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Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of \$30 Million for Great Lakes Projects in Underserved Communities

EPA's new Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant program was made possible by President Biden's Investing in America Agenda and will advance environmental justice in underserved communities across the Great Lakes

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Contact Information

EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

WASHINGTON – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of \$30 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for restoration projects that advance environmental justice in underserved and overburdened communities across the Great Lakes. Thanks to President Biden's Investing in America Agenda, EPA has published a request for applications for the newly created Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program that will fund implementation of environmental protection and restoration projects that will further the goals of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in communities with environmental justice concerns.

Many communities in the Great Lakes Basin lack the resources needed to apply for, obtain, and oversee the implementation of federal grant projects. EPA's new Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program will ease these administrative barriers by funding "principal recipients" who will help underserved communities effectively access federal funding for important local projects. In addition, this investment

will encourage even greater environmental, economic, health, and recreational benefits for underserved Great Lakes communities, including those near severely degraded sites, known as “areas of concern.”

EPA’s Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program was made possible by President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which invests \$1 billion in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to accelerate Great Lakes restoration and protection.

“The Great Lakes are national treasures that play a critical cultural, economic, and environmental role in the region and beyond,” **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. “Thanks to the President’s historic investments in America, we’re removing barriers and moving faster to advance environmental justice across communities that have been overlooked for too long. Ensuring this funding is available for environmental projects will not only protect overburdened communities but also restore and preserve our precious Great Lakes.”

“The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has dramatically accelerated the restoration and protection of the Great Lakes Basin,” **said Debra Shore, Regional Administrator of EPA’s Region 5 and Great Lakes National Program Manager**. “This new Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program builds on the additional GLRI funds provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and will allow us to assist communities wishing to collaborate in restoring historically polluted sites.”

This announcement is a part of President Biden’s Investing in America Agenda, which is growing the American economy from the bottom up and middle-out – from rebuilding our nation’s infrastructure, to driving over \$470 billion in private sector manufacturing and clean energy investments in the United States, to creating good paying jobs and building a clean-energy economy that will combat climate change and make our communities more resilient.

About the Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program

EPA has issued a request for applications and is making available up to \$30 million for the Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program. This program will select “principal recipients” that will receive funding from EPA to develop, implement, and oversee grant issuance and management programs focused on environmental restoration and protection projects for which Great Lakes underserved communities seek funding.

Qualifying non-profit organizations, institutions of higher learning (i.e., colleges and universities, including minority-serving institutions), state agencies, interstate agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes and tribal organizations, and local governments are eligible to apply as principal recipients.

EPA will consider applications from potential principal recipients interested in setting up Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Programs to fund environmental restoration and protection work on a Basin-wide basis or on a smaller, more localized basis. Projects funded through this program must improve the environmental health of the Great Lakes or Great Lakes watersheds through a variety of means, including:

- restoring, enhancing, or protecting habitat;
- reducing non-point source runoff through, e.g., green infrastructure, riparian restoration, shoreline stabilization, or other stormwater/nutrient reduction practices that will improve water quality;
- connecting aquatic resources, e.g., dam removals, culvert replacements, etc.;

- controlling or preventing invasive species; and
- providing hands-on, place-based environmental educational opportunities in the Great Lakes Basin.

EPA intends to award the principal recipient(s) up to \$20 million in funding to create a broad, basin-wide Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program and up to \$10 million in funding to create the more localized Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Programs.

Applications are being accepted through August 11, 2023. Learn more about the [Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program and the request for applications](#).

Informational Webinars

EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office will host several webinars to discuss the application process and answer questions from participants. [More information on the upcoming webinars](#).

Tools and resources for prospective grantees, including webinars, writing guidance, networking tools and helpful templates, can be found at:

- [Helpful Recipient Training](#)
- [GLRI Action Plan III \(PDF\)](#)
- [EPA Grants Award Process Webinar](#)
- [Interim General Budget Development Guidance](#)

Additional Background

Since 2010, EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) has funded more than 7,000 restoration and protection projects totaling more than \$3.5 billion.

Read more about the [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#).

Sign up for the [Great Lakes News email list](#) to get information about funding opportunities to support Great Lakes environmental work and get updates about Great Lakes environmental projects.

Email GLRI-RFA@epa.gov with questions about this funding opportunity.

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