

Canada - United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada - États-Unis
Section canadienne

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Western Governors'
Association Annual Meeting
Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
Whitefish, Montana, United States of America
June 27-28, 2010**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

On June 27 and 28, 2010, the Honourable Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Vice-Chair, led a delegation from the Canadian Section of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) to the annual meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in Whitefish, Montana. Other members of the delegation were Mr. Brian Masse, M.P., Vice-Chair and Mr. Michel Guimond, M.P.

THE EVENT

The Western Governors' Association includes the governors from 19 western states (see the Appendix) as well as from American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The Canadian premiers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba also participate in the WGA's activities. The WGA uses six basic strategies: develop and communicate regional policy; serve as a leadership forum; build regional capacity; conduct research and disseminate findings; form coalitions and partnerships in order to advance regional interests; and build public understanding and support for regional issues and policy positions.

Each year, the WGA holds an annual meeting. Governors Schweitzer (Montana), Otter (Idaho), Freudenthal (Wyoming), Gibbons (Nevada), Gregoire (Washington), Herbert (Utah), Richardson (New Mexico), Ritter (Colorado) and Rounds (South Dakota) attended the 2010 annual meeting, as did Premier Selinger from Manitoba.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The 19 states in the WGA and Canada share a mutually beneficial relationship. According to recent figures, of the estimated 8 million US jobs that depend on bilateral trade, more than 2.7 million jobs in the WGA states rely on Canada-US trade. Bilateral trade was recently valued at almost US\$103 billion in one year: just over US\$39 billion was exported from these states to Canada, while they imported almost US\$64 billion from Canada. Moreover, recent data suggest that Canadians made more than 8.6 million visits to the WGA states and spent almost US\$3.7 billion in a 12-month period, while residents of the WGA states made almost 2.4 million visits to Canada and spent more than US\$1.8 billion.

The Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group aims to find points of convergence in respective national policies, to initiate dialogue on points of divergence, to encourage the exchange of information, and to promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern. Members of the Canadian Section of the IPG meet regularly with their federal counterparts and, in recent years, have attended meetings of governors and state legislators as well. At these events, Canadian delegates take the opportunity to engage in the conversations that will help achieve the Canadian Section's objectives, and to communicate the nature and scope of the bilateral relationship.

Delegates found the 2010 annual meeting of the WGA to be an important opportunity to speak with governors and Canada's Ambassador to the United States, Gary Doer, who

– as a former premier of Manitoba – was until recently a regular attendee at the annual meeting. Delegates informed the governors about Canadian priorities and the nature of the bilateral relationship; in particular, they spoke with Governors Schweitzer, Gibbons, Ritter and Rounds. Feeling that the delegation was able to achieve its objectives for the event, the Canadian Section of the IPG intends to participate at future annual meetings of the WGA and to continue its work in advocating Canadian interests.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

During the 2010 annual meeting, the WGA held opening keynote addresses and three plenary sessions. In particular, the following plenary sessions were held:

- Sharing a Finite Resource: Challenges and Opportunities in Water Management
- The Future of Energy Technology
- Working Across Borders to Conserve Landscapes.

This report summarizes the discussions that were held at the plenary and keynote sessions.

OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Phil Jackson, *Author/Basketball Coach and Player*

- nature is fragile, harsh and beautiful
- Native Americans, who have cared for our earth, must be honoured
- things beyond our control are changing our environment, but we must make changes in order to “help things along”
- although we are “global,” we must start thinking “local”
- we must be able to feed ourselves locally
- the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico may have a positive effect: it may teach us about fragility
- people must understand their role as stewards of our resources

Michael Connor, *United States Department of the Interior*

- the US Department of the Interior has a variety of initiatives and priorities regarding the American West
- in April 2010, President Obama established the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative in order “to promote and support innovative community-level efforts to conserve outdoor spaces and to reconnect Americans to the outdoors”
- the Department of the Interior manages about 20% of the US landmass and 1.7 billion acres off the US’ shores
- Department of the Interior resources currently supply about 33% of US domestic energy production

- through its WaterSMART Program, the Department of the Interior is tackling water challenges
- through the Treasured Landscapes Initiative, the Department of the Interior is working to restore, protect and preserve US ecosystems, including in the US West
- consultations are under way and work is ongoing with respect to reform of the trust land management system

SHARING A FINITE RESOURCE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN WATER MANAGEMENT

Robert Glennon, *Author*

- people have stewardship obligations and must protect resources, including water, in the US West
- water is often thought to be infinite and inexhaustible, like air; in fact, water is finite and exhaustible
- there are increasing demands for water by people, industry, etc.
- the water crisis in America is not limited to the US West; a number of states are experiencing a crisis
- water “lubricates” the American economy; thus, an adequate supply of water is needed to ensure the health of the US economy
- water shortages are resulting in migration as people move from locations with limited water to areas where water is more plentiful
- the water consequences of various types of energy production should be considered
- in the face of a finite supply of – and a growing demand for – water, there are a variety of possible solutions; however, diverting water, drilling wells and building dams are not viable solutions
- there is no “silver-bullet” solution to the water crisis, and there is no “one size fits all” solution; instead, the menu of viable solutions to water crises includes:
 - desalination – it is relatively costly, takes a great deal of energy and has waste products
 - the use of reclaimed water – while not suitable for drinking, the supply of water that is suitable for reclamation expands as the population grows
 - conservation – increased awareness is needed
 - the construction of green infrastructure – for example, there are opportunities with respect to storm water
 - a limit on exempt wells – there are millions of wells pumping millions of gallons of water

- installation of water meters – data are needed, since what is not monitored cannot be managed
 - water pricing – water, which is currently less expensive than cell phones or cable television, should be priced “sensibly” and in a manner that provides an incentive for conservation
 - facilitation of the reallocation of water for high-value uses – farmers use 70-80% of every state’s water
 - adjudication of water rights – the protection of existing users should be ensured
- a crisis presents opportunities, and the right choices need to be made

Susan Cottingham, *Montana Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission*

- Montana has been grappling with difficult jurisdictional issues regarding water, including with respect to the federal government, the governments of other states, Native Americans, governments in Canada, etc.
- the Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission settled water rights issues between Native Americans and the federal government
- some water rights settlements are currently pending in the US Congress, including in Montana and Arizona
- appropriations have not kept pace with authorizations
- work is under way to develop creative funding mechanisms to finance water settlements; if funding cannot be found, settlements cannot be finalized

Mike Hayden, *Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks*

- the Missouri River is the third-largest watershed in the world
- the *Flood Control Act* of 1944, which was passed by President Roosevelt, still governs the largest watershed in North America
- the *Flood Control Act* was prompted by such circumstances as:
 - unsustainable agricultural practices
 - the Great Depression
 - the *National Industrial Recovery Act*
 - Missouri River floods
- the US Congress has approved a study of authorized purposes in respect of the Missouri River
- the circumstances that existed in 1944 are not the same as the circumstances that exist today; changes to the *Flood Control Act* are required since the needs have changed
- the Missouri River ecosystem needs to be restored, and funding is required for this activity

- the bottom of the Missouri River is dropping, in part because of the removal of sand and gravel
- climate change is affecting the Missouri River, including in terms of the timing and volume of runoff; runoff is occurring earlier in the spring and within a short period of time, which affects downstream users
- tribal water rights issues need to be resolved

THE FUTURE OF ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

Arun Majumdar, *United States Department of Energy*

- 1% of the lithium batteries manufactured worldwide are made in the United States, yet such batteries were developed in the US
- technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance energy security and facilitate US technological leadership need to be developed
- the US should work on batteries for cars and storage for the grid
- carbon dioxide should be used in better ways to create products with higher value
- energy is a top priority; children in school should be engaged, with the hope that they will “teach” their parents about conservation, efficiency, etc.

Vinod Khosla, *Khosla Ventures*

- it is hard to make forecasts when technology changes rapidly
- carbon capture and storage is needed only if carbon dioxide is a problem; carbon dioxide should be used as a feedstock in a profitable use
- fertilizer is costly, and creates environmental problems, including runoff issues
- governments should not try to “pick winners”
- there is a need to make green technologies less expensive

David Leuschen, *Riverstone*

- the future of the “energy business” is bright
- Brazil is the best country in which to produce ethanol
- investors who are stewards of someone else’s money have a limited timeframe
- government support is very fickle

Ronald Evans, *Denbury Resources Inc.*

- 65% of the known oil resources are still in the ground; existing and new technologies should be used to access these resources
- today, 5% of US oil production involve carbon-dioxide-enhanced oil recovery; pipelines are needed to move carbon dioxide from place to place

- there is a need to amalgamate the land that is required to facilitate carbon-dioxide-enhanced oil recovery
- carbon-dioxide-enhanced oil recovery is a proven technology

Robert Bernard, *Microsoft Corporation*

- the information technology industry is responsible for the same quantity of emissions as the airline industry
- “great tools” exist to “drive” energy efficiency
- people should be provided with the tools that will enable them to identify their energy usage; then, behavioural change can become a focus and people can make better choices based on the information they receive

WORKING ACROSS BORDERS TO CONSERVE LANDSCAPES

Sally Jewell, *REI*

- with globalization, the world is becoming flat
- ecosystems, and economies, are connected
- the “outdoors” should be brought into people’s everyday lives
- technology has tied us to electrical outlets
- wildlife, water and air know no boundaries

Michael Scott, *University of Idaho and United States Geological Survey*

- we live in a world of change
- now, many wildlife threats are driven by global economic, climatic and other forces
- challenges present opportunities
- less than 5% of the American public own 80% of private property in the US
- landscapes are changing and, at times, the change means that the landscape presents challenges for wildlife
- there is a decline in hunting and fishing communities, and an increase in wildlife-viewing communities
- habitat loss occurs very quickly
- there may be as many as 10,000 species that are endangered, and some species are conservation-reliant

Chas Cartwright, *Glacier National Park*

- resource management and preservation are important
- Montana and British Columbia have signed a memorandum of understanding designed, at least in part, to protect Glacier National Park from the adverse impacts of mining and extractive development

Dave McDonough, *Waterton Lakes National Park*

- there is a seamless link between Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park
- cooperation, respect and public engagement are important

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Janis G. Johnson, Senator
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Gord Brown, M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

APPENDIX

STATES REPRESENTED IN THE WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Kansas
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Dakota
Texas
Utah
Washington
Wyoming

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Western Governors' Association Annual Meeting
DESTINATION	Whitefish, Montana, United States of America
DATES	June 27-28, 2010
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Ø
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Vice- Chair Mr. Brian Masse, M.P., Vice-Chair Mr. Michel Guimond, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Chad Mariage, Executive Secretary Ms. June Dewetering, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$5,934.21
ACCOMMODATION	\$2,027.08
HOSPITALITY	\$Ø
PER DIEMS	\$1,403.06
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$Ø
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$2,871.30
TOTAL	\$12,235.65