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**Historic Great Lakes Compact Vote Expected Tomorrow
 Legislators Urged to Support the Compromise Bill**

Madison- Today, the Coalition to Protect the Great Lakes is urging legislators to support LRB 4367/1, which will adopt the Great Lakes Compact. The Great Lakes Compact is an agreement between eight states and two Canadian provinces to prevent the diversion of Great Lakes water outside the region with only limited exceptions.

“The Great Lakes Compact represents years of hard work and careful compromise,” said Jodi Habush Sinykin, Of Counsel, Midwest Environmental Advocates. “The passage of the Compact will be a victory for all Wisconsinites. It is an important step in protecting our environment, our economy and our way of life,” said Habush Sinykin.

For more than two years, support for the Strong Great Lakes Compact has poured into the Capitol:

- The Strong Compact was selected as one of the just four Conservation Priorities for the 2007-2008 legislative session by a coalition of more than 50 organizations;
- More than 40 local elected officials and 50 organizations have signed on in support of the Strong Compact;
- With less than 24 hours notice, over 150 people showed up in support of the Strong Compact at the public hearing in Kenosha in February;
- Over the course of two Conservation Lobby Days, more than 700 Wisconsin citizens came to Madison to lobby their legislators; and
- Thousands more citizen comments (calls, emails, postcards, letters) have poured into the Capitol over the last six months.

“The Great Lakes provide Wisconsin residents with abundant recreational opportunities, support strong industry and foster tourism,” said Melissa Malott, Water Program director at Clean Wisconsin. “The need for protection is evident, and we applaud the leadership and hard work of Governor Doyle, Senators Miller, Cowles, Jauch, Lehman and Wirth and Representatives Gunderson, Mason and Richards in taking an important step toward ensuring the Great Lakes exist for future generations to enjoy,” she said.

“Our legislators and stakeholders see the importance of protecting Wisconsin’s water security, and will hopefully be able to rise above partisanship to create balance in the Compact,” said Emily Green, Director, Sierra Club Great Lakes Program. “However, tomorrow will be just the first step. We still need strong administrative rules and strong implementation to ensure protection of the Great Lakes.”

A coalition of state and local environmental groups has been working diligently to ensure passage of the strongest Compact bill possible. “Once the law is in place, we will work with local stakeholders, the DNR and our neighboring states to ensure the strongest implementation of this law,” said Peter McAvoy, Vice President, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center. “This will be especially important in the interim period before the Compact is ratified by Congress.”

“Tomorrow could be a historic day. At a time when other states and countries are increasingly looking to our Great Lakes to solve their own water shortages, Wisconsin legislators refused to go home before making sure our water was protected. We are looking to them to fulfill that promise,” said Anne Sayers, Program Director for the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters.

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