



US Army Corps
of Engineers

News Release

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Great Lakes Wetlands and Habitat Proposal Selected by Corps of Engineers for \$1 million Funding

Washington DC – (5/1/06) – John Paul Woodley, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works announced today that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Districts located in Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago will receive \$1 million to further the efforts of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration for the protection and restoration of wetlands and coastal habitat. The Great Lakes project was the largest of five selected by Mr. Woodley from numerous proposals for the \$4.5 million of funding available for analyses of complex water resources issues within large, multijurisdictional watersheds.

The Corps' proposal for this Great Lakes project received letters of support from key regional stakeholders, including Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, the Great Lakes Commission, and the co-chairs of the Collaboration Habitat Team.

The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration is a partnership of federal, state, tribal and municipal governments that was created in December 2004 in response to Executive Order (EO) 13340 signed by President Bush in May 2004. The EO designated the resource issues of the Great Lakes as nationally significant and defined a federal policy to support local and regional efforts to restore and protect the Great Lakes ecosystem through the establishment of regional collaboration.

Over 1,500 people participated in the Collaboration, which developed a strategy for the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes by addressing eight priority issue areas: (1) Coastal health; (2) Non-point source pollution; (3) Toxic contaminants; (4) Invasive species; (5) Habitat and species; (6) Contaminated sediments/Areas-Of-Concern; (7) Indicators/information, and, (8) Sustainable development. The Collaboration Strategy was completed in December 2005.

“The Corps' \$1 million will be spent on a two-year effort to develop an implementation plan that builds upon the recommendations of the Collaboration Strategy, focusing on the Habitat/Species area. This effort will bridge the gap between the Strategy recommendations and site-specific projects for habitat protection and restoration that can be implemented through existing governmental and nongovernmental funding programs,” said Mr. Woodley.

The products of this investigation will support the identification, prioritization, and implementation of actions to protect and restore coastal wetlands and aquatic habitat in the Great Lakes region. These products will be:

- A summary of existing funding programs for protection and restoration of Great Lakes fish and wildlife habitat;

- An inventory of place-based actions to protect and restore coastal wetlands and aquatic habitat in the Great Lakes that have been proposed to federal, state, local, tribal and nongovernmental programs, but not implemented because of funding limitations;
- Performance measures for prioritizing actions based on their ecological value or benefits, and;
- An integrated analysis of potential habitat protection and restoration actions from the inventory, prioritization using the performance metrics, and cross-matching with existing governmental and nongovernmental funding programs.

The products of this effort will provide tools to agencies and organizations that manage funding programs for prioritizing potential projects and integrating with other habitat funding programs. It will also provide tools to state, tribal and local agencies and nongovernmental organizations that might sponsor or be a proponent for a site-specific habitat project to identify candidate projects and available funding programs.

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Additional information about the project can be found on the internet at www.lrd.usace.army.mil/environmental

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