

# Public Supports Federal Great Lakes Investments

## THE GREAT LAKES ARE IMPORTANT.

THE GREAT LAKES PROVIDE DRINKING WATER TO MORE THAN 30 MILLION PEOPLE.



**1.5 million people** depend on the Great Lakes for their jobs, which generate **\$62 billion in wages annually.**



### MOST PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT:



**TOXIC POLLUTANTS**  
79%



**UNTREATED SEWAGE**  
81%



**TOXIC ALGAL BLOOMS**  
78%



**FARM RUNOFF**  
70%



**INVASIVE SPECIES**  
76%

## FEDERAL INVESTMENTS TO RESTORE THE GREAT LAKES ARE PRODUCING RESULTS.

The federal government has invested more than \$300 million per year for seven years to restore the Great Lakes. Since 2010, the federal government has funded more than 2,900 projects around the region through a program called the **GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE**. These efforts are already producing results, including:

Restoring more than **148,000 acres** of wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Opening up more than **3,800 miles** of rivers for native fish.

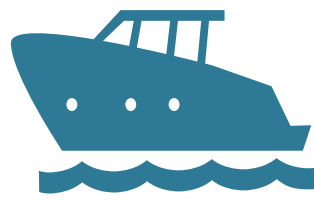
Accelerating the cleanup of toxic hotspots by delisting three formerly contaminated sites.

Helping farmers implement conservation programs on more than **1 million acres** of rural working lands.



**PEOPLE THINK FEDERAL INVESTMENTS TO RESTORE THE HEALTH OF THE GREAT LAKES ARE AN EXCELLENT OR GOOD USE OF TAX DOLLARS.**

### FEDERAL INVESTMENTS HAVE:



**Cleaned up toxic contamination** such as mercury from the mouth of the Ashtabula River near Cleveland, Ohio, which has made the area safe for fishing and boating again. **(44% excellent, 37% good)**

**Restored a native dune habitat** at a Lake Michigan beach north of Chicago, which improved water quality and allowed the beach to remain open for swimmers. **(32% excellent, 44% good)**



**Removed concrete along the banks of the Kinnickinnic River** in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and replaced it with natural vegetation. **(28% excellent, 43% good)**

## BUT THERE IS MORE WORK TO DO.

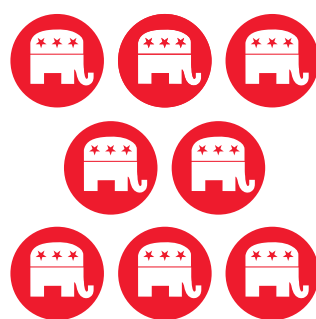
The U.S. EPA, for example, estimates that more than \$77 billion is needed over the next 20 years in the eight Great Lakes states to address issues with wastewater infrastructure, like sewer overflows into lakes.



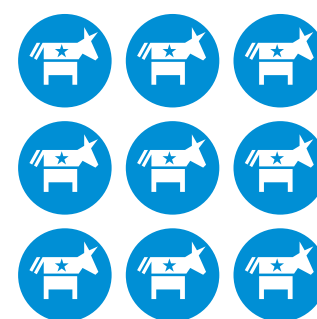
## HUGE MAJORITIES OF REPUBLICANS, DEMOCRATS AND INDEPENDENTS SUPPORT GREAT LAKES RESTORATION.

In this era of intense political party polarization, support for funding Great Lakes restoration transcends party politics.

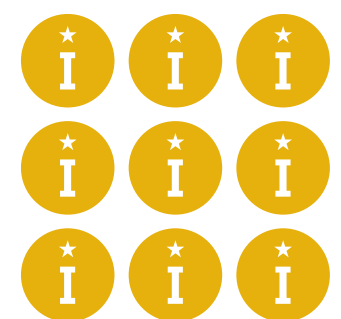
**86% OF GREAT LAKES CITIZENS SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUE SPENDING \$300 MILLION A YEAR ON GREAT LAKES RESTORATION.**



80% of Republicans



92% of Democrats

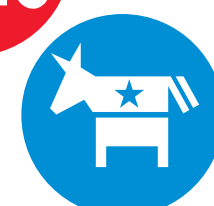
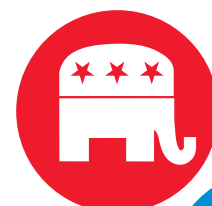


88% of Independents

Supporting the Great Lakes is a factor in how people in the region vote.



**58%** are less likely to vote for members of Congress if they hadn't supported Great Lakes funding.



**53%** are less likely to vote for presidential candidates if they hadn't supported Great Lakes funding.

The Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition is urging the U.S. Congress to maintain funding for core Great Lakes restoration efforts to protect clean drinking water, keep beaches open, and support outdoor recreation. The Coalition is also asking 2016 presidential candidates to support our Great Lakes Restoration and Protection Platform. **Learn more at [healthylakes.org](http://healthylakes.org).**