



Contact: Monica Allen
301-713-2370

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NOAA Announces \$9.2 Million to Restore Fish Habitat in Great Lakes

NOAA announced today that it has awarded about \$9.2 million to nine projects throughout the Great Lakes Region that will restore fish habitat by removing dams and barriers, constructing fish passage, restoring wetlands, removing marine debris and invasive species.

NOAA received funding from the Environmental Protection Agency through President Obama's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to support these projects.

"Industrial activities and development have led to the habitat degradation in the Great Lakes basin," said Eric Schwaab, assistant administrator for NOAA's Fisheries Service. "These projects to restore more than 700 acres of habitat and open more than 100 miles of river for migratory fish passage, are an important step in restoring the fisheries of the Great Lakes."

Projects funded include:

- **Removal of the Campbellsport Millpond Dam (Campbellsport, Wis.)** – \$684,000 – The Village of Campbellsport will remove the Millpond Dam, opening fish passage throughout the uppermost 25 miles of the Milwaukee River and restoring approximately 22 acres of wetland and 3,000 feet of free-flowing river.
- **Erie Marsh Preserve Coastal Wetland Restoration Project (Erie, Mich.)** – \$2.5 million – The Nature Conservancy will construct and improve levees, water distribution canals, and water control structures; install a new water supply system; and build a fish passage structure. This will increase the quality and diversity of approximately 258 acres of coastal wetlands and provide additional fish spawning and rearing habitat.
- **Fordson Island Oxbow Restoration and Debris Removal (Detroit, Mich.)** – \$150,000 – Detroit Wayne County Port Authority will remove 15 metric tons of shoreline debris in and around Fordson Island. The island, located in the Rouge River just upstream of the Detroit River, is uniquely positioned as a refuge for fish and wildlife.
- **Lower Black River Fish Habitat Restoration Project (Lorain, Ohio)** – \$1.7 million – The City of Lorain, Ohio will build two fish habitat shelves, totaling more than 3,000 feet of new fish habitat, in the Black River watershed – a tributary to Lake Erie.
- **Restoring Lake Erie Hydrology and Coastal Marsh (Middle Harbor, Ohio)** – \$643,000 – Ducks Unlimited will install a culvert to establish fish access and restore the water connection to Lake Erie. At least 350 acres of submerged aquatic grasses and other native vegetation will be planted, which will provide natural and long-term flood control in the marsh.

- **Radio Tower Bay Restoration Project (Duluth, Minn.)** – \$665,000 – In the first phase of this project, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and its partner, the Minnesota Land Trust, will remove marine debris, including 460 derelict pilings, from Radio Tower Bay.
- **Restoring Native Fish Spawning Habitat in the St. Clair River Delta (St. Clair, Mich.)** – \$890,000 – Michigan Sea Grant will construct 40,000 square feet of native fish spawning habitat in the St. Clair River and connect spawning habitat to almost 14 square miles of rich, underutilized nursery area in the St. Clair delta.
- **Coastal Fisheries Habitat Restoration in the St. Lawrence River (Watertown and Alexandria Bay, N.Y.)** – \$1 million – As part of an on-going restoration effort, Ducks Unlimited will install fish passage and excavate river channels at three locations in the upper St. Lawrence River watershed in New York. The project will restore and enhance 110 acres of marsh ecosystem and fish spawning habitat.
- **Watervliet Dams Removal in the Paw Paw River (Berrien, Mich.)** – \$920,000 –The Berrien County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority will remove two concrete dams, restoring fish passage to more than 100 river miles, including 31 miles of the mainstem and tributaries of Lake Michigan.

The EPA provided the NOAA Restoration Center with funding for habitat restoration in the Great Lakes region as part of President Obama's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a collaborative effort between EPA and 15 other federal agencies with a goal of building on existing and current work to restore the Great Lakes. For more information on the Initiative and Action Plan go to www.greatlakesrestoration.us

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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On the Web:

NOAA: www.noaa.gov

GLHRP: <http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/restoration/programs/greatlakes.html>