



**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY  
AREAS OF CONCERN PROGRAM**

**GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORT**

*The state is authorized to provide grant assistance pursuant to  
funding provided by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative*



\*The Heritage Landing restoration site on Muskegon Lake in Muskegon, MI. after habitat restoration.

**MICHIGAN AREAS OF CONCERN PROGRAM  
GRANT OPPORTUNITY  
FOR PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL  
JUNE 30, 2025**

## INTRODUCTION

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is providing grant funding to support public advisory councils (PAC) in Michigan's 11 remaining Great Lakes [Areas of Concern](#) (AOC). This funding is intended to support activities of the PACs in their role of advising EGLE on implementation of the AOC Program. This grant program is funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI); funding is provided through EGLE by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO).



Figure 1. Map of Michigan's Areas of Concern

## **BACKGROUND**

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) between the United States and Canada established the Great Lakes AOC Program. A total of 43 Great Lakes AOCs has been formally recognized where 1 or more of 14 beneficial uses have been identified as impaired. Remedial Action Plans (RAP) were prepared and are being implemented for each AOC. The RAPs take a comprehensive, ecosystem approach to restoring and protecting beneficial uses in the AOCs. Public involvement is a key component of the process. Community-based PACs have been established for each AOC to facilitate public participation in the RAP process, identify key issues, help develop cleanup goals, and assist in guiding the development and implementation of restoration activities. In 2009, the President proposed, and Congress approved funding for the GLRI, an unprecedented, multi-year program to restore the Great Lakes. The GLRI strategically targets urgent problems facing the Great Lakes – including restoring degraded AOCs – by providing funding for a number of critical programs and activities. The USEPA has developed a series of five-year action plans to direct the work under the GLRI. The current [GLRI Action Plan](#) is online.

Currently, 11 AOCs are located completely or partially within Michigan's jurisdiction (Figure 1). Michigan's AOC Program is administered by EGLE in cooperation with local communities and other state and federal agencies. For each AOC, USEPA has requested that EGLE prepare and submit Management Action Lists. These Management Action Lists describe the actions required in each AOC to restore beneficial uses which allows the removal of Beneficial Use Impairments (BUI) and eventually the delisting of AOCs. These Management Action Lists are prepared by EGLE in consultation with the local PACs and submitted to USEPA for approval.

## **FUNDING**

### Sources and Availability

Funding for this program is through a GLRI Management Assistance Cooperative Agreement between the USEPA and EGLE. Up to \$1.1 million is available for all Michigan AOCs for a period of two years. Funding is contingent on the continuation of funds being provided by the USEPA to EGLE through the GLRI Management Assistance Cooperative Agreement.

### Minimum and Maximum Funding Amounts

The minimum request is \$5,000 in grant funds. While there is no specific maximum limit on the grants, individual awards are expected to not exceed an approximate total of \$100,000 over the approximate two-year life of the grant at \$50,000 per year. Again, funding is conditional on the continued funding from the USEPA to EGLE.

## Schedule

There is no specific due date for grant applications; however, PACs are encouraged to submit applications by September 30, 2025. Applications may be submitted when they are completed, and grants will be issued individually rather than on a batch basis. If applications are delayed, they may be subject to limits on funding as the available funds are committed to other grantees. The grants are anticipated to be awarded through a period of about two years. The grant period must end by August 31, 2027, since PAC support grants cannot extend beyond the grant period of the current GLRI Management Assistance Cooperative Agreement between EGLE and USEPA. Only work conducted between the start and end dates of the grant is eligible for reimbursement.

## Match

**There are no match requirements under this funding program.**

## Reporting and Payments

Grantees will receive payments on a reimbursement basis through the State Integrated Governmental Management Application ([SIGMA](#)). Grantees will be required to submit regular progress and Financial Status Reports (FSR) including supporting documentation for any expenses. Reporting is typically submitted quarterly. FSRs are to be prepared on a form provided by EGLE. **Final reports will be due on the last day of the grant; this ensures that resources spent preparing the final report are eligible to be reimbursed under the grant.** An amount equal to ten percent or more of the grant award will be withheld by the state until the final report is approved, and all deliverables are received.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are units of government, including state agencies, counties, cities, townships, and villages; regional planning agencies; conservation districts; public and private colleges and universities; and incorporated nonprofit organizations who are exempt from taxation under [Section 501\(c\)\(3\)](#) of the Internal Revenue Code. In addition, all applicants must:

- Provide a letter of support from the AOC's PAC chair.
- Supply one of the following:

- Proof of a successful financial audit for a period ending within the 24 months immediately preceding the date of application submittal as demonstrated by an *Independent Auditor's Report* signed by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) from a Comprehensive Annual Report.
- The audit must be of the applicant's organization. The audit date is based on the audit period and not the date of the audit or the audit letter.
- A copy of Internal Revenue Service (IRS) [form 990](#) and a written request to be exempted from the audit requirement. This option is provided for organizations that are sufficiently small that the cost of an audit would be prohibitively expensive. Exemptions must be approved by EGLE prior to a grant being issued.
- Be in good standing with EGLE programs and within the 24 months immediately preceding the application:
  - There should be no EGLE grant terminated for cause.
  - There should be no demonstrated inability to sign a contract in a timely fashion, manage a grant, or meet the obligations in a project contract with EGLE.
  - The grantee must not appear on the Federal Debarment and Suspension List. The list can be searched through the federal [System for Award and Management \(Sam.gov\)](#).
- Be a registered vendor in SIGMA or be willing to become one.
- Be registered with [MILogin](#) and log into the [EGX](#) system to view the current grant opportunities and apply.

Successful applicants and all contractors will be required to certify they are not an Iran-based business and contractors must also certify they are not an Iran-linked business as defined in [MCL 129.312](#).

#### Ineligible applicants

Federal agencies, individuals and groups without nonprofit status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, Inter-County Drainage Boards, and entities without proof of a successful audit within the 24 months preceding the application date or an approved exemption to the audit requirement are ineligible. However, these entities can serve as project partners or receive grant funds as subcontractors of eligible grantees if they are not on the Federal Debarment and Suspension List on [Sam.gov](#)

## Eligible Activities

In general, activities eligible for funding are those that support PAC efforts, operational or project-specific, in the PAC's role as advisors to EGLE in implementing the AOC Program. Such activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Convene partners / committees, hold meetings / workshops, and perform other associated tasks for PAC operations, such as:
  - Prepare and distribute meeting agendas, minutes, and summaries.
  - Post meeting and event notifications through print or electronic media.
  - Maintain PAC member distribution lists.
  - Establish and maintain local AOC web sites.
  - Arrange meeting logistics.
  - Develop and revise PAC bylaws or governance documents.
  - Recruit PAC membership consistent with PAC bylaws or governance documents.
  - Review, revise, and / or produce updated educational materials for PAC members.
  - Retain records of PAC operations including meeting minutes, grant agreements, reports, and receipts.
  - Prepare grant applications to pursue funding opportunities in support of implementing activities identified on approved Management Action Lists.
  - Prepare a final grant report and regular progress and financial reports for this grant.
- Assist EGLE in assessing BUIs including technical support such as geographic information system (GIS) mapping and analysis, survey work, monitoring, or other expert consultation.
- Implement actions or projects supporting removal of BUIs.
- Conduct AOC-related public engagement and education.
- Plan for and / or implement actions designed to expand PAC membership.
- Planning for partnering with other local organizations in order to reach all of an AOC's communities.
- Facilitate AOC delisting once all BUIs have been removed.

Note that any international travel under this grant such as cross-border travel to binational PAC meetings is only reimbursable if prior approval is obtained from the USEPA and EGLE.

### Ineligible Activities

Activities that are not eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Use of funding for light refreshments and/or meals, unless prior approval is granted.
- Any event or meeting where alcohol is served, purchased, or otherwise available as part of the event or meeting.
- Travel costs associated with Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC) meetings. These costs are reimbursed directly to SPAC members.
- Travel costs associated with the annual AOC conference. There is typically another funding mechanism available for this.
- Support for public events not related to the AOC Program.
- Activities which do not have a direct relationship to the AOC Program.

### REVIEW CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to review and assess grant applications:

- Past performance on EGLE grants.
- Ability to implement the project, including the ability to meet statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Financial stability.
- Demonstration of support from the relevant PAC.
- Degree to which the application supports the relevant RAP or Management Action List.
- Qualifications of staff assigned to carry out work under the proposal, both applicant staff and, if relevant, subrecipient staff.
- Reasonableness, necessity, and eligibility of costs in the proposed budget for the level of work proposed and for the expected benefits to be achieved.

**EGLE reserves the right to reject all or part of any work plan and to negotiate specific work products and project budgets with applicants.**

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Federal law requires that EGLE perform a risk assessment on each grant / grantee. This assessment reviews the financial, organizational, and project risks associated with each grant. If a grantee or application is deemed to be a high risk, additional restrictions may be placed on the grant including, but not limited to:

- Requirements for more frequent reporting.
- Requirements for additional documentation for reimbursement.
- Limitations on the length of the grant period.
- Increased withholding, greater than 10 percent (10%), of grant amount pending completion of work.

## FEDERAL UNIFORM GUIDANCE

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards ([Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#), Parts [200](#) and [1500](#)) will apply to all new awards including:

- Indirect costs are calculated as follows:
  - Entities with a current federally approved negotiated indirect cost rate must use their negotiated rate and are required to submit a valid negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA).
  - A *de minimis* indirect cost rate of 15 percent (15%) of the Modified Total Direct Costs must be used by entities without a current NICRA.
- Any subawards or contracts must be consistent with [General Procurement Standards \(2 CFR 200.318\)](#).

## MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROJECT PLANS (QAAP)

Projects that collect physical, chemical, biological, or social information for evaluation or project guidance will be required to submit a QAAP for approval by EGLE. QAAPs must be approved prior to the onset of data collection, therefore QAAP preparation and review should be included in the proposal schedule. **Applicants should allow up to 8 weeks for EGLE review and approval of the QAAP.**

## APPLICATIONS

EGLE has introduced a new grant management system ([EGX](#)). Grants must be applied for through EGX.

To apply for a grant under this opportunity, the applicant's organization must first register with [MILogin](#) in order to access EGX. Once an organization has completed an initial registration, other members of the organization can be assigned access to EGX. The account used to register the organization will receive an email notification of approval and then can designate access to the organizational account for additional staff once registration is complete. Once the organization's [MILogin](#) account is activated, EGX can be accessed to view current grant opportunities and apply.

**A separate step-by-step instructional document is available to guide applicants through the EGX application process.**

Information needed to apply for the grant in EGX will include organizational details (name, address, telephone), Federal ID Number, Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), SIGMA Vendor Number and Address Code, project summary, monitoring and data collection information, tasks and outcomes, and budget will all be part of the EGX application. There will be prompts to enter your full proposal through EGX. Additional information such as maps and the required PAC letters of support can be uploaded to EGX.

If organization has a NICRA, it can be uploaded into EGX.

Itemize the following project costs as described:

- Personnel Salaries & Wages – Salaries / Fringe: For each member of the project team, specify title, number of hours, hourly rate, and fringe benefit rate. If the fringe rate exceeds 40 percent (40%), provide a detailed breakdown of the fringe elements.
- Supplies / Materials – Supplies / Materials Costs: These include other eligible costs, such as project supplies, printing supplies, phone plans, postage, etc., and technology or equipment that costs less than \$10,000. Itemize and provide calculations for costs when applicable.
- Contractual – Contractual Services Costs: There are limits to costs for consultants or other contract work. Note: There is a cap on the rate that can be charged for individual consultants. Per the USEPA funding requirements: *the salary rate (excluding overhead) paid to individual consultants shall be limited to the maximum daily rate for [Senior Executive Service \(SES\) Level 4 Pay](#), to be adjusted annually. As of January 1, 2025, the limit is \$748.24 per day and \$93.53 per hour. This rate does not include transportation and subsistence costs for travel performed.* Consultant expenses exceeding these caps will not be allowed.
- Equipment / Technology – Equipment / Technology Costs: These include items with a cost of over \$10,000 each.

- Travel / Training – Travel / Training Costs: Provide a justification for travel funds requested, including approximate meeting dates and locations, number of travelers, mileage, etc. Indicate if any international travel is expected. Any international travel is only reimbursable if prior approval is obtained from EGLE and USEPA. Mileage expenses are limited to the approved federal rate identified by the [Internal Revenue Service](#). As of January 1, 2025, the rate is \$0.70 per mile.
- Other – Other Costs: Use this section for any costs that do not fit into other budget sections.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

A written letter or email of support for the application from the PAC is required and should be submitted as an attachment in EGX. An application that is submitted without a letter of endorsement from the appropriate PAC will not be considered for funding. Letters of support from other local partners are also encouraged.

Applicants are required to provide proof of a successful audit for a period ending within the 24 months immediately preceding the application due date or a copy of the most recent [IRS Form 990](#) submittal along with a request for an audit exemption explaining the reason for the exemption. Other supporting information and additional documentation may also be provided.

## QUESTIONS / ASSISTANCE

For any questions or assistance please contact Melanie Foose, Supervisor, Great Lakes Watersheds, Assessment, Restoration, and Management (GLWARM) Section, Water Resources Division (WRD), at 517-897-3244 or FooseM@Michigan.gov or the AOC Coordinator for your AOC at the information below:

- Jennifer Tewkesbury
  - Rouge River, Clinton River, Kalamazoo River
  - 517-897-3257
  - [TewkesburyJ@Michigan.gov](mailto:TewkesburyJ@Michigan.gov)
  
- Sam Todaro
  - Saginaw River / Bay, Manistique River, River Raisin
  - 517-331-2728
  - [TodaroS@Michigan.gov](mailto:TodaroS@Michigan.gov)
  
- Weston Hillier
  - Detroit River, St. Clair River, St. Marys River
  - 517-230-6487
  - [HillierW@Michigan.gov](mailto:HillierW@Michigan.gov)
  
- Stephanie Swart
  - Muskegon Lake, Torch Lake
  - 517-331-3779
  - [SwartS@Michigan.gov](mailto:SwartS@Michigan.gov)

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