

Press Release

Region 2 - New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands



EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Grants Awarded for New York

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(Buffalo, N.Y. – Sept. 23, 2010) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is making a \$20 million investment in the Great Lakes through New York State, targeting the most significant environmental problems facing the Great Lakes. These grants to 17 organizations are part of a larger group of projects throughout Great Lakes states being funded under President Barack Obama's Great Lakes Restoration initiative.

"These grants represent an critical investment in a place that is home to millions of Americans, billions of dollars in economic activity, and is by far the largest source of our nation's fresh surface water," said Cameron Davis, Senior Advisor to U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson in the announcement at the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes conference in Buffalo, NY. "President Obama has made protecting the Great Lakes a national priority. EPA is investing in a diverse network of partners to achieve a new standard of care: leaving the Great Lakes better for the next generation."

The grant recipients include tribes, state and local agencies, non-profit organizations, and colleges and universities. Among those being highlighted today:

- **Be Green in the Great Lakes.** This project will encourage homeowners and land care providers to adopt organic land care practices that reduce water use and avoid the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) will initiate an education and outreach program that will disseminate brochures and web content, hold training sessions, and introduce NYSDEC's "Be Green Organic Yards NY" program. Grant recipient is the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Grant amount is \$315,223.
- **Buffalo River Area of Concern Habitat Restoration – Riverbend.** This project will result in the design, implementation, and monitoring of a restoration project at the Riverbend site on the Buffalo

River. This is a former industrial site and these efforts will help restore the area's natural habitat. The work will include 2,800 feet of river bank enhancement, plus 6.3 acres of floodplain habitat restoration. Tasks include river bank regrading to reduce soil erosion, planting native trees and shrubs, and removal of invasive plant species. Two years of vegetation surveys and monitoring will then occur. Grant recipient is the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper. Grant amount is \$657,245.

- St. Lawrence River Area of Concern and St. Lawrence River Sturgeon Restoration (two projects). The first project will focus on four beneficial use impairments (restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption, degradation of fish and wildlife populations, bird/animal deformities or reproductive problems, and loss of fish and wildlife habitat) in the St. Lawrence River, Massena, N.Y., Area of Concern. Specifically, this project will monitor furbearers, turtles and birds, and conduct tissue analysis of wildlife to assist decision-makers considering restrictions on wildlife consumption. Grant amount is \$1,229,415. The second project will advance efforts to restore Lake Sturgeon in the St. Lawrence River, Massena, N.Y., Area of Concern, by investigating suitable spawning habitat, water quality, and causes of reproductive failure. Project amount is \$723,107. Grant recipient is the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe.

Other awards are being published on the multi-agency website at <http://greatlakesrestoration.us>.

The Great Lakes provide some 30 million Americans with drinking water and underpin a multi-billion dollar economy. EPA is awarding \$475 million in grants for aggressive community-based efforts to address five priorities:

- Cleaning up toxics and toxic hot spots around the Great Lakes.
- Combating invasive species.
- Promoting nearshore health by protecting watersheds from polluted runoff.
- Restoring wetlands and other habitats.
- Accountability and working with strategic partners on outreach.

In addition to EPA, the federal agencies that make up the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force are:

- White House Council on Environmental Quality.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- U.S. Department of Commerce.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- U.S. Department of State.
- U.S. Department of the Army.
- U.S. Department of Interior.
- U.S. Department of Transportation.

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