

Great Lakes Restoration: Investing in a National Treasure



Regional Priorities for the Great Lakes
February 2008



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

A united Great Lakes region calls on Congress to strengthen national investment in Great Lakes restoration and protection as outlined in the *Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes*. Increased support from the Federal government is needed to implement recommendations in the Strategy and to match the significant investment of state and local governments, Tribes and private funds in Great Lakes restoration. The following highest priority actions – a subset of the Strategy recommendations – are consistent with the requests of the Governors of the Great Lakes States. We urge Congress to act on these regional priorities to address significant threats and capitalize on high-value restoration opportunities.

- **Stop Aquatic Invasive Species:** Enact comprehensive legislation such as the *National Aquatic Invasive Species Act* (S. 725) to address aquatic invasive species. If passage of a comprehensive bill is not possible in 2008, we urge Congress to strengthen and pass legislation to ensure that commercial vessels entering the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system meet uniform ballast water discharge requirements and legislation to screen species that might invade the region from non-ballast pathways. Fully fund the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to control sea lamprey and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete construction and operation of the dispersal barrier system on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.
- **Clean Up Toxic Sediments:** Reauthorize the Great Lakes Legacy Act at \$150 million annually and fully fund the Act in FY2009 to continue to clean up contaminated sediments and restore Great Lakes “toxic hot spots.”
- **Restore Great Lakes Wetlands:** Continue existing support and appropriate an additional \$28.5 million for Federal programs to partner with the States, Tribes, local governments and other non-federal partners in restoring 200,000 acres of Great Lakes wetlands. Appropriate \$16 million for the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act.
- **Protect Water Quality:** Restore funding and prevent further cuts to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (reduced by more than one-third in FY2008) by appropriating \$1.35 billion for FY2009. Great Lakes States will lose approximately \$143 million in funding this year as a result of the FY2008 cuts.

***We are united as a region in asking for
congressional support for these near-term
Great Lakes priorities.***