

For immediate release

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New interactive application showcases habitat and wildlife restoration underway on the Great Lakes

Ann Arbor, Mich. – The Great Lakes Commission, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), today announced the release of an updated and improved Great Lakes Restoration Database (GLRD), available at habitat.glc.org. Originally launched in 2013, the website showcases habitat restoration projects implemented under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), a multiyear program that is addressing the biggest threats to the health of the Great Lakes. The website provides individual factsheets and powerful visual tools to view the location and footprint of more than 600 habitat restoration projects across the eight-state Great Lakes region.

The GLRI is the largest federal investment in Great Lakes restoration and conservation in two decades. Thousands of acres of habitat for valuable fish and wildlife have been restored and protected across the eight-state Great Lakes region through the program, which provides grants to federal, state, local and nonprofit organizations. The Great Lakes Restoration Database was developed to increase awareness and improve the communication of accomplishments in the habitat and wildlife protection and restoration component of the program.

According to Tim Eder, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Commission, “this database and application were designed to show elected officials and citizens how their tax dollars are improving wildlife habitat under the GLRI.” “More than \$50 billion in economic activity is generated annually from recreational activities in the Great Lakes, including fishing, hunting, wildlife watching and recreational boating, so this is a valuable investment in our region’s economic prosperity,” Eder added.

The GLRD was funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and created by the Great Lakes Commission with assistance from a network of federal, state and local agency partners. According to Mike Greer, USACE project manager, “in the first five years of the GLRI, tremendous progress has been made in restoring and protecting valuable fish and wildlife along the Great Lakes. This application provides a quick and easy way to find detailed information on the funded projects, their goals, objectives, locations and recipient organizations. It also provides a landscape perspective of the great work being done in the region.”

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Great Lakes Commission

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The GLRD includes projects funded under the GLRI's Habitat and Wildlife Protection and Restoration Focus Area in fiscal years 2010-2014. The application is built on a geographic information system that provides powerful search and mapping tools to find and display projects by location and key characteristics. Printable factsheets for each project include project descriptions, objectives, habitat restoration metrics, and contact information for recipient organizations. The database is continuously updated with input from grant recipients and project managers. Other GLRI focus areas have supported habitat-related projects (such as removal of aquatic invasive species or restoration of degraded habitat in Areas of Concern) but are not reflected in the database at this time.

For more information on the Great Lakes Restoration Database, visit habitat.glc.org. To learn more about the GLRI, go to www.glri.us.

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The Great Lakes Commission, led by Acting Chair Jon W. Allan, director of the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes, is an interstate compact agency established under state and U.S. federal law and dedicated to promoting a strong economy, healthy environment and high quality of life for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region and its residents. The Commission consists of governors' appointees, state legislators, and agency officials from its eight member states. Associate membership for Ontario and Québec was established through the signing of a "Declaration of Partnership." The Commission maintains a formal Observer program involving U.S. and Canadian federal agencies, tribal authorities, binational agencies and other regional interests. The Commission offices are located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Learn more at www.glc.org.