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ADVANCING PUBLIC TRUST
SOLUTIONS TO SAVE THE
GREAT LAKES

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Longtime FLOW Volunteer Eric Olson Steps Down as Communications Director, Maintains Position as Board of Directors Vice Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Dettmer, *Chair*
Eric Olson, *Vice Chair*

TRAVERSE CITY, MI - Presiding selflessly as an unpaid volunteer Executive Director from 2009 to 2012 and then as Communications and Education Director from 2012 to April 2014, Eric Olson has stepped down from his staff role and now maintains his position as Vice Chair and interim Secretary of the Board of Directors.

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Ross Biederman
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Ted Curran
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Eric Olson has been with FLOW since its infancy, and was the first Executive Director. He joined FLOW to help realize the lifelong dream of his brother—FLOW Founder and President Jim Olson—to start a Great Lakes policy and education nonprofit.

“Jim, of course, infected me with his passion for the Great Lakes, the public trust, and water justice,” says Eric Olson.

“If it were not for my brother Eric joining forces with me to form the original FLOW coalition, FLOW would not be the thriving, cutting-edge water policy and education nonprofit organization it is today,” says Jim Olson.

Some of Eric Olson's notable contributions to FLOW include:

- transitioning FLOW from a coalition to a nonprofit,
- reimagining the FLOW website,
- launching and managing FLOW’s Facebook page,
- growing the very beginning of the Great Lakes Society, and
- networking to bring FLOW together with world-renowned water advocate and National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians, Maude Barlow for a series of speaking engagements and workshops across the Great Lakes Basin.

“Eric has worked tirelessly to build a movement and a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to protect the Great Lakes as a commons. We are so grateful to him for his volunteer work and service. Because of Eric, FLOW has become a strong

PRESIDENT & FOUNDER
Jim Olson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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policy and educational center for the Great Lakes,” remarks Executive Director Liz Kirkwood.

Eric Olson, who resides in Rochester Hills, MI with his wife Joyce, gave enormous amounts of his free time to FLOW during what he calls his “semi-retirement” from commercial real estate. He spent countless long weekends travelling hundreds of miles, dedicated to helping forge FLOW from an idea into reality.

“FLOW started because of the need to address questions and threats to the Great Lakes and waters of Michigan, and Eric understood the magnitude of this. He also shared the larger vision of the right of the public to use and enjoy the Great Lakes and our common waters, and the importance communicating this to the public in addition to our research and reports submitted to government leaders. Because of Eric, we now have a strong communications program and several partner organizations around the Great Lakes, in addition to our water policy program and projects,” says Jim Olson.

Eric Olson will remain with FLOW as Vice Chair and interim Secretary of the newly expanded Board of Directors, and his staff leadership legacy will continue to benefit FLOW for many years to come. “I’m looking forward to continue serving on the Board as Vice Chair to ensure FLOW’s leadership in educating the public and our government leaders about the threats facing our Great Lakes and the solutions FLOW is advancing to protect these majestic waters. These solutions not only protect the Great Lakes but also the public’s rights and responsible uses of these waters that have been handed down generation to generation by our forefathers through public trust doctrine,” says Eric Olson.

Serving alongside Vice Chair Eric Olson is newly-elected Board of Directors Chair and attorney Mike Dettmer. Also joining the FLOW Board of Directors this spring are former Executive Director of the Grand Traverse Land Conservancy, Lew Coulter; Senior Editor of Circle of Blue, Keith Schneider; and Food & Water Watch Water Program Director, Emily Wurth.

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FLOW is the Great Lakes Basin’s only public trust policy and education 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to advance public trust solutions to save the Great Lakes.