



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
LANSING



STEVEN E. CHESTER
DIRECTOR

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In December 2008, I asked the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), the principal advisory body to the Department of Environmental Quality, to consider Michigan's current approach to addressing environmental issues and the need for a new direction.

I am now pleased to accept the results of that effort and commend it to everyone interested in the future of Michigan.

The EAC report is entitled "A Roadmap to a New Environmental Management Model for Michigan." It presents a critique of our current system for managing environmental issues and describes what must be done to successfully address the emerging and complex environmental challenges of the 21st Century.

The EAC's roadmap captures and synthesizes themes I have heard from concerned citizens, the regulated community, my colleagues in other states, and nationally: First, there is a growing recognition that we must transcend the current narrow legal and funding framework that constrains our perspective and too often leads us to focus on activities rather than outcomes. Second, environmental quality can be best achieved within an integrated regulatory framework, one that employs new tools and better ways of encouraging everyone to make wise environmental choices. Finally, we must employ new collaboration and decision making skills in working as partners in the broad endeavor of achieving and maintaining environmental quality.

Importantly, the EAC recognizes that the roadmap must be informed by the views of many other interested parties. Accordingly, the roadmap recommends a wider discussion on these topics to develop a more robust understanding of the circumstances we face, refine the direction we should head, and, crucially, elicit the involvement and support of all those interested in joining the journey.

I encourage everyone reading this note to engage in that discussion.

Sincerely,

Steven E. Chester
Director