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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**International Upper Great Lakes Study Experts Recommend
New Regulation Plan for Lake Superior Outflows**

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. The International Upper Great Lakes Study (IUGLS) announced they have recommended an improved regulation plan for outflows from Lake Superior. The new plan – *Lake Superior Regulation Plan 2012* – is more robust than the existing plan and provides important benefits, especially to the environment. Made up of a panel of experts from Canada and the U.S., the recommendation is the highlight of their final, peer-reviewed report to the International Joint Commission (IJC), marking the end of the five-year study.

The new *Lake Superior Regulation Plan 2012* includes these key features:

- improved protections for fish habitat resulting from a shared vision planning process used by the Study;
- more natural river flows, an important factor in sustaining ecosystem health in the St. Marys River;
- benefits to other key interests such as commercial navigation, hydroelectric generation and coastal interests under both wetter and drier water supply conditions;
- less complex, more adaptable rules, making management and maintenance easier as well as making it easier to adapt to a changing climate;

The plan was tested using state-of-the art climate research regarding the impacts of climate change on the upper Great Lakes. Throughout the five-year study, the concerns of the public about water levels, which differed considerably depending on geographic location, were considered.

In its report to the IJC, the Study Board made the following key recommendations:

- the IJC should approve *Lake Superior Regulation Plan 2012* as the new plan for regulating Lake Superior outflow;
- the IJC should seek to improve scientific understanding of hydroclimatic processes and impacts on future Great Lakes water levels as part of a continuous, coordinated bi-national effort that includes strengthened modeling and enhanced data collection;
- an adaptive management strategy should be applied to address future extreme water levels and a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Levels Advisory Board should be established to help administer the strategy; and
- further study of multi-lake regulation in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system should not be pursued at this time.

The study was launched by the IJC in 2007 to review the regulation of Lake Superior outflows and to assess the need for improvements to address both changing needs and a changing climate. *Lake Superior Regulation Plan 2012* will determine the operation of the power dams and other control structures in the St. Marys River at Sault Ste. Marie (MI and ON).

The final report was unanimously endorsed by the 10-member bi-national Study Board, includes the work of more than 200 scientists and engineers including nearly a dozen from various Corps Districts, HEC and ERDC, and reflects extensive, independent peer review. IWR's Eugene Stakhiv is a co-chair of the Study Board and Anthony Eberhardt is a co-manager of the Study. IWR and the IJC have a memorandum of agreement relating to activities of the International Upper Great Lakes Study Board.

The Study also benefited from the advice of a 20-member Public Interest Advisory Group and input provided by the public at meetings held throughout the upper Great Lakes basin. The IJC will be conducting public meetings around the Great Lakes in July regarding the Study Board's findings, conclusions and recommendations. Highlights of the Study and the full report can be found on the Study's website, www.iugls.org

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