



**Committee of Advisors  
to the  
Great Lakes Fishery Commission**



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**A RESOLUTION TO BAN PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS CONTAINING MICROBEADS**

**Whereas** the cosmetic and personal-care product industry produces many facial scrubs, body washes, toothpastes and other products that contain tiny plastic abrasives called “microbeads;”

**Whereas** microbeads are multicolored, buoyant pieces of plastic, often perfectly spherical, and typically much smaller than 5 millimeters;

**Whereas** when products containing microbeads are used, the microbeads are washed down bathroom sinks, pass through wastewater treatment plants, and are discharged into waters where they persist and collect toxic chemical pollutants on their surface;

**Whereas** plastic is mistaken for food by organisms throughout the aquatic food chain, where it can cause physical blockages, internal damage, and serve as a pathway for dangerous toxic pollutants to enter the food chain and contaminate the fish and wildlife we eat;

**Whereas** the first ever open water survey of the Great Lakes for plastic found some of the highest concentrations of microplastic ever recorded on earth, and microbeads made up the majority of microplastic under 1 millimeter in size;

**Whereas** the cosmetic and personal-care product company Unilever has made a voluntary commitment to stop using plastic microbeads in their products by 2015, and others such as Burt’s Bees have never used plastic microbeads in their products;

**Whereas** the Great Lakes- St. Lawrence Cities Initiative has called on more industries to phase out the use of microbeads by 2015, and called on the federal governments of the United States and Canada to stop future additions of microplastics to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence and to clean up the microplastics currently present; and

**Whereas** the States of, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio and California have introduced legislation to prohibit the sale of cosmetic and personal-care product containing plastic microbeads.

*The Committee of Advisors consists of both U.S. and Canadian representatives, from First Nation, commercial, recreational, academic, agency, and public fishery interests in the Great Lakes Basin. Advisors provide advice to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; U.S. advisors are nominated by the State Governors, and appointed by the commission. Canadian advisors are nominated by the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources and appointed by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.*

**Therefore be it resolved** that the binational committee of advisors of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission call on the state, provincial and federal governments in the United States and Canada to prohibit the sale of any cosmetic or personal care product containing plastic microbeads of any size by 2015; and

**Therefore be it further resolved** that the binational advisors of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission call upon the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to carry these recommendations to all appropriate parties.

Passed unanimously  
Canadian and U.S. Advisors  
June 3, 2014