IAGLR
LAKES Letter

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Lakes Letter Redux: A note from IAGLR President Michael Twiss



Some who were IAGLR members a few decades ago might recall regularly receiving in the mail a newsletter on ivory-colored paper IAGLR used before the Internet to communicate *en masse* with its members by means other than the annual conference or the journal. Bringing back *Lakes Letter* was your idea. Let me explain.

In 2018, we conducted a member survey where you told us that you wanted to be more engaged. *Lakes Letter* is just one way for our members' voices be heard. In this new quarterly publication, we'll celebrate your good news and mourn your loss. We'll feature member profiles so we can better get to know one another. We'll also share news from the board and committees that help make IAGLR tick.

Since I've been on the board, IAGLR has made several changes to better support our members and constituents of great lakes across the globe, as our name suggests. We are now a member of the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies, speaking with a unified voice to protect fresh waters by providing scientific advice to governments. On behalf of our members' desire to be a more proactive force, we've responded to the U.S. federal government's efforts to redefine *waters of the United States*, encouraged the Russian government to reconsider its desire to relax nutrient loading into Lake Baikal, and requested reconsideration of changes to the NSERC Strategic Grant program in Canada. We now have an international (non-Canada, non-U.S.) board member position to better reflect other nations, here on this continent and beyond, that are rights holders and stakeholders in great lake ecosystems.

When I was elected to the board in 2016 we had one conference per year; last year we had three and will do so again in 2021. Our annual State of Lake conferences enjoy participation by those who don't normally attend the annual IAGLR research conference, connecting to policymakers and business leaders across the Laurentian Great Lakes basin. In 2020, we will partner with the International Institute for Sustainable Development-Experimental Lakes Area in Winnipeg for our annual research conference. Based in an area rich in social linkages to water resources, IISD-ELA has a strong scientific connection to past and present issues confronting the Great Lakes. We look forward to stepping again outside of the LGL basin to reflect on where we are as an association of great lake researchers and establish new partnerships.

Our association faces important issues. As our activity to serve our constituents grows, we need to find better ways to make connections amongst them and still maintain our mission to advance understanding of the world's great lake ecosystems. To this end we are seeking input on a strategic plan for IAGLR. We are also living in a world experiencing rapid technological, environmental, and social changes. People worldwide rely on great lake ecosystems for their livelihood, and we must be able to reply to those who warn of impending strife due to climate change, burgeoning human population, and unsustainable attitudes toward the natural ecosystem. Great lake researchers are needed now and in the future.