



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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U.S. Chair of International Joint Commission to Receive Award, Speak at Winter Environmental Conference

Commissioner Lana Pollack to address water levels, Plan 2014 & the IJC's broader work to improve the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River

CLAYTON – Commissioner Lana Pollack, United States Section Chair of the International Joint Commission (IJC), will be the headline speaker at Save The River's 29th annual Winter Environmental Conference, Saturday, February 3. Commissioner Pollack, who has served on the IJC since her appointment by President Obama in 2010, will speak about a topic of intense and ongoing interest to the River community - Plan 2014 after one year of extreme climate conditions.

“It is a terrific honor and a real statement about the importance of the St. Lawrence River to the entire Great Lakes system to have Commissioner Pollack speak to our conference,” said Lee Willbanks, Riverkeeper and Save The River's Executive Director. “With Canadian Section Chair Gordon Walker, she has been at the helm of this international treaty organization during a time when it has made great contributions to understanding the challenges facing the Great Lakes and our River and in developing the policies and tools to address those challenges. Of course, developing, adopting and now strenuously defending Plan 2014 is a prime example.”

In the year since Plan 2014 went into effect, Commissioner Pollack has travelled the region speaking about the proper relation between the Plan, weather conditions and this past year's high water. She has been quoted as saying, “We'd love a perfect plan where everybody is protected, but nature has not allowed us to do that,” pointing out that the IJC is required to balance the interests of shippers, dam operators, recreational boaters, upstream and downstream residents and the environment.

In addition to presenting, Commissioner Pollack will be accepting Save The River's “Friend of the River™” Award on behalf of the other Commissioners and the staff and boards of the IJC for their for “unwavering support of initiatives and policies that support a healthy St. Lawrence River”. This annual award is given to individuals or groups who have contributed in some

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Save The River envisions a healthy Upper St. Lawrence River that provides safe drinking water, is home to a thriving range of indigenous species, and supports sustainable economic activity.



exceptional way to protecting the St. Lawrence River either through advocacy or programs that are in line with Save The River's mission and vision, but who are not necessarily affiliated with or acting as a part of a Save The River initiative or activity.

Prior to the IJC, Commissioner Pollack served in the Michigan State Senate from 1983-1994 where she was a leading advocate for women, children and the environment. From 1996-2008 she was president of the Michigan Environmental Council, a coalition of 70 environmental organizations working to protect the Great Lakes and Michigan's environment. Ms. Pollack has been a Fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, taught at the University of Michigan and an elected trustee of the Ann Arbor Board of Education. In 2002, she was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

The IJC was established in 1909 by the Boundary Waters Treaty. Under the treaty Canada and the United States agreed that neither country will pollute boundary waters or waters that flow across the boundary to an extent that would cause injury to health or property in the other country. A major responsibility of the IJC is to evaluate progress toward restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes basin ecosystem.

Other presentations at the conference will be on the status of environmental improvement efforts being made by shippers, terminals and ports, the condition of the River as habitat, and the general state of fish and birds that depend on the River being healthy. For almost three decades, the Winter Environmental Conference has provided an opportunity for community members and leaders to gather with regional and national policy makers, scientists, opinion leaders, and students to discuss topics of critical importance to the health of the St. Lawrence River and the communities that depend on it.

Save The River's 29th Winter Environmental Conference will be Saturday, February 3 at the 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel in Clayton, New York. The \$50 registration fee includes coffee, lunch, and cocktail reception with light hors d'oeuvres (cash bar); community members are encouraged to attend and can register by calling 315-686-2010.

Since 1978 Save The River has been the leading environmental advocacy organization fighting for the ecological integrity of the St. Lawrence River, first against year-round navigation, then expansion of the Seaway to accommodate larger ships and most recently securing approval of a modern water levels plan (Plan 2014) that will restore critical wetland habitat and threatened species.

More information can be found at the Save The River website by visiting savetheriver.org.

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Lana Pollack