

# Executive Director's Report

September 9, 2013  
Annual Meeting  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

# Federal Policy Agenda - 2013

## Strengthening the Great Lakes as an Environmental and Economic Asset

### Regional Priorities for Restoration and Protection

MARCH 2013

The Great Lakes states and coastal communities across the region are leveraging the competitive advantage the lakes provide as both a natural treasure and a vital economic asset. In particular, our region is implementing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a bipartisan, multi-year program that is addressing the most serious problems facing the Great Lakes. This action-oriented initiative is generating meaningful, site-specific improvements. Fully implementing our regional restoration strategy is projected to generate at least \$50 billion in long-term economic benefits for our region. We must keep taking action and get the job done. Our organizations urge Congress to support these top regional priorities for the Great Lakes.

- **Maintain funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**  
The GLRI is cleaning up areas of Concern, halting Asian carp and other invasive species, and preventing polluted runoff that closes beaches and causes harmful algal blooms. Nearly 1,200 projects are completed or underway, but much work remains. Maintain support for the GLRI to sustain our progress and build on investments from the states and local communities by providing at least \$300 million in FY 2014.
- **Enact comprehensive legislation to support Great Lakes conservation efforts**  
The GLRI is cleaning up areas of Concern, halting Asian carp and other invasive species, and preventing polluted runoff that closes beaches and causes harmful algal blooms. Nearly 1,200 projects are completed or underway, but much work remains. Maintain support for the GLRI to sustain our progress and build on investments from the states and local communities by providing at least \$300 million in FY 2014.
- **Enact comprehensive legislation to support Great Lakes ports and harbors**  
Legislation enacted in 2007 authorized the Great Lakes Ecosystem Protection Act, which authorized the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, reauthorized the Great Lakes Legacy Act, and strengthened regional coordination, accountability and binational cooperation with Canada. Cosponsor and support similar legislation if introduced this year.
- **Sustain the economic and ecological vitality of Great Lakes ports and harbors**  
Historically low water levels create challenging economic and ecological conditions for commercial and recreational ports and harbors. Cargo vessels cannot operate at full capacity and some recreational harbors may close. Meanwhile, we are not fully using resources available from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, which has a surplus of over \$6 billion. Help Great Lakes coastal communities by providing funding to maintain access to existing commercial ports and recreational harbors, using ecologically protective measures.
- **Invest in clean water infrastructure**  
Continued support is needed to help local communities repair and upgrade aging infrastructure to end and sewer overflows, keep Great Lakes beaches open and safeguard drinking water. Reauthorize and provide funding for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds.
- **Halt Asian carp, sea lamprey, and other aquatic invasive species**  
Invasive species seriously threaten the future of the Great Lakes ecosystem and economy. Provide funding for programs that prevent and control Asian carp, sea lamprey and other harmful species and pass legislation to prevent the importation of harmful species.
- **Incorporate strong Great Lakes conservation provisions and funding in the Farm Bill**  
Farm Bill conservation programs protect the Great Lakes from soil erosion and polluted runoff from agricultural operations. Authorize the Farm Bill and support the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to target areas that contribute to water quality problems in the Great Lakes.

**The Great Lakes region is united in asking Congress to support these priorities.**

## Sustaining Environmental Restoration and Economic Revitalization in the Great Lakes Region

### Great Lakes Commission Federal Priorities for 2013

MARCH 2013

The Great Lakes shaped our region's cultural identity and fueled our economic growth in the past. With proper care and wise investments, they will continue to be a foundation for economic prosperity and a high quality of life in the future.

The Great Lakes are an invaluable resource that supports

- 1.5 million jobs generating \$62 billion in wages annually
- 4 million recreational boats and a \$16 billion annual boating industry
- A \$30 billion tourism economy supported by 6.2 million anglers, 4.6 million hunters, and 23.2 million bird watchers
- The longest inland deep-draft navigation system in the world, moving 322 million metric tons of cargo annually, generating 226,000 jobs, \$14 billion in wages and \$34 billion in business revenues

### Investing in Our Future

The Great Lakes are an invaluable environmental and economic resource for the eight-state Great Lakes region. They provide vital benefits for the 36 million Americans and Canadians who live in the region, including unparalleled recreational opportunities for local residents and visiting tourists; abundant fresh water for communities and industries; environmentally efficient transportation system for raw materials and finished goods; and unique and extensive habitats for valuable fish and wildlife resources.

As we work to grow our regional economy, it is imperative that we maximize the value of the Great Lakes as both a natural treasure and a vital economic asset. With 90 percent of our nation's fresh surface water, the Great Lakes give our region a unique competitive advantage that can play a decisive role in our future. Leveraging the value of the Great Lakes is an important component of our broader strategy to create jobs, stimulate economic development, and invest in freshwater resources and waterfront communities.

### Sustaining Our Progress

Our region has made substantial progress in recent years in cleaning up the Great Lakes and addressing threats to their health. Most significantly, we are implementing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), an unprecedented, multi-year program that is addressing the most serious problems facing the Great Lakes. This action-oriented initiative is translating our restoration strategy – broadly endorsed by the Great Lakes states, cities, tribes, conservation groups, and business and industry – into step-specific actions that are generating real benefits for communities across our region.

After years of planning, the GLRI is having a real impact and the federal commitment is leveraging substantial investments from the Great Lakes states, local communities and nongovernmental partners. Much work remains, however, and it is critical that the initiative be carried through to completion. Fully implementing our Great Lakes restoration strategy is a wise investment that is projected to generate over \$50 billion in long-term economic benefits.

### Strengthening the Federal-State Partnership for the Great Lakes

The Great Lakes states are partnering closely with the federal government to restore the Great Lakes and leverage them as an asset to build a more prosperous future for our region. The Great Lakes Commission urges Congress and the Administration to support the following priorities to strengthen this partnership, sustain our restoration efforts, and address specific challenges to the long-term environmental and economic health of the Great Lakes.

**The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is addressing serious problems facing the Great Lakes by**

- cleaning up toxic sediments, testing degraded areas for fish and wildlife
- installing Asian carp and other harmful invasive species
- reducing polluted runoff and safeguarding beaches
- monitoring environmental health, tracking progress, and educating the public

# Federal Policy Agenda - 2013

- **Fund Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)**
- **Pass comprehensive Great Lakes legislation**
- **Address low water levels by funding dredging**
- **Fund waste and drinking water infrastructure**
- **Pass Farm Bill**
- **Stop Asian carp and other aquatic invasive species**

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# Fund Great Lakes Restoration Initiative & Clean Water





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# House Co-Sponsors – HR 2773

## **Illinois**

- Mike Quigley

## **Indiana**

- Peter Visclosky

## **Minnesota**

- Betty McCollum
- Richard Nolan

## **Wisconsin**

- Gwen Moore
- Tom Petri
- Mark Pocan

## **Michigan**

- Dan Benishek
- John Conyers
- John Dingell
- Sander Levin
- Candice Miller
- Gary Peters

## **New York**

- Brian Higgins
- Dan Maffei
- Louise Slaughter

## **Ohio**

- David Joyce  
(bill sponsor)
- Marcia Fudge
- Bill Johnson
- Marcy Kaptur

# Senate Co-Sponsors – S. 1232

## **Illinois**

- Mark Kirk  
(sponsor)
- Richard Durbin

## **Minnesota**

- Amy Klobuchar
- Al Franken

## **Wisconsin**

- Tammy Baldwin

## **Michigan**

- Carl Levin  
(sponsor)
- Debbie Stabenow

## **New York**

- Charles Schumer

## **Ohio**

- Sherrod Brown



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# Navigation Issues in Water Resources Development Act

- Great Lakes navigation as a single “System”
- Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Reform
- Recreational harbors

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# Asian Carp and AIS

- Lacey Act reform
- Internet Sales
- Ballast water collaboration
- Chicago and Asian Carp

# Separation Alternatives

Down River



Mid-System



Near Lake







# Asian Carp and AIS

- Financing
- Flooding and flow modeling
- What next after GLMRIS?
- What is “Effective” and “Optimal”?
  - Physical
  - Ecological
  - Effective
  - Permanent
  - Other uses and service
  - Time to Implement
- “Interim” solutions

# Brandon Lock & Dam





# The Threat



# Fox P Trade:

## *Applying Water Quality Trading in the Lower Fox River*





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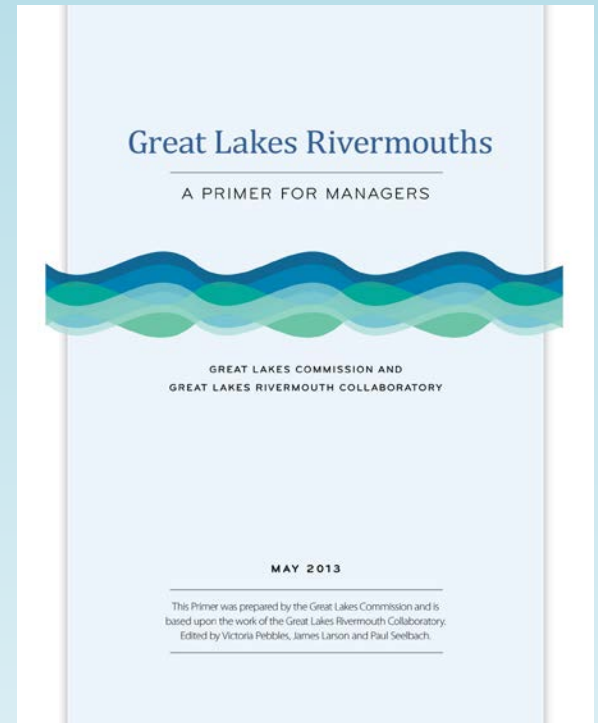
[www.glc.org/foxptrade](http://www.glc.org/foxptrade)





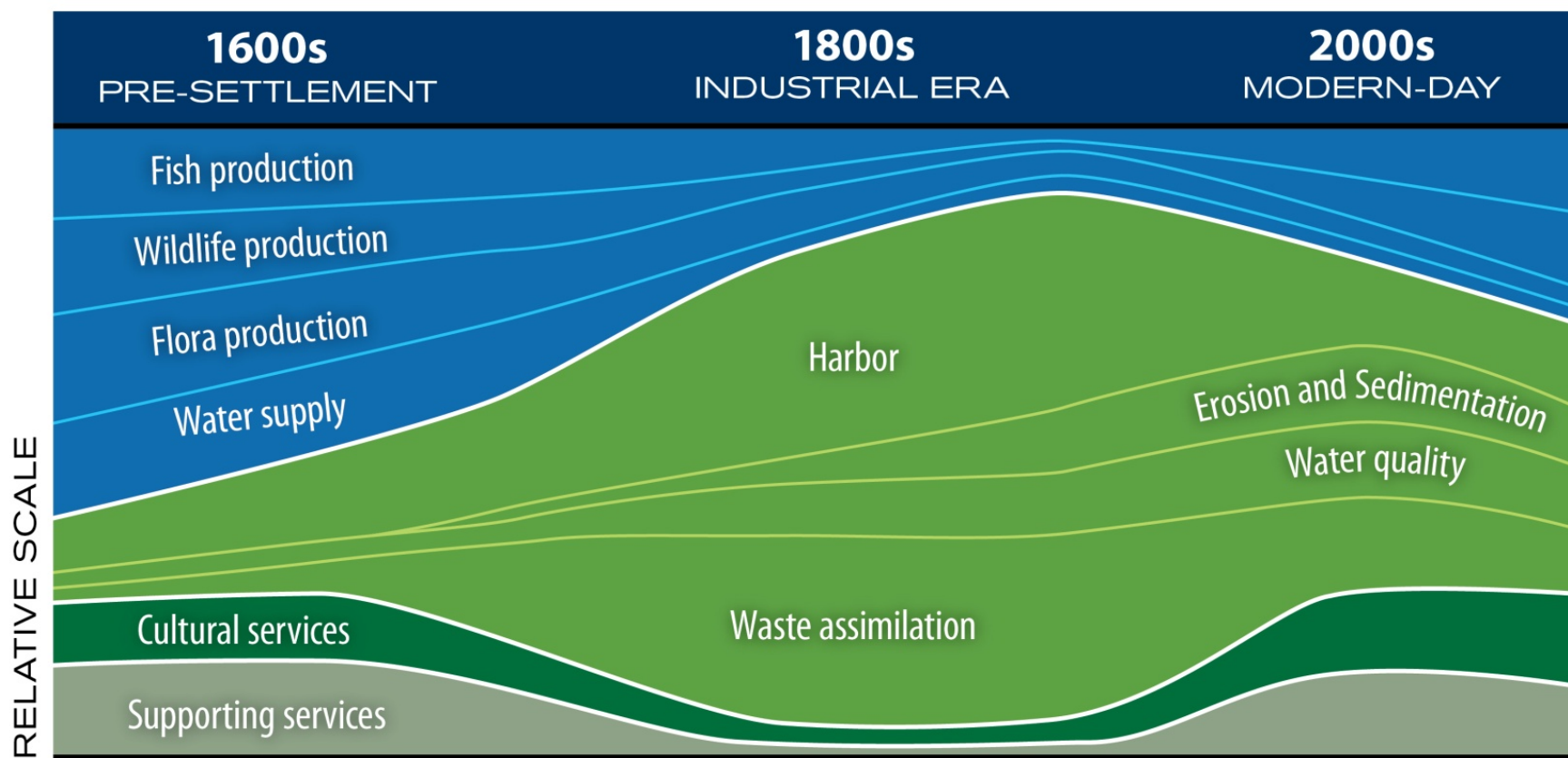
# Great Lakes Rivermouths

- *Primer for Managers*
- All but three AOCs are rivermouths (or encompass rivermouths)
- Distinct type of ecosystem
- Created by mixing of river and lake



# Rivermouth Ecosystem Services

- Varied
- Valued differently at different times



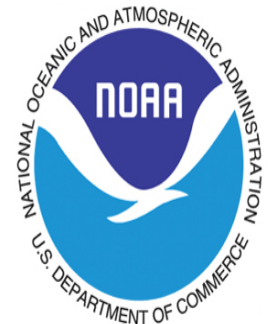
# Great Lakes Ports *and* Regional Growth

*Integrating Environmental Health and Economic Prosperity*

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