

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Improving the Health and Vitality of the World's Largest Freshwater System

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
 State and Private Forestry



Description: The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) is a 5-year Presidential initiative that began in Fiscal Year 2010 to protect and restore the water quality and ecosystems of the Great Lakes region. Funding is provided to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which administers the program and distributes funds to Federal agencies, States, tribes, municipalities, and nongovernmental organizations. Funded projects advance the GLRI Action Plan and provide immediate, direct ecological benefits.

Key Issues:

- Clean up toxic waste
- Combat invasive species
- Protect watersheds from polluted runoff
- Restore wetlands and other habitats

Accomplishments:

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA S&PF) receives project funds to retain, restore, and expand tree canopy cover; mitigate forest lost to the emerald ash borer; reduce toxic substances in brownfields; control invasive plants; and promote the benefits of trees for water quality. In Fiscal Year 2014, NA S&PF allocated \$1.7 million in 18 grants to city, State, and nongovernmental organizations via a competitive grant program.

To date, 110 projects have been awarded; when completed, more than 134,000 trees will have been planted. Since the initiative was funded, nearly 50 grants have been closed and validated with 67,912 trees planted. Using the national benefits calculator for the Midwest, these trees are estimated to intercept more than 4 million gallons of stormwater annually for the first 5 years. Results include these:

- *Grand Rapids EAB Recovery:* The city planted 1,850 trees along streets to restore canopy cover lost to EAB infestation. An additional 500 trees were planted along the Grand River in collaboration with the Friends of Grand Rapids Parks using more than 780 trained volunteers. Together these trees will intercept more than 138,000 gallons of stormwater annually for the first 5 years.
<http://urbanforestproject.com>
- *Muskegon, Michigan:* More than 2,000 hybrid poplar trees were planted to support phytoremediation of brownfield sites at a Farmers Market, Green Acres Park, Shoreline Inn, and the Zephyr oil refinery site. All sites are being monitored for reduction in heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

Budget History:

U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative					
<i>(Dollars in Thousands)</i>					
Available Funds in EPA Interagency Agreement	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014
Restore urban and community forests	\$1,000	\$225	\$184	\$121	123
Mitigate emerald ash borer	3,000	1,360	1,227	1,040	1,162
Reduce toxic substances	2,000	1,800	1,452	1,211	1,211
Develop ecosystem services markets	500	225	184	98	99
Control invasive species	250	150	120	112	112
Participate in lakewide planning	51	75	15	15	15
Totals	\$6,801	\$3,835	\$3,182	\$2,597	2,722

Future Direction: NA S&PF and U.S. Forest Service Region 9 will continue to provide and monitor grants, and report results of this Federal investment. We will emphasize improving tree canopy and green infrastructure in high-priority watersheds that impact EPA areas of concern. More information about the GLRI Initiative is available at http://www.na.fs.fed.us/watershed/gl_restore_initiative.shtm.

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