

# Executive Director's Report

February 22, 2010



2010 GREAT LAKES COMMISSION SEMIANNUAL MEETING  
FEBRUARY 22 - 23, 2010 | WASHINGTON, D.C.



# Legislative Priorities

## **Top regional priorities for the Great Lakes:**

- Maintain or increase funding for the GLRI
- Protect water quality through the clean water and safe drinking water SRFs
- Establish strong protections against aquatic invasive species
- Strengthen regional coordination and federal-state collaboration



# Funding for the GLRI

- Multi-year Action Plan released Sunday calls for \$2.2 billion over 5 years
- ***Request*** = at least \$475 million in FY 2011 for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
- The President's FY 11 budget requests \$300 million



# Funding for the GLRI

- The GLRI supports a comprehensive cleanup plan that is broadly endorsed by the states, cities, and others
- It targets science-based solutions to urgent Great Lakes problems and is guided by an Action Plan with clear performance goals and accountability measures
- States and others have geared up to implement the GLRI – more than \$1 billion requested for nearly 1,000 projects
- It is a wise investment that will create jobs and advance regional economic revitalization.
- Brookings Institution projected \$50 billion in benefits from implementing the GLRC restoration strategy.



# Support for the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs

- Provide \$2.7 billion in FY 2011 for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) and \$1.4 billion for the Clean Water SRF.
- The President's budget requests \$2 billion for the Clean Water SRF and \$1.3 billion for the Drinking Water SRF.



# Support for the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs

- The GLRI does NOT address
- Aging wastewater infrastructure causes sewage overflows that close beaches in the Great Lakes and threaten public health
- 70% of combined sewer overflows are in the Great Lakes states, which face an estimated \$70 billion need
- Local governments invest more than \$11 billion for the Great Lakes, the majority for water quality management



Hart Park Menomonee River storm sewer construction in Menomonee Falls, Wis.



## The Federal Wastewater Infrastructure Deficit in the Great Lakes Region

The Great Lakes River system contains 20 percent of the world's freshwater and 95 percent of the surface water supply in the United States. Because the system is so vast, there is a perception that these waters are inexhaustible. In reality, this water resource is finite, intensively used and ecologically fragile. Of the 6.5 quadrillion gallons contained in the Great Lakes system, about one percent is renewable.

That one percent includes water that people and businesses rely on every day, but generally forget about once they have used what they need. Wastewater infrastructure is the extensive network of pipes and treatment plants that carry, filter and treat used water so that it can be returned to rivers, lakes and streams without degrading water quality. This network of conveyance systems has three major features: 1) sanitary sewers, which transport domestic, commercial and industrial wastewater directly to a treatment facility; 2) storm sewers, which collect and transport rainwater from the streets to a water body such as a river or lake; and 3) combined sewers where rainwater is mixed with sanitary sewer flow to be delivered to a treatment facility. The region's economy and quality of life depend on these systems.

Constructing, operating and maintaining wastewater infrastructure is of critical importance to the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes ecosystem and the well being of the region's economy. The U.S. federal government must act now to

Local governments  
in the United States

# Cities Invest over \$11 B Annually in Great Lakes Protection and Restoration

MEETING



# Close the Door on Aquatic Invasive Species

- Increase funding for actions to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes
  - Complete barriers on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
  - Reinforce the Corps' authority to take emergency response actions
  - Expedite long-term planning for ecologically separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watershed
- Implement effective federal ballast discharge regulations.
- Support the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's sea lamprey control program.
- Enact legislation to prevent AIS introductions from the trade in live organisms.



# Close the Door on Aquatic Invasive Species

- More than 180 non-native species have become established in the Great Lakes, causing \$5.7 billion annually in economic losses.
- AIS threaten the \$7 billion sport fishing and \$10 billion recreational boating industries in the Great Lakes.
- Once AIS become established, they are virtually impossible to eradicate or control.
- Without effective prevention, we face never-ending costs for control. \$20 million annually just to control sea lamprey.



# Strengthen Great Lakes Conservation and Enhance Regional Coordination

- New legislation, to be introduced
- Reauthorize EPA's Great Lakes National Program
- Formally authorize the GLRI with strong roles for states and other stakeholders
  - Strengthen accountability, transparency and regional coordination
  - Provide formal role for states in guiding Great Lakes restoration



# Additional Great Lakes Priorities

- **Reauthorize the Great Lakes Legacy Act**
  - Increase funding authorization to \$150 million annually
- **Infrastructure for Commercial Navigation and Recreational Boating**
  - Provide funding to the Corps for the Soo locks expansion
  - Provide funding to the Corps' Great Lakes O&M budget to address the backlog in dredging harbors
- **Support Core Programs for Restoration, Protection and Effective Management of the Great Lakes.**



# Asian Carp

- **Publicity surrounding Asian carp helps elevate the profile of Great Lakes issues.**
- **The most urgent, immediate threat to the Great Lakes, but only the latest – and not the last – AIS.**
- **Response actions reflect unprecedented regional and inter-agency coordination – a substantial accomplishment.**
- **Lawsuit reflects disagreement among states and causes some to question regional unity.**
- **Will carp consume GLRI funding or help us maintain and leverage additional funding?**



# Addressing Asian Carp Under the GLRI

- AIS is one of the GLRI's focus areas
- Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework outlines short-term actions
- \$58 of \$78 million from GLRI for carp strategy
- Long-term impact of carp control costs on GLRI unclear

**Will the GLRI be devoured by Asian Carp?**



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# The Path Forward

- Current response and control efforts are expensive, unsustainable and likely unsuccessful in the long-term.
- The region is united in its commitment to keep Asian carp from being established in the lakes.
- The precautionary principle must drive actions.
- Ecological separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River is the permanent solution that protects both watersheds and avoids costly, ongoing efforts.
- Chicago waterway system evolved over decades, is complex and provides many benefits.



# A Problem We Can't Solve...



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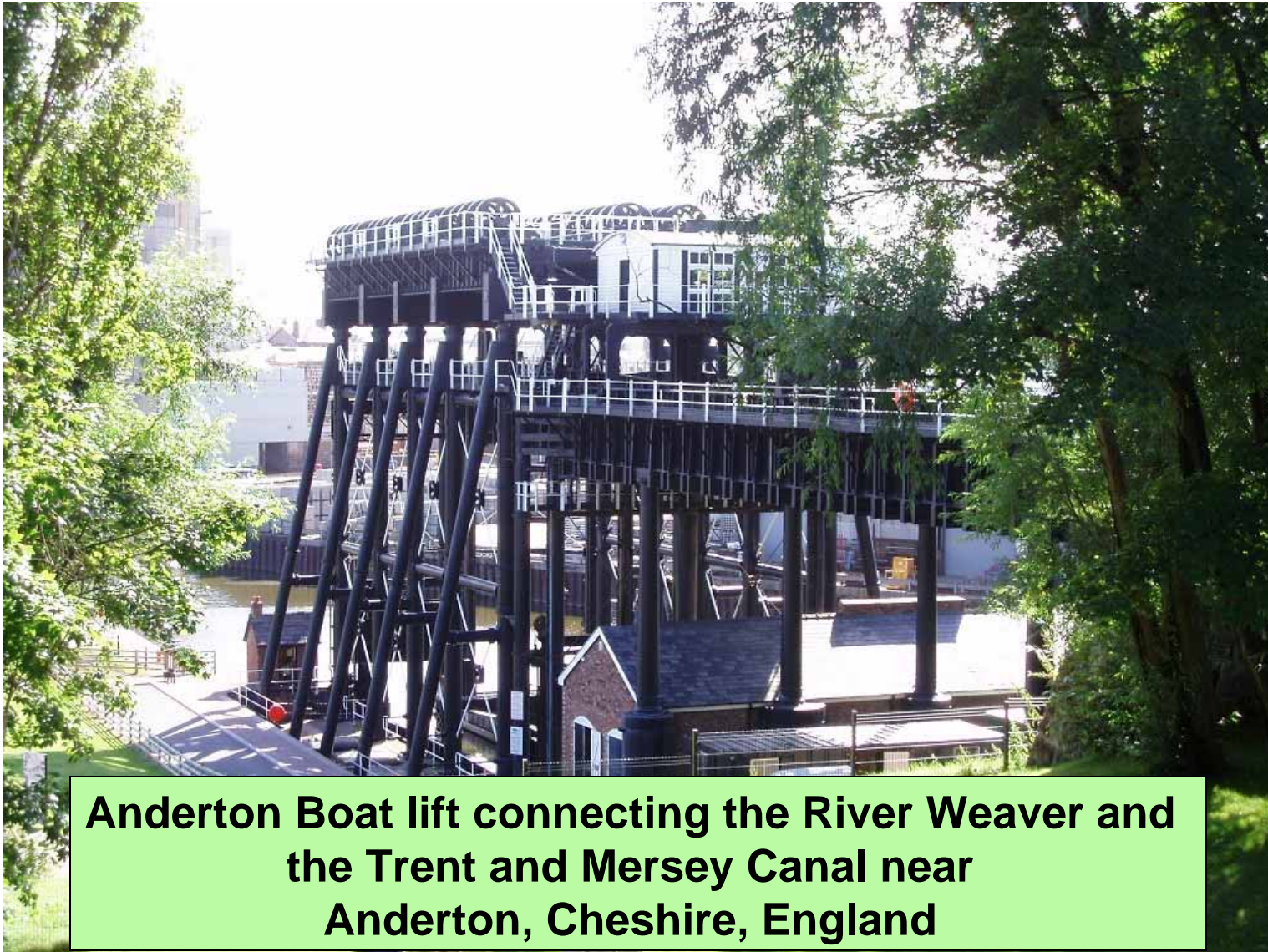
# A Problem We Can Solve...

Big Chute Marine Waterway:  
Lock 44 of the Trent-Severn Waterway  
in Ontario, Canada



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**Anderton Boat lift connecting the River Weaver and the Trent and Mersey Canal near Anderton, Cheshire, England**



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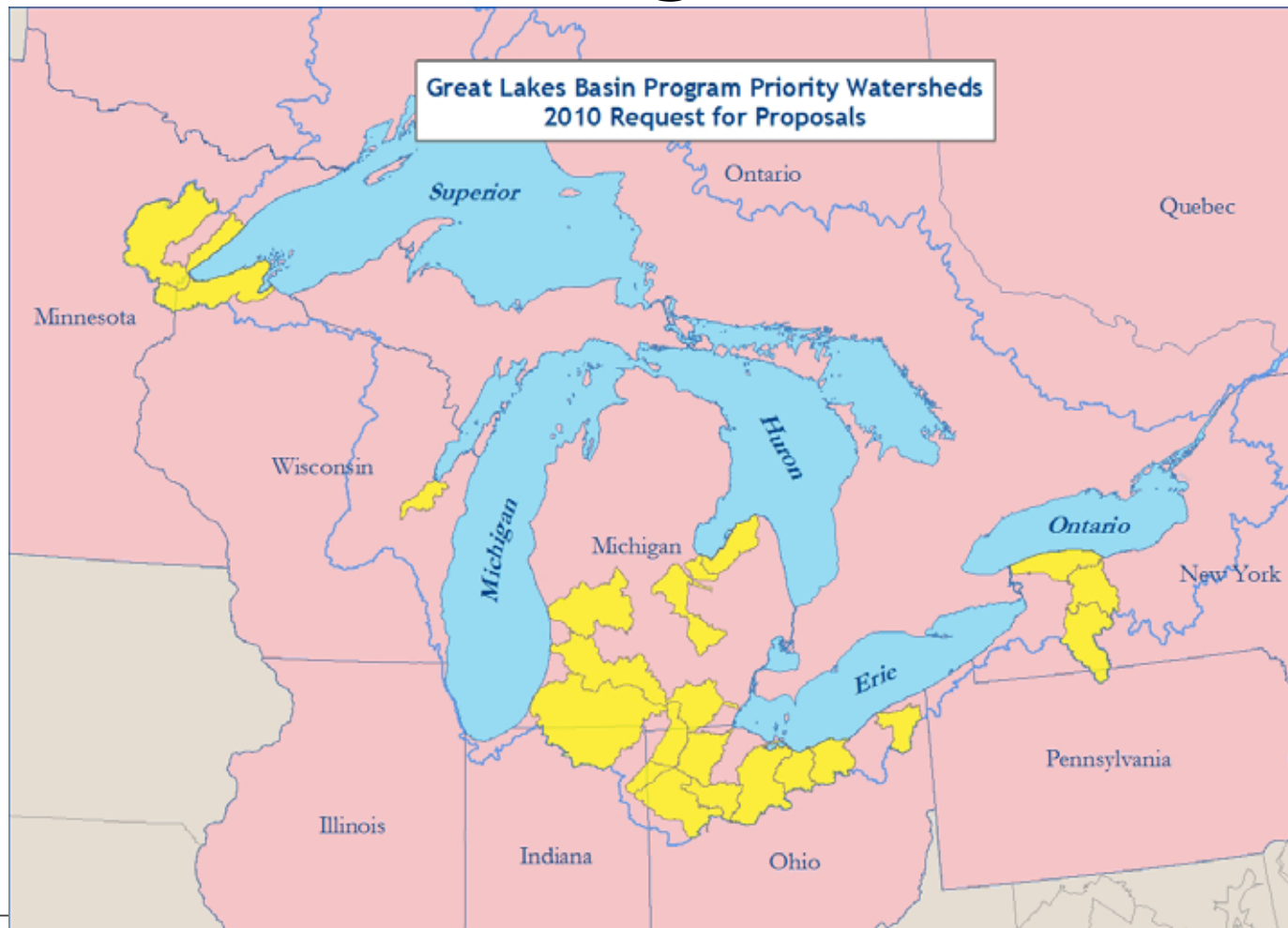
**Falkirk Wheel connecting the Forth and Clyde Canal with the Union Canal near Falkirk, Scotland**



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# Priority Watersheds for the Great Lakes Basin Program 2010 RFP



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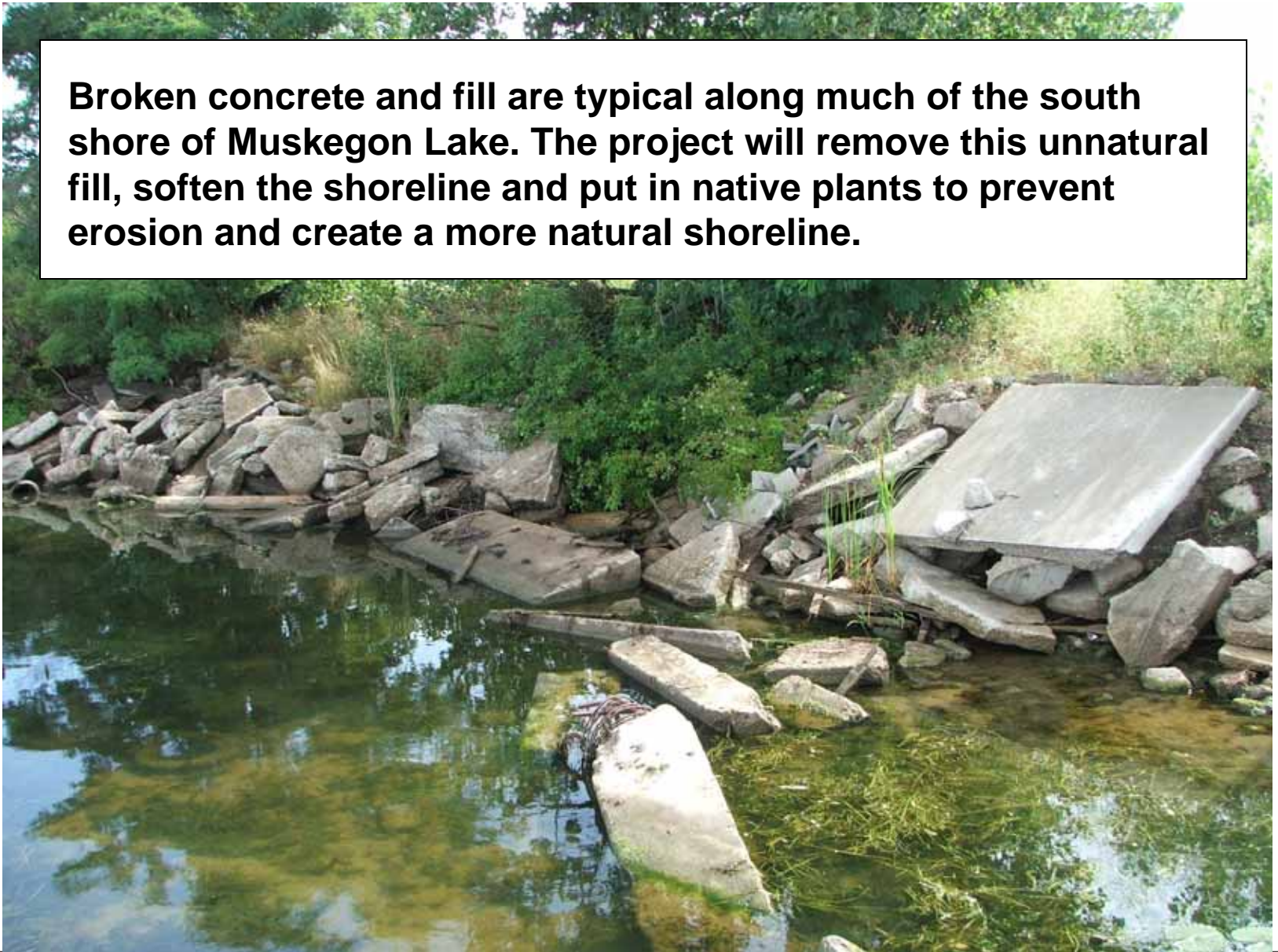
## Muskegon Lake Fish and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Map

*NOAA Coastal and Marine Habitat Restoration Project Grants  
under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*



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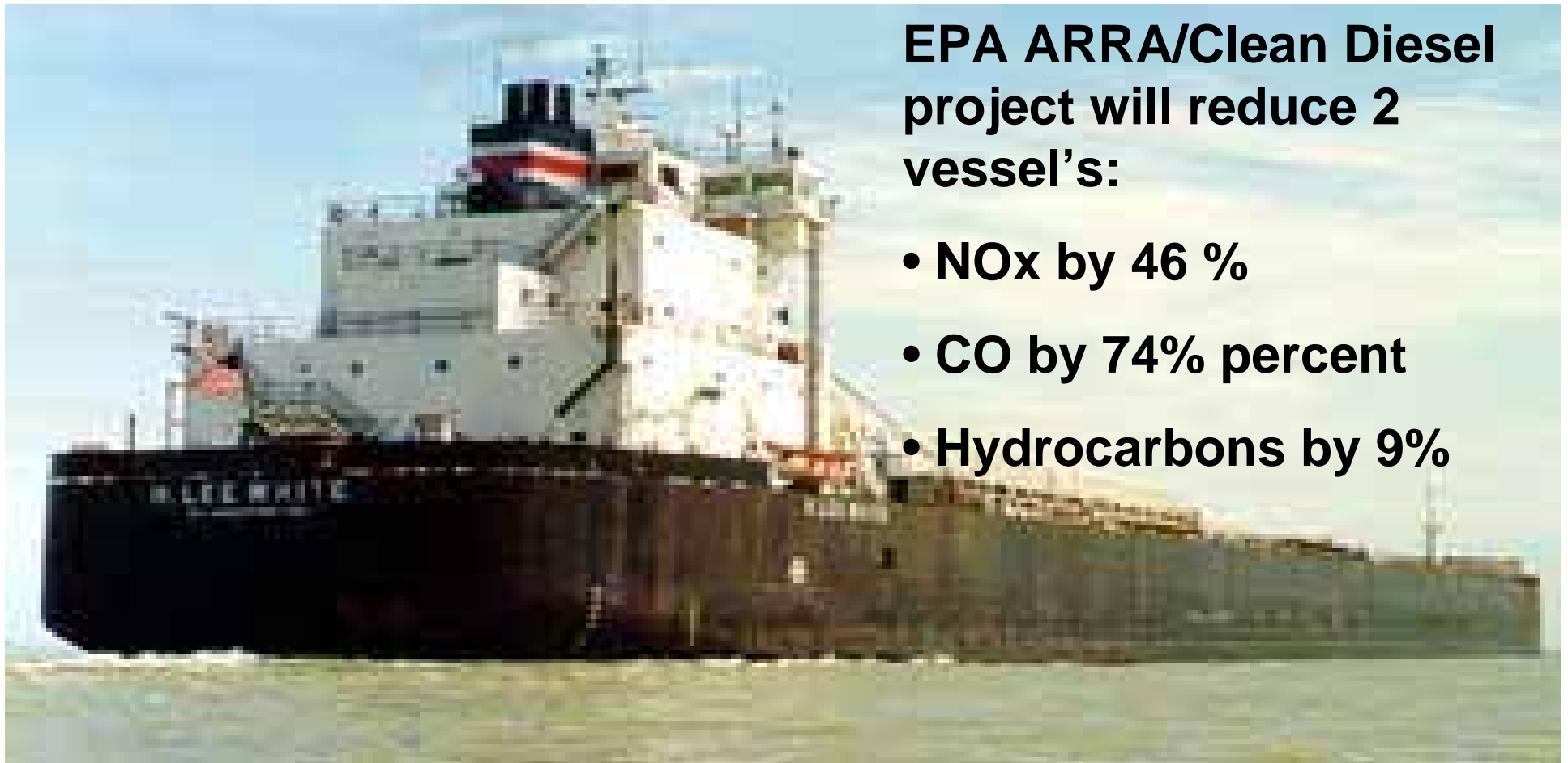
**Broken concrete and fill are typical along much of the south shore of Muskegon Lake. The project will remove this unnatural fill, soften the shoreline and put in native plants to prevent erosion and create a more natural shoreline.**



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# Working with the Great Lakes marine industry to improve air quality



**EPA ARRA/Clean Diesel project will reduce 2 vessel's:**

- **NOx by 46 %**
- **CO by 74% percent**
- **Hydrocarbons by 9%**



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