



August 5, 2016

Mr. Rick Hobrla  
Office of the Great Lakes  
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

**RE: Michigan Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae Beneficial Use Impairment**

Dear Mr. Hobrla,

On behalf of the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) for the St. Marys River Area of Concern (AOC), we are writing to convey agreement regarding the removal of the Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae Beneficial Use Impairment from the US side of the AOC.

The State's restoration criteria for this BUI appear to be met, and data collected through the MDEQ's Water Chemistry Monitoring Program in the St. Marys River between 1998 and 2014 appear to further support the assertion that the BUI is no longer impaired. Although *Didymo* has been recently observed in the rapids near Sault Ste. Marie, we understand that the presence of this potentially nuisance diatom may be indicative of low nutrient conditions, as opposed to the nutrient-enriched conditions typically associated with other algal blooms. As such, it does not appear that *Didymo* is related to the typical causes of most impairments within the Great Lakes Areas of Concern. Thus, with these factors considered, and upon review and discussion of the Removal Recommendation document, BPAC members present at the June 15<sup>th</sup> 2016 meeting voted unanimously to support the removal of this BUI.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Antunes'.

Paula Antunes, Ph.D.  
Canadian BPAC Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily K. Martin'.

Emily Martin  
U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair