

# GREAT LAKES RESTORATION at work in Minnesota



March 2011

The State of Minnesota – together with local communities, tribes, business and industry, and nongovernmental organizations – is collaborating with the federal government to implement a comprehensive restoration strategy for the Great Lakes. This partnership is generating on-the-ground actions that will improve Minnesota’s economy, environment and quality of life. This fact sheet describes how Great Lakes restoration is benefiting Minnesota and showcases restoration projects now underway.



## The Great Lakes: A Vital Economic Asset for Minnesota

Lake Superior is one of Minnesota’s most valuable natural resources, providing water for drinking and industry, shipping of commodities, commercial fishing, and waterborne transportation. An estimated 3.5 million people visit Minnesota’s “North Shore” every year. Tourism in this area has an estimated economic impact of more than \$1 billion annually and supports over 20,000 jobs. Lake Superior also helps to support

- an exceptional sport fishery valued at \$1.58 billion;
- a recreational boating industry that generates nearly 50,000 jobs and an economic impact of \$3.7 billion annually; and
- Duluth-Superior Harbor, America’s busiest inland port, with 1,000 vessels visiting annually carrying \$2 billion in cargo and supporting 2,000 local jobs with a \$210 million economic impact.

As these figures show, cleaning up the Great Lakes isn’t just about correcting mistakes of the past, but of leveraging a vital resource to build a better future.

## Investing in Minnesota’s Waterfront Communities

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) is supporting implementation of a comprehensive cleanup plan that has been broadly endorsed by the region’s governors, tribes, cities, conservation groups, and business and industry. The Initiative builds on years of work to identify solutions to key problems facing the Great Lakes:

- shutting the door on aquatic invasive species, such as Asian carp
- cleaning up contaminated sediments
- controlling polluted runoff and cleaning up beach pollution
- restoring degraded coastal wetlands
- conserving and enhancing valuable fish and wildlife resources

## Economic Benefits from Restoring the Great Lakes

Restoring the Great Lakes advances the region’s broader strategy to create jobs, stimulate economic development, and invest in freshwater resources and waterfront communities. A detailed study conducted by the Brookings Institution found that fully implementing the Great Lakes restoration strategy would generate:

- \$50 billion in long term economic benefits;
- \$30 billion to \$50 billion in short term benefits;
- \$50 million to \$125 million in reduced costs to municipalities; and
- direct benefits of up to \$300 million to the Duluth area alone.

## Great Lakes Restoration in Minnesota

The GLRI is off to a strong start in Minnesota with nearly \$20 million coming into the state to implement 30 restoration projects. The map and table showcase the major restoration projects underway in Minnesota. Minnesota’s citizens and coastal communities will benefit in many ways from this funding, including:

- enhanced public outreach on invasive species leading to greater public awareness and understanding of invasive species issues;
- restored habitat to support valuable fish and wildlife resources;
- improved communication on beach conditions resulting in fewer beach users swimming during unsafe conditions and greater awareness of beach safety issues; and
- better understanding of mercury sources and bioaccumulation in the environment.

These actions will benefit the next generation of Minnesota citizens who will look to the Great Lakes as an important resource to improve their quality of life and economic well-being.

## Solving Great Lakes Problems

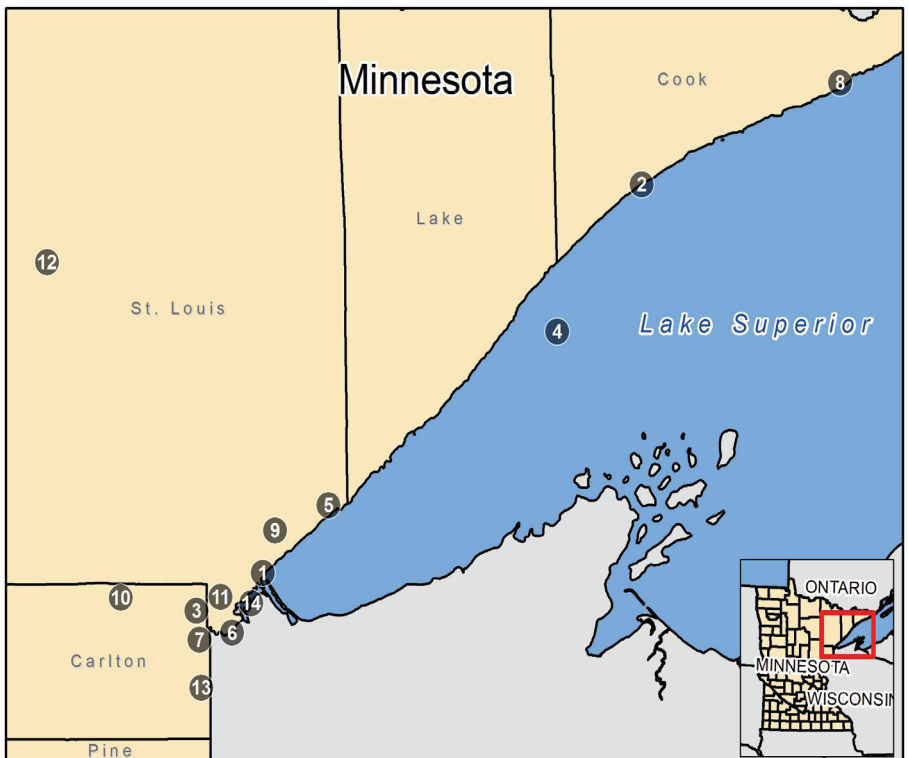
The GLRI builds on local and state efforts to solve the problems facing Lake Superior. The state has identified a number of restoration goals, including

- restoring the St. Louis River Area of Concern and removing it from the list of “toxic hotspots”;
- removing toxics from Lake Superior waters;
- halting the introduction of invasive species through ballast water;
- stopping pollution in nearshore waters;
- preparing pollution control plans for impaired waters in the basin;
- improving habitat for fish and wildlife;
- strengthening resource management through better environmental monitoring; and
- using the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan to track progress, share information and build partnerships.

## Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Projects Underway in Minnesota

The map shows the major restoration projects currently being implemented in Minnesota; details are provided on the attached list. Other projects and activities are underway to strengthen the GLRI:

- **Public Outreach** to engage citizens in restoration efforts; improve beach health and fish consumption advisories; and keep pesticides, pharmaceuticals and other pollutants out of the Great Lakes
- **Monitoring** of mercury pollution to protect children’s health; beaches to enhance swim advisories; and Great Lakes water and wildlife to detect contaminants
- **Engineering and Design** of sustainable restoration projects, new technologies to detect bacterial contamination, and techniques to monitor invasive species
- **Research** on ways to control Asian carp and eradicate Phragmites, prevent the introduction of invasive species in ballast water, enhance knowledge of the Great Lakes ecosystem, protect endangered species, and predict impacts of climate change
- **Capacity Building** to help states and local governments implement restoration projects, improve collaboration, and educate health care providers about fish consumption advisories
- **Sound Science and Accountability** to ensure that funds are spent effectively and that the GLRI reflects a strong, science-based understanding of the Great Lakes
- **Pollution Prevention** to keep the Great Lakes clean, safeguard investments in restoration, and prevent polluted runoff from agricultural land and city streets



Information on GLRI projects is available online at <http://greatlakesrestoration.us>

## Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Projects Underway in Minnesota

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Map Number	Project Title	Recipient Organization or Lead Agency	GLRI Funding
1	Restoring Lake Superior's Streams One Neighbor at a Time	Community Action Duluth	\$636,365
2	Poplar River Watershed Erosion and Sediment Reduction Project	Cook County Soil & Water Conservation Dist.	\$687,034
3	St. Louis River Area of Concern-40th Ave. West Habitat Complex Remediation and Restoration Ecological Design	Dept. of Interior-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$230,000
4	Minnesota State Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan	Dept. of Interior-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$792,000
5	Riparian Habitat Assessment, Protection and Management in Minnesota's Lake Superior Watershed	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	\$285,714
6	Restoration of Radio Tower Bay in the St. Louis River Area of Concern	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Land Trust	\$665,000
7	St. Louis River Area of Concern Implementation Framework	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	\$411,680
8	Flute Reed River Restoration Initiatives	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	\$540,603
9	Amity Creek Restoration Project	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	\$843,616
10	Cedar Lake Wild Rice	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	\$100,000
11	Fond du Lac Creek	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	\$100,000
12	Duluth Mineland Reclamation Demonstration	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	\$200,000
13	St. Louis River Area of Concern-St. Louis Bay Contaminated Sediment Site Characterization	U.S. EPA-Great Lakes Legacy Act and State of Minnesota	\$400,000
14	Nemadji-Lower St. Louis River Initiative	U.S. Department of Agriculture in Minnesota	\$249,000