University at Buffalo, SUNY

9:30 - 10:00  Niagara River Overview
Brad Hill, Environmental Scientist, Science & Technology Branch, Environment Canada

10:20 - 10:50  Detroit River Overview
Lynda D. Corkum, Professor, or Jan J.H. Ciborowski, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Windsor

10:50 - 11:20  St. Lawrence River Overview
Michael R. Twiss, Great Rivers Center; Assoc. Professor, Department of Biology, Clarkson University

11:20 - 12:00  General Discussion: Challenges, Opportunities and Needs in Connecting Channels Science
Luncheon Address
12:00 - 1:30  
*Wag the Dog - Using Science to Govern the American and African Great Lakes*

Dr. Zafar Adeel, Director, United Nations University,
International Network on Water, Environment and Health (UNU - INWEH)

Part II: Governing the Connecting Channels
1:30 - 2:20  
(a) Citizens Organizing in Binational RAPs: To Be or Not To Be Binational

Panel convened by Great Lakes United
John Jackson, Moderator

Elaine Kennedy, St. Lawrence River Restoration Council and former Chair of Public Advisory Committee for St. Lawrence (Cornwall) RAP
Janice Littlefield, U.S. Co-Chair, St. Clair River Binational Public Advisory Committee

2:20 - 4:00  
(b) Reflections on the Theory and Practice of Governing Across and Around the Connecting Channels

Errol Meidinger, Moderator, Professor, University at Buffalo Law School, SUNY
Mark Sproule-Jones, Professor, Department of Political Science, McMaster University
John Hartig, Refuge Manager, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge
John Gannon, Secretary, Water Quality Board, International Joint Commission

4:00 - 4:45  
General Discussion:  How Do the Connecting Channels Fit Into the Changing Process of Great Lakes Environmental Management?

4:45 - 5:00  
Remarks of Michael Wilson, Canadian Ambassador to the United States (invited)

5:00 - 5:45  
Reception

REGISTRATION: Online registration at www.glu.org/en/sharedwaters or contact conference administrator, Anita Mazurek, at AMazurek@buffalo.edu or call (716) 645-2071. There is a $25 fee that includes breakfast, breaks, and lunch. Students may apply for scholarships.

QUESTIONS: Address questions about the substance of the conference to Professor Barry Boyer at boyer@buffalo.edu. Direct questions about attendance or logistics to conference administrator, Anita Mazurek, at AMazurek@buffalo.edu or call (716) 645-2071.

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