



# Great Lakes Investments at work in **Wisconsin**



**The state of Wisconsin** – together with local communities, Indigenous Nations, nongovernmental organizations, business and industry – 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 Wisconsin’s economy, environment and quality of life. These activities will benefit us today as well as the next generation of Wisconsin residents who will look to the Great Lakes as an important resource to support their social and economic well-being.

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

The Great Lakes have profound effects on Wisconsin’s environment and culture, providing water for manufacturing, shipping goods and commodities, commercial and sport fishing, and waterborne transportation and recreation.

Lakes Michigan and Superior provide:

- **drinking water** for more than **1.6 million** Wisconsin residents;
- **recreational fishing opportunities** that provide more than **20,000 jobs**, generating more than **\$2.6 billion** annually in economic benefits statewide;
- **a marine economy** supporting over **2,200 businesses** and nearly **50,000 jobs** directly tied to the Great Lakes that contribute **\$2.9 billion** to Wisconsin’s GDP;
- **harbors and marinas** that support **34,000 jobs** and **\$8.4 billion** in economic activity from recreational boating statewide;
- **the impetus for capital investments for ports, terminals, and waterway infrastructure** totaling more than **\$200 million** since 2018; and
- **a maritime transportation** network that handles more than **30 million tons of cargo** annually, generating almost **6,800 jobs** and more than **\$2 billion** in economic activity.

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

## Investing in Wisconsin’s Communities

The **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative** (GLRI) is supporting the implementation of a comprehensive cleanup plan that has been broadly endorsed by the region’s governors, Indigenous Nations, cities, conservation groups, business and industry. Established in 2009, the GLRI builds on years of work to identify solutions to key problems facing the Great Lakes, including addressing the impacts of aquatic invasive species, cleaning up contaminated sediments, controlling polluted runoff, restoring degraded wetlands and conserving and enhancing fish and wildlife resources.

Additionally, federal legislation enacted over the last several years has brought further investments into the Great Lakes region. Notably, the **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act** (IIJA) and the **Inflation Reduction Act** (IRA) fund projects that upgrade drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, improve our maritime transportation network, enhance climate resilience and support conservation efforts in the region.

## Economic Benefits from Restoring the Great Lakes

Restoring the Great Lakes advances our region's broader strategy to create jobs, stimulate economic development and invest in freshwater resources and waterfront communities. A research team led by the Great Lakes Commission coordinated a study that found every dollar of federal spending on GLRI projects between 2010 and 2016 will produce \$3.35 in additional economic activity in the region through 2036. Another study by The Brookings Institution found that fully implementing the Great Lakes restoration strategy would generate \$80 billion to \$100 billion in benefits, including:

- **\$6.5 billion to \$11.8 billion** in direct benefits from [tourism, fishing and recreation](#);
- **\$50 million to \$125 million** in reduced costs to [municipalities](#); and
- **\$16.1 billion to \$26.5 billion** in benefits to the region's [largest metropolitan areas](#), including up to **\$1.5 billion to \$2.3 billion** for the [Milwaukee](#) metro area alone.

## Improving and Protecting the Great Lakes

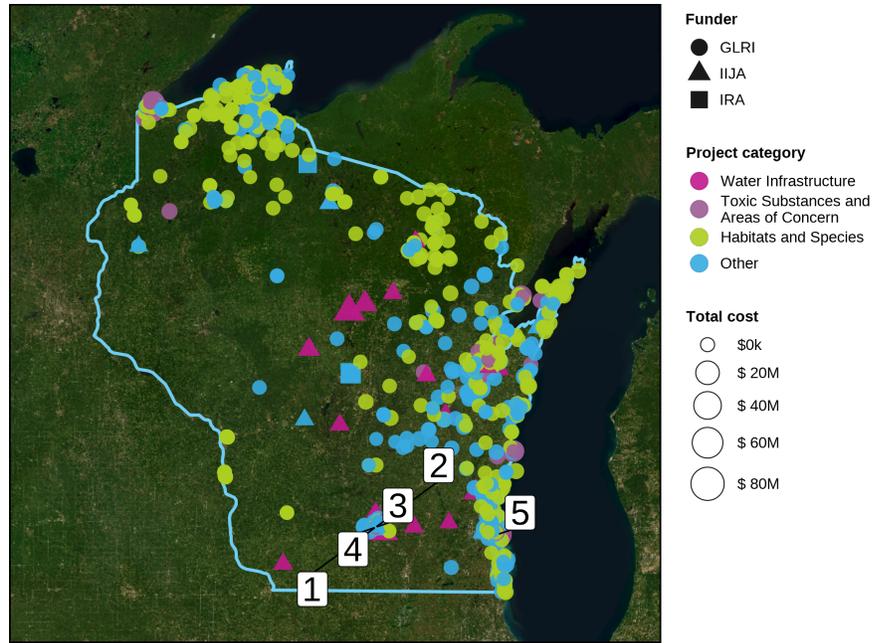
The GLRI builds on state and local efforts to solve problems facing the Great Lakes. GLRI funding supports [Wisconsin's five Areas of Concern \(AOCs\)](#), including [Lower Menominee River](#), which was delisted in 2020, and [Sheboygan River](#), for which all management actions necessary for delisting have been completed. Additionally, [Wisconsin's Great Lakes Strategy](#) outlines further actions needed to restore Wisconsin's Great Lakes, such as managing water use and water transfers out of the basin, preventing the introduction of invasive species, cleaning up contaminated sites and controlling pollution from nonpoint sources.

# The State of Wisconsin

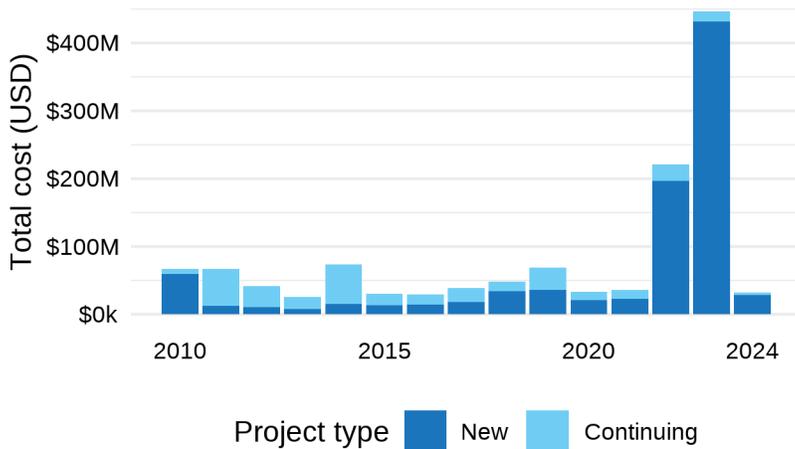
As of 2024, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) have funded 1,312 projects within the State of Wisconsin, 423 of which have received additional funding after their first year. IRA and IIJA funding included in this report and in the Investment Tracker reflect only those programs directly related to Great Lakes Commission priorities.

The top-funded projects in the state are numbered in the map and detailed in the table below.

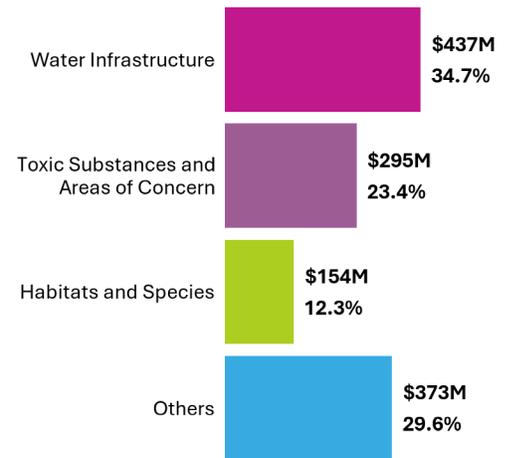
Learn more about these and other projects across the Great Lakes states at [investments.glc.org](https://investments.glc.org).



Total amount funded per year



Funding per category



Top-funded projects - Wisconsin

#	Funder	Year	Project title	Recipient	Total funded
1	IIJA	2023	Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	\$81,203,000
2	IIJA	2023	Clean Water State Revolving Fund	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	\$61,986,100
3	IIJA	2022	Capitalization Grants for Clean Water State Revolving Funds	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	\$52,927,600
4	IIJA	2023	Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	\$48,319,000
5	IIJA	2023	Geographic Programs - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative	Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District	\$40,000,000

Note: This report was automatically generated using data from U.S. federal government databases. Locations are approximate. See [investments.glc.org](https://investments.glc.org) for more information.