



Priorities for Sustaining Great Lakes Restoration and Economic Revitalization

A Joint Agenda for the Great Lakes Region • March 2018

Restoring and protecting the Great Lakes is an enduring, bipartisan priority for the people of the Great Lakes region and their elected leaders. Our organizations present these priorities to sustain progress and maintain the Great Lakes as an economic engine and environmental treasure.

Fully fund the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

The GLRI is producing results and creating jobs by cleaning up contaminated sites, addressing threats from Asian carp and other invasive species, preventing polluted runoff that causes toxic algae, restoring habitat for valuable fish and wildlife and paving the way for economic development. Congress has formally authorized the program at \$300 million annually and strong, bipartisan support continues among regional leaders. Much work remains and Congress and the president should sustain this successful program. *Appropriate \$300 million for the GLRI in FY 2019 to advance restoration and protection of our Great Lakes.*

Maintain federal agency capacity to support long-term protection and management of the Great Lakes

Effective management and protection of the Great Lakes depends on the region's robust partnership with federal agencies and programs. The GLRI is a critical program for accelerating protection and restoration efforts, but it does not supplant core federal programs that provide a platform for collective Great Lakes efforts. Base agency budgets for important Great Lakes programs must be maintained at federal agencies such as U.S. EPA, NOAA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers and others to ensure continued progress toward restoration objectives and to serve as a foundation for long-term programs and initiatives. *Maintain funding for base agency programs that protect the Great Lakes.*

Strengthen conservation programs in the new Farm Bill

Agricultural conservation programs are critical for building partnerships with the farm community to protect water quality and enhance wildlife habitat in the Great Lakes region. They help farmers keep nutrients on the land and are vital for preventing harmful algal blooms, which are a persistent threat to public health and drinking water safety. The 2018 Farm Bill should maintain, strengthen and strategically target conservation programs that protect the Great Lakes and support a healthy farm economy. *Maintain and strengthen conservation programs authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill to ensure they meet farmer demand to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.*

Invest in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure

Aging drinking water infrastructure threatens our region's future prosperity and the health of our citizens. We face an urgent need to safeguard drinking water sources and modernize drinking water systems. Aging and inadequate sewer systems release sewage and stormwater into the Great Lakes each year, closing beaches and threatening public health. *Boost funding for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act program (WIFIA); encourage more green infrastructure; and promote policies and incentives that increase access to water infrastructure financing and ensure affordable water to all residents.*

Protect the Great Lakes from aquatic invasive species

Strong federal leadership is needed to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species that threaten the environmental and economic health of the Great Lakes. *Fully fund efforts under the Asian Carp Action Plan to prevent the introduction of Asian carp; and support regional and state programs to prevent and control invasive species, including the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's sea lamprey control program.*

Strengthen the Great Lakes navigation system

The Great Lakes navigation system is vital to our region's economy. Infrastructure for commercial navigation and recreational boating must be maintained and upgraded. Secure and resilient navigation structures are needed to ensure reliable access to raw materials that are vital for manufacturing nationwide. *Provide funding to maintain and upgrade commercial ports, locks and other navigation infrastructure and recreational harbors using ecologically protective measures.*



Great Lakes Commission



Healing Our Waters®
Great Lakes Coalition



Great Lakes
Fishery Commission



Great Lakes and
St. Lawrence Cities Initiative



Chippewa Ottawa
Resource Authority



Council of
Great Lakes Industries



GREAT LAKES METRO CHAMBERS COALITION

Great Lakes Metro
Chambers Coalition

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