



RESOLUTION

Adopted May 25, 2023

Great Lakes Priorities for the 2023 Farm Bill Reauthorization

Whereas, agriculture is a vital sector of the economy for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River region, with a market value of over twenty-four billion (USD, 2017)¹ in the U.S. portion of the Great Lakes basin; and

Whereas, agricultural conservation and well-planned rural development promote sustainability of this vital sector while also protecting and enhancing water quality and habitat for fish and wildlife; and

Whereas, the U.S. Farm Bill represents the largest source of conservation funding for private lands in the federal budget and supports myriad activities essential to continued progress in protecting the Great Lakes from the impacts of nutrient pollution, enhancing soil health and productivity, restoring habitat, and financing water and wastewater infrastructure improvements in rural communities.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages Congress to enact a new, five-year Farm Bill that builds upon policies that promote agricultural growth, sustainability, resilience, and conservation.

Be It Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission recommends that the 2023 Farm Bill include provisions under the relevant titles to address the following:

Title I: Commodities

- USDA disaster assistance programs should coordinate with state agencies leading investigations into PFAS in the Great Lakes region.

Title II: Conservation

- Continue support for the Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework (ACPF) as a tool to identify high-impact locations for the placement of conservation practices.
- USDA should collaborate with other federal agencies to develop integrated, reliable, and easy to use models that generate information on upstream and downstream water quality impacts arising from practice installation, as well as information on field conditions such as changes in soil health, inputs, and yield.
- Emphasize Farm Bill programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program and Regional Conservation Partnership Program to support long-term transformation of agricultural operations that protect local waterways and reduce costs to farmers.

¹ Calculated using the National Agricultural Statistics Service's [Census of Agriculture](#) data provided through the United States Department of Agriculture. The 2017 values for "Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold Including Food Marketing Practices and Value-Added Products" were tallied for all United States counties within or partly within the Great Lakes basin.

- Enhance Farm Bill investments to retain and restore wetlands in the Great Lakes basin by promoting landowner participation in the *Phragmites* Adaptive Management Framework (PAMF) to manage invasive *Phragmites australis* (common reed). Provide information on management approaches to recipients of funds through Farm Bill programming including the Conserve Reserve and Reserve Enhancement Programs and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

Title VI: Rural Development

- Expand support for water infrastructure programs, including the expansion of funding for nature-based solutions to manage stormwater.

Title VII: Research

- Continue research to identify conservation practices that reduce the nutrient pollution that contributes to harmful algal blooms.
- Collaborate with USGS to understand water quality impacts from the agriculture industry.
- Continue to partner with state and federal agencies to assess emerging practices such as prairie strips, phosphorus filters, and wetland enhancement.

Title VIII: Forestry

- Continue and expand the State and Private Forest Landscape-Scale Restoration Program to support the Great Lakes states' efforts to collaboratively restore and enhance the basin's forest landscapes.
- Expand opportunities for communities interested in protecting sources of drinking water through riparian plantings and other watershed-based efforts.

Be It Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission recognizes agriculture's important role in the economy of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River region and supports continued emphasis within the Farm Bill on programs fostering a healthy and sustainable system to produce agricultural products for the world, protect the world's greatest source of fresh water, and build resilience to climate change.

Adopted at the 2023 Semiannual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, May 23-25, 2023, held in Chicago, Illinois. The resolution was passed unanimously.