



The Grand Traverse Resolution

At the end of the last panel session of the historic Flow for Water¹¹ Conference Save the Great Lakes Forever, Saturday, May 7, 2011, Traverse City, Michigan, the following declaration (to be referred to as “The Grand Traverse Resolution”) was introduced by motion and seconded, and adopted by unanimous acclamation by all those present:

We declare and reaffirm that the waters of the Great Lakes Basin, including groundwater, are a commons held by the states, provinces, tribes, and first nations within the Great Lakes Basin as a high and solemn public trust for every person and living thing in the Basin, as beneficiaries of this trust, and that the principles of water as commons and public trust are ancient with deep roots in our cultures and legal heritage; and that this commons and public trust continue in perpetuity for future generations for those who depend on the integrity, flow, and health of these waters;

We therefore pledge to conform to this truth and principle of water as commons and public trust and pledge the following:

We pledge to educate ourselves, and each other, about the public trust in this water commons, including respect for, and the extent and limits of, personal, private, commercial, and public uses of this commons;

We pledge to live in accordance with this water commons and public trust;

We pledge to protect and conserve these waters as a commons consistent with public trust principles;

We pledge to reclaim and restore those waters that have been impaired through violation of this public trust;

We pledge to enforce protections for this water commons as beneficiaries of the public trust;

We pledge to govern this commons within and between our communities, states, provinces, and first nations in compliance with the duties and limitations imposed by this public trust for the benefit of every person and living thing within the Basin, as individual users and as users in common, for the protection and sustainability of life and this water commons;

We pledge to respect this water commons in accordance with this public trust, including the precautionary burden of proof that the commons will not be altered, impaired, transferred, or diminished unless it is first determined by strong and sound evidence and knowledge that such conduct will not impair or diminish the integrity of these waters, the commons, or violate the principles of public trust.

¹¹www.flowforwater.org