



The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative: Creating Jobs and Revitalizing Communities

MARCH 2019



- The Great Lakes provide the backbone for a **\$6 trillion regional economy**. They directly generate more than **1.5 million jobs and \$60 billion in wages annually**.
- With strong bipartisan support and a proven record of success, the **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative** is creating jobs and revitalizing struggling communities across the eight-state Great Lakes region.
- The bipartisan GLRI was formally authorized by Congress in 2016 at \$300 million for five years. It is **very much a collaboration** among multiple federal agencies, the Great Lakes states, local communities and businesses.
- GLRI is the **most important line of defense against Asian carp**, with eight million pounds of Asian carp trapped and removed from the Illinois River – an important pathway to Lake Michigan – helping to protect the **\$7 billion Great Lakes fishing economy**.
- GLRI is helping **protect drinking water for 48 million people** by working with farmers to **prevent nearly 800,000 pounds of phosphorous from polluting the Great Lakes** and causing harmful algae blooms. In 2014, a toxic bloom cut off access to clean drinking water for more than 500,000 people. Blooms also threaten Lake Erie's critical **\$15 billion tourism industry**.
- GLRI is **accelerating cleanup of Great Lakes toxic hotspots**. Work in one of these hotspots in Muskegon, Michigan, is projected to increase property values by nearly \$12 million, contribute \$600,000 in new tax revenues annually, and attract 65,000 new visitors, generating more than \$1 million in new recreational spending.
- The GLRI is cleaning up a **legacy of toxic sediments** in waterfront areas. Cleanups are ready to begin at 10 sites in five states, with 50 contaminated sediment cleanups projected over the next five years. **Nearly \$90 million is needed for toxic sediment cleanups in FY 2020**, which are projected to leverage more nearly \$60 million from nonfederal partners.
- Communities across the Great Lakes region are benefiting from economic recovery and re-investment thanks to the GLRI. A recent study found that **the GLRI will have a long-term impact on our regional economy, with every dollar spent under the program projected to generate more than three dollars in additional economic activity over the next two decades**.

Thanks to the GLRI, environmental cleanup in communities across the Great Lakes basin is paving the way for regional economic revitalization.