



Great Lakes Habitat Restoration

Primary Activities

NOAA is working in the Great Lakes Region to improve both the environment and the local economies. NOAA staff work with a wide array of partners to improve Great Lakes habitat and water quality. Key activities include:

- Fund and implement quality restoration projects to ensure healthy and sustainable fishery resources;
- Employ technical staff to help improve project design, ensure environmental compliance, and advance restoration techniques;
- Engage the local community and encourage stewardship of the region's coastal and riverine habitats;
- Collaborate with public, private, and non-profit partners to prioritize projects and leverage successes; and
- Use scientific monitoring to evaluate restoration project success and ensure the efficient use of tax dollars.

In 2008, NOAA initiated its Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program (GLHRP) to plan, implement, and fund coastal habitat restoration projects throughout the region. Much of NOAA's work through the program is focused on supporting community-identified restoration priorities in Areas of Concern, environmentally degraded areas within the Great Lakes basin and other waste sites.

The Program strives to demonstrate meaningful, measurable, and sustainable ecological benefits to coastal and near-shore resources by addressing habitat beneficial use impairments such as loss of fish and wildlife habitat; degraded fish and wildlife populations; and degraded benthos.

The Program includes NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP), which addresses damage due to oil spills and releases of hazardous substances in the region, including the recent Kalamazoo River oil spill. DARRP works with remedial agencies, responsible parties and others to protect and restore NOAA managed injured resources. The technical and scientific capabilities associated with the DARRP provide a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to Great Lakes coastal habitat restoration.

NOAA is committed to the restoration, conservation, management and sustainable use of the Great Lakes.

Contact:

Julie A. Sims

NOAA Restoration Center
4840 South State Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48108-9719

julie.sims@noaa.gov

Ph: 734.741.2385

www.restoration.noaa.gov

Partnering and Interagency Coordination

NOAA is currently funding three coastal restoration projects in the Great Lakes that were funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These projects, totaling more than \$16 million, are also creating jobs in a depressed economic area. Activities include creating and improving fish passage, and restoring important habitat such as freshwater wetlands and natural dune systems along the Great Lakes coast.

In 2010 and 2011, through the President's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, NOAA's Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program awarded \$15.5 million to 17 projects throughout the region. With support from NOAA, these projects will improve fish passage, clean up marine debris, restore coastal wetlands, and remove invasive species. These projects will restore more than 1,200 acres of habitat and open more than 100 miles of river for fish passage—an important step in restoring the Great Lakes.

The NOAA Restoration Center maintains strong relationships with a number of non-profit organizations. In the Great Lakes, we are working with the Great Lakes Commission, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and the National Wildlife Federation. Through these partnerships, we focus on providing climate change expertise to inform restoration planning and implementation, assisting with design and engineering, conducting on the ground restoration work, and assisting with project evaluation to inform future restoration efforts. NOAA is also working with Sustain Our Great Lakes, a public-private partnership, to sustain, restore and protect fish, wildlife and habitat in the Great Lakes basin.

Moving Forward

NOAA will continue to plan, implement, fund, and direct priority coastal habitat restoration projects throughout the Great Lakes region to address priority ecosystem issues, such as invasive species, climate change, marine debris, and other threats to fish and wildlife habitat. In addition, NOAA will continue to work with federal, state, and local partners to bring about cleanup actions at hazardous waste and oil spill sites. NOAA is also interested in fostering new and ongoing partnerships to address regional needs.

For more information on NOAA's restoration activities, please visit our website: <http://www.restoration.noaa.gov>

NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
(301) 713-0174



Volunteers work on the Muskegon Lake project.



Response to the Kalamazoo River oil spill.



A fish passage project on the Milwaukee River.