



WORKSHOP IN POLITICAL THEORY AND POLICY ANALYSIS

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Members of the International Upper Great Lakes Study Team

Summer Meeting on the Manitoulin Island, August 6, 2011

Dear Study Team Members:

My husband and I bought land on the south shore of the Manitoulin Island in 1967. We built a log cabin, where we have spent many summer writing retreats with regular walks along the shore of Lake Huron. It has been distressing to observe the reduced levels of Lake Huron in more recent years.

I am very concerned that many public investments across the Great Lakes system have led to unprecedented and sustained lower levels of Lake Huron for the past 12 years. Investments in increased conveyance, dredging channels, and other public works have hardened the shoreline, led to losses of wetland habitats, and reduced fish habitat regions. I am afraid that the substantial costs to ecology of Lake Huron have not been taken into account in past evaluations of Great Lakes Projects.

I urge the Study Team to take these substantial costs into account in assessing the impact of future policies and public investments. As a scholar focusing on the benefits and costs of diverse ways of governing and managing natural resources, I understand how difficult decisions about benefits and costs can be. I am distressed that the costs to the Manitoulin Island and other shorelines of Lake Huron have not adequately been taken into account in decisions about water levels and flows in the Great Lakes system.

Sincerely yours,

Elinor Ostrom

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