



Joint Priorities Unveiled for 2024 Great Lakes Restoration and Economic Growth

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[Ann Arbor, MI] March 04, 2024 – More than 10 united groups across the Great Lakes region unveiled their joint priorities for the restoration and economic vitality of the Great Lakes in 2024, prioritizing equity, resilience, and sustainable growth for the Great Lakes ecology and economy.

"We are proud to stand together as small businesses in the Great Lakes region to advocate for the restoration and preservation of our invaluable natural resources," said Peter Laing, Owner of MAWB. "Our joint priorities for 2024 underscore the importance of investing in initiatives that promote environmental stewardship, economic growth, and community resilience."

Building upon the successes of previous years, small businesses are advocating for robust investments in Great Lakes restoration initiatives and equitable access to clean water infrastructure. Recognizing the urgent need to address historical disparities and environmental challenges, this year's priorities reflect a collaborative effort to ensure the Great Lakes remain a source of vitality and prosperity for generations to come.

The joint priorities are endorsed by a coalition including legislators, Indigenous communities, regional agencies and others, all invested in a shared commitment to environmental stewardship, economic prosperity, and community well-being.

Key Priorities Include:

- **Capitalizing on Investments in Great Lakes Restoration:** Advocating for a minimum appropriation of \$450 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, in addition to supplemental funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA);
- **Ensuring Equitable Water Infrastructure Investments:** Urging full funding of the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds to address historic inequities and improve water quality and access across the region.;
- **Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change Impacts:** Supporting efforts to advance the Army Corps of Engineers' Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study and investing in clean energy infrastructure to mitigate climate risks and create green jobs;
- **Promoting Coordinated Regional Science Plans:** Calling for funding to support federal and regional agencies in developing integrated, binational science plans to inform decision-making and address the current and future needs of the Great Lakes;
- **Strengthening Maritime Infrastructure:** Advocating for funding to improve icebreaking capacity, maintain commercial ports, and support the construction of essential navigation infrastructure projects; and
- **Addressing Environmental Challenges:** Supporting federal actions to address harmful algal blooms, emerging contaminants, and invasive species threatening the Great Lakes ecosystem.

The [Great Lakes Business Network](#) is a network of business leaders committed to protecting the Great Lakes regions from threats to the natural environment. A fact-based, non-partisan, and focused coalition, it is co-lead by the National Wildlife Federation and Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities.