



Michigan's Great Lakes Protection and Restoration Update November 2009

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An Update from Lt. Governor John Cherry

I have again asked the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Office of the Great Lakes to provide this update on Michigan's efforts to implement the MI-Great Lakes Plan. It has been an exciting past several months for Michigan and the Great Lakes region with Congress approving \$475 million for President Barack Obama's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) for Fiscal Year 2010. In addition, many important stimulus-funded projects are getting off the ground such as the Muskegon Lake habitat restoration project which received \$10 million under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) habitat restoration program. These dollars will represent a significant boost to our economy over the next several months and future years of the GLRI.

We encourage you to visit U.S. EPA's website at www.epa.gov/greatlakes/glri for the GLRI to obtain information about the Initiative and possible funding opportunities for projects in your watershed. I invite you to review the information provided and share with us your thoughts as we move forward with Michigan's approach to prioritize Michigan's Great Lakes protection and restoration actions by emailing DEQ-GreatLakesRestoration@michigan.gov. You may now also find latest information on Michigan's Great Lakes protection and restoration efforts at www.michigan.gov/deqgreatlakes, click on Protection and Restoration.

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Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Update

GLRI Funding Approved

In late October, Congress approved the full \$475 million proposed by President Obama for a new Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) for Fiscal Year 2010. The President recently signed the budget bill into law on October 31, 2009. It is anticipated that in Fiscal Year 2010, the GLRI funding will specifically be targeted at the following priorities:

- \$147 million for cleaning up toxic substances and Areas of Concern (AOCs).
- \$60 million for preventing or removing aquatic invasive species.
- \$98 million for improving nearshore health/preventing nonpoint source pollution.
- \$105 million for restoring and protecting habitat and wildlife.
- \$65 million for evaluating and monitoring progress.

EPA RFP Anticipated Soon

In addition to the increased funding made available through existing federal agencies and programs to target these priorities, a significant part of the funding is expected to be made available through a new grants process to aid non-federal partners in Great Lakes protection including states, tribes, local units of government, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

The long anticipated U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Request for Proposals (RFP) is expected to provide over \$200 million in grants and be issued by the end of November. Once the RFP is issued, the U.S. EPA has indicated they will host webinars at which the RFPs will be discussed and questions will be answered. It's expected that upon release, there will be a minimum of 60 days for applications to be submitted to the U.S. EPA.

Getting Ready

In August, U.S. EPA staff, including Cam Davis, Senior Advisor to the Administrator, came to Michigan to hear public comments on the GLRI and to meet with state agency staff to discuss the GLRI grants process.

Initially, you may have heard that states were being encouraged by the U.S. EPA to submit large "bundled" applications for funding to address specific geographic or focus areas. More recently, it's become less clear that U.S. EPA will include the "bundled" approach during this year's RFP process. As a starting point, it shouldn't be assumed that all local projects will be submitted to U.S. EPA by state agencies or that state agencies will have the capacity to provide technical assistance for all local projects as they are being developed.

Until the U.S. EPA releases their RFP, there will be many unanswered questions about this process, in particular the role of states in putting forward proposals. We understand that this uncertainty has created some confusion and apprehension for local groups, as it has for state agencies.

While some of Michigan's proposed projects for GLRI funding will be completed by state agencies, many more will result in funding opportunities for local groups through competitive grants in 2010. This funding represents an opportunity to build from our existing partnerships and develop new and broad reaching collaborations.

State Agencies Preparation

During the past months, at the request of the Lt. Governor, the Office of the Great Lakes has been working to coordinate state activities under the GLRI. We have coordinated state agency partner discussions and have joined other agencies staff in meetings with many stakeholder groups to further develop our vision for this funding that is outcome based and targeted toward the most significant stressors that are affecting the health of the Great Lakes.

We are further refining specific priorities that will address our vision and hope to make public very soon a list of specific priorities for each focus area in the first year of funding. In addition, when the RFP is released, we can further comment on the role the state will assume related to local projects.

Preparations by Other Great Lakes Partners

As we await the release of the RFP for GLRI funding by EPA which will fully reveal the details and scope of funding possibilities for programs and projects in Michigan, we

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encourage local project supporters to seek out partners and further develop proposal ideas.

While specifics of the RFP aren't known, we believe it would be beneficial for any project to:

- Identify measurable outcomes for their project.
- Develop broad collaborative approaches for projects.
- Develop projects that are based in the recommendations of existing plans, including:
 - o the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy.
 - o the EPA's Multi-Year Action Plan for the GLRI.
 - o the MI-Great Lakes Plan developed last year.
 - o Lakewide Management Plans.
 - o Local AOC Remedial Action Plans.

For more information about the U.S. EPA-led Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, visit www.epa.gov/greatlakes/glri. For information about Michigan's Great Lakes protection and restoration efforts, visit www.michigan.gov/deqgreatlakes or to provide input on Michigan's proposals or inform us of projects you intend to submit, E-mail DEQ-GreatLakesRestoration@michigan.gov.

The Green Jobs for Blue Waters Initiative Update

Lt. Governor John D. Cherry Jr, while on an investment mission to Israel in November, secured commitments for two pilot projects that will promote diversifying Michigan's economy through the development and implementation of water technology.

The first commitment came from the Israeli company EPC Ltd. Onsite Wastewater Solutions (EPC) to locate pilot projects in Oakland County coordinated with the state of Michigan and Oakland County Public Works Commissioner John McCullough. The projects will be designed to help small communities deal with wastewater issues in an innovative way. The goal of this decentralized approach will be to improve water quality, reduce energy costs, and help communities with local economic development efforts.

The second commitment came from EMEFCY to locate a pilot project in Michigan developing energy generation directly from wastewater using technology which can be used in municipal waste water treatment plants, the food processing industry and in the agricultural community for confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs)

The Green Jobs for Blue Waters Initiative is one of the state's economic diversification initiatives that targets the growing water technology sector. The initiative focuses on municipal, industrial, agricultural, and residential water use with the goal of assuring clean and sustainable water resources for the state.

Lt. Governor Urges for Swift Action on Asian Carp

Recently, Lt. Governor John Cherry strongly urged that action be taken to prevent the spread of Asian Carp into the Great Lakes in his letter to Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of Civil Works. The proposed measures are in response to the emerging threat of Asian carp which could migrate into the Great Lakes should certain measures not be taken.

In his letter, the Lt. Governor stressed that swift action is essential to the environmental and economic health of the Great Lakes region. Previous invasive species, such as the Zebra Mussel and Round Goby, have adversely affected the watershed in the past. Similarly, Asian Carp have demonstrated the ability to out-compete native fish for food, thereby threatening a \$4.5 billion fishing industry and changing how recreational boaters, anglers, and tourists relate to the Great Lakes.

In order to prevent such consequences, several temporary measures have been proposed. These include finishing an electrical canal barrier that deters Asian Carp passage into the watershed, completing safety studies that will allow the barrier to work at full potential, and constructing a physical barrier that prevents migration during times of flooding. Additionally, the Lt. Governor has called for permanent



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solutions to prevent the dispersal of aquatic invasive species. For more information on the Asian Carp rapid response measures or the electronic dispersal barrier, visit www.seagrant.wisc.edu/AIS/Default.aspx?tabid=393.

Grant Awarded to Enhance Phragmites Control Efforts in Lake St. Clair Watershed

Ducks Unlimited has recently received a \$550,000 grant from the National Coastal Wetland Conservation to conduct a marsh restoration project to control Phragmites expansion in the Lake St. Clair watershed in partnership with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). This marsh restoration project is part of a four-year cooperative effort to assess, evaluate, monitor, and restrict Phragmites expansion throughout the St. Johns Marsh and other Lake St. Clair wetlands. In addition, this project will result in reducing the adverse social, economic, and environmental effects associated with invasive wetland grasses in the St. John's marsh. Proper implementation of control activities will aid in the protection of wetland ecosystems, native vegetation, habitat diversity, and property values.

Treatment efforts will include both helicopter and ground-based approaches, requiring a combination of herbicides followed by burning or mowing. Geographic Information System (GIS) aerial mapping systems will gauge the effectiveness of control by analyzing the earlier, current, and future distribution of Phragmites, and will ensure accountability within the management process.

Additionally, funds will be used to develop public education, outreach, and involvement programs related to long-term Phragmites control. The campaign will highlight activities that educators, property owners, and other residents of the Lake St. Clair watershed can engage in to help control their spread. For more information about this project, contact Ernie Kafcas, MDNR at 586-465-4771.

International Upper Great Lakes Study Announces Release Date for Report on St. Clair River

The International Upper Great Lakes Study (IUGLS) recently announced that the report "Impacts on Upper Great Lakes Water Levels: St. Clair River" will be released on December 1. The International Joint Commission (IJC) launched the Study in 2007 to examine whether potential ongoing changes, such as erosion, in the St. Clair River may be affecting water levels in the upper Great Lakes.

A draft report was released on May 1 for public comment and 17 public meetings were held throughout the region on both sides of the border. The public comment period closed on August 1, and IUGLS scientists and engineers are preparing responses to all the questions and comments raised by the public.

The report will reflect a thorough Study Board review and analysis of public comments, peer review and additional research. Once the IJC receives the report in December, commissioners will hold public hearings prior to making recommendations to the federal governments.

Visit www.iugls.org to review the draft report, read the many technical documents that support the report findings, and to watch recordings of the public meetings. The second phase of the Study to examine potential improvements to the regulation plan for Lake Superior outflows is already well underway with a report expected in 2012. This information was obtained from a press release issued by the International Joint Commission on September 23, 2009, "International Upper Great Lakes Study Announces Release Date for Report on St. Clair River." For more information, contact Mr. John Nevin at 202-256-1368 or Ms. Jill Wingfield at 734-223-3121.

Michigan Environmental Program Wins Council of State Governments' Innovations Award

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) received a 2009 Innovations Award from the Council of State Governments for its new Water Withdrawal Assessment Process. The program was developed as a result of legislation aimed at implementing provisions of the Great Lakes Compact and is designed to protect Michigan's water resources from excessive withdrawals.

Grants Promote Hands-On Learning in Northeast Michigan

Students in northeast Michigan will have the opportunity to experience hands-on Great Lakes science, thanks to a mini-grant program administered through the Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan. Teachers in the Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle Educational Service District and the Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District were recipients of the first round of grants.

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Michigan's Water Withdrawal Assessment Process requires any project that withdraws more than 100,000 gallons of water per day from Michigan waters to register with the MDEQ to determine whether their proposed project could adversely impact the water resource. To avoid a burdensome permitting process, a Web-based screening tool was developed to estimate the impact of withdrawing water from a source on the surrounding ecosystem.

If the screening tool determines the withdrawal is not likely to cause an adverse impact, the user may simply register their withdrawal through the program and proceed with their project without further contact with the MDEQ. If the proposed withdrawal is in a sensitive stream area, or the tool indicates there is an increased likelihood of an adverse impact, the user is referred to the MDEQ for a site specific review.

The Innovations Awards Program was established in 1986 to bring greater visibility to exemplary state programs and practices throughout the country. The award program highlights new state programs that find creative and effective solutions that address a significant regional issue.

The grant-funded projects will allow students to learn about the Great Lakes by studying watersheds and water quality, monitoring fish, growing their own lunch food in a school garden, and developing nature trails in a state park.

This was the first round of grant awards. Additional participating schools have the opportunity to apply for mini-grants over the next 20 months.

This information was obtained from a press release issued by the Michigan Sea Grant on October 20, 2009, "Grants to Promote Hand-On Learning in NE Michigan." To read the full release or for more information visit www.miseagrant.umich.edu/news/2009/25-grants-promote-learning.html or contact Brandon Schroeder, Michigan Sea Grant Northeast Michigan Extension Educator at 989-984-1056.





Keweenaw River Lighthouse at Mclain State Park, Houghton County, Michigan, Travel Michigan

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Recovery Act Funding Announcements

This information provides an update on specific projects that have received funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 for projects that will protect and restore Michigan's Great Lakes and waterways.

Habitat and Species Restoration

Stimulus Grant Awarded for the Muskegon Lake AOC Habitat Restoration Project

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has awarded \$10 million under ARRA to the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) for a major wetland and wildlife habitat restoration project on Muskegon Lake, Michigan. The Muskegon Lake is identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as one of 43 Areas of Concern (AOCs) in the Great Lakes for its legacy of toxic contaminants.

Partnering with the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, the GLC will coordinate the restoration of some 10,000 feet of shoreline "hardened" over several decades by broken concrete, foundry slag, sheet metal, and other materials. The project will also remove more than 180,000 tons of degraded lake fill to improve aquatic habitat for fish and other species.

In addition to the environmental benefits, the project will provide a needed economic boost to the Muskegon County economy. The project is projected to generate almost 40,000 labor hours to support 125 jobs, largely in engineering and construction. Design and engineering work for the project was initiated in September, with construction beginning as early as November. For more information on the Muskegon Lake Restoration Project, go to www.glc.org/announce/09/06muskegon.html or contact Heather Braun, GLC, at 734-971-9135.

Michigan Receives U.S. Forest Service Funds for Invasive Species Control

The U.S. Forest Service has awarded \$2.7 million to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) under the ARRA for invasive species control projects in Michigan. This funding will target priority invasive species projects on both public and private lands. Invasive species are a major threat to native wildlife, plants, and ecosystems. They can out-compete native species thereby reducing diversity and altering ecosystem structure, composition, and function.

The MDNR Forest, Mineral, and Fire Management Division will utilize a portion of this funding to address high threat invasive species projects in Ecological Reference Areas (ERAs) on state forest land. ERAs are high quality examples of functioning natural communities, which serve as models of ecological benchmarks within the state. One project will target controlling leafy spurge and spotted knapweed in the Shakey Lakes region of Menominee County, which contains high quality oak barrens in the Upper Peninsula. A portion of funds are also being dedicated to address oak wilt, a destructive disease that kills oaks rapidly, in the Northern Lower Peninsula.

In addition, the MDNR State Parks Stewardship Program will receive one-third of the funds to control invasive plants on nearly 40 state parks. The Stewardship Program will implement projects ranging from controlling buckthorn on Algonac State Park's rare lakeplain prairies to controlling a variety of invasive plants in Wilderness State Park restoring habitat for the piping plover, a federally endangered bird.

The MDNR Wildlife Division will be using remaining funds to target high-threat invasive species on state game and wildlife areas and private lands. A portion of the funds will treat several infestations of black swallow-wort, a species

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just coming into Michigan that has potential for widespread destructive impacts to forested and open ecosystems. Other projects include: cooperative efforts to control garlic mustard at Cut River Bridge in the Upper Peninsula, treat infestations of phragmites along 222 miles of shoreline in the Grand Traverse region, and introduce spotted knapweed bio-control agents.

A majority of the work will be completed by contractors, resulting in the creation of hundreds of Michigan jobs. Control projects will begin this winter with the majority of work concluding by September 2010. For more information about this project, contact Sue Tangora, MDNR, at 517-373-1263.

Nearshore Health

Update on MDEQ Issuance of Clean Water State Revolving Funds

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is using nearly all the \$168 million Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) capitalization grant made available through the ARRA for principal forgiveness, thereby allowing more municipalities to participate in the program than could without the ARRA funding. These projects improve water quality and provide jobs for Michigan citizens. Forty projects have been tendered ARRA-supported loans to date, committing \$78.6 million of the available funds. The MDEQ is currently reviewing applications for an additional 27 CWSRF projects, with loan closings scheduled for January of next year that will receive the remaining ARRA funds.

To date, 12 Drinking Water Revolving Fund (DWRF) projects have received ARRA funding, utilizing \$34.1 million of the \$64.8 million made available to Michigan. Seventeen additional DWRF applications will receive loans in January from Michigan's remaining ARRA DWRF funds. For more information contact, Chip Heckathorn, MDEQ, at 517-373-4725.

Toxic Pollutants

MDEQ Awards Seven Stimulus Grants for Clean Diesel Activities

On October 16, 2009, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) announced that more than \$1.5 million in grants were awarded under

the Michigan Clean Diesel Recovery and Reinvestment Project, a state stimulus grant project funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) of 2009. More than \$300 million in Recovery Act funding was made available to states through the U.S. EPA's National Clean Diesel Campaign (Clean Diesel) and the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) program.

The "Clean Diesel" campaign was launched by the U.S. EPA to encourage owners and operators of diesel engine vehicles and equipment to find ways to upgrade their engines so that less efficient diesel engines are retired and cleaner burning diesel engines and technologies are used.

The seven entities receiving Recovery Act grant awards under the Michigan Clean Diesel Recovery and Reinvestment Project are:

- Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority of Detroit-Nicholson Terminal and Dock for the repower of certified marine engines and aerial lifts (\$141,700).
- Detroit Wayne County Port Authority of Detroit Waterfront Petroleum Terminal Company for the repower of certified propulsion marine engines, certified engine generator sets, and shore pumps (\$309,913).
- Mass Transit Authority of Flint for the certified engine repower of urban transit buses (\$162,705).
- Okemos Public Schools for the purchase and installation of exhaust control retrofit devices for a variety of statewide school buses (\$153,964).
- Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision for engine repowers of non-road construction equipment, as well as short haul on-road vehicles, and marine ferry engines. This project will also incorporate idle reduction technology in tire loaders and exhaust control retrofit devices on high-way vehicles (\$370,367).
- Whiteline Express, Ltd. to install idle reduction auxiliary power units on their long haul truck fleet (\$79,200).
- Zeeland Public Schools to replace diesel engine school buses with propane powered school buses (\$309,648).

Each project will apply U.S. EPA or California Air Resources Board-verified diesel engine emissions reduction technology solutions.

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Other ARRA Funding Announcements

This information provides a summary of funding announcements under ARRA for Michigan projects that will protect and restore Michigan's Great Lakes and waterways.

Nearshore Health

\$65 Million – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
– Michigan Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Projects - The funding will allow rural communities in Michigan to provide safe drinking water and improve water treatment facilities for their citizens.

\$213,000 – U.S. EPA – Drinking Water Infrastructure
- This funding will be used to provide safe drinking water and improve water treatment facilities in two Michigan tribal communities.

- Bay Mills Indian Community – \$190,000 for Pump Upgrades
- Hannahville Indian Community - \$22,000 for Pump Upgrades

Toxic Pollutants

\$7.1 Million – MDEQ – Leaking Underground Storage Tanks - The funds will be used for overseeing assessment and cleanup of leaks from underground storage tanks or directly paying for assessment and cleanup of leaks from federally regulated tanks where the responsible party is unknown, unwilling or unable to finance, or the cleanup is an emergency response.

Sustainability

\$1.9 Million – Department of Energy (DOE) - Office of Electricity Delivery and Reliability Announces 3 New Wind Energy Projects in Michigan - Michigan has received funding for three projects for wind turbine research, and testing and transmission analysis, planning, and assessments. These projects will help address market and deployment challenges including wind turbine research and testing and transmission analysis, planning, assessments.

Supporting Wind Turbine Research and Testing

- \$745,189 - Dow Corning Corporation - Lifetime Lubricating Fluid for Gearboxes to Increase Efficiency and Durability of Wind Turbine Drive Trains (Midland, MI)
- \$748,002 - Michigan Aerospace Corporation - Turbine

Reliability and Operability Optimization Through the Use of Direct Detection LIDAR (Ann Arbor, MI)

Transmission Analysis, Planning and Assessments

- \$413,534 - Regents of the University of Michigan - Techniques for Voltage Control and Transient Stability Assessment (Ann Arbor, MI)

\$14.9 Million – DOE – Clean Cities program – Ypsilanti awarded grant to support clean fuels, vehicles, and infrastructure development.

Other Funding Opportunities

The Michigan Energy, Labor and Economic Growth's Bureau of Energy Systems promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy resource development to Michigan's residents, businesses and public institutions. For information about funding opportunities visit, www.michigan.gov/energyoffice.

For information about ARRA grant opportunities or funding announcements visit the state of Michigan's Recovery website at www.michigan.gov/recovery.

U.S. EPA's Environmental Education Division (EED), Office of Children's Health Protection and Environmental Education is requesting grant applications under the Environmental Education Grant program. This program supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. Applications are due December 15, 2009. For more information visit www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html.



This newsletter was prepared by and edited by Emily Finnell of the Office of the Great Lakes. Some of the information presented was obtained from other sources as noted. For more information on the activities of the Office of the Great Lakes visit www.michigan.gov/deqgreatlakes, E-mail DEQ-GreatLakesRestoration or contact:

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