



**GREAT LAKES AND
ST. LAWRENCE**
CITIES INITIATIVE

Stimulus talking points for Social Media

1. Our federal governments must make every effort to accelerate the pace of economic recovery. Investments in water infrastructure and coastal protection will put residents to work and generate economic activity while addressing urgent needs in our communities.
2. The water restoration investments requested by Great Lakes cities are projected to create more than a half million jobs.
3. More than nine million jobs across the binational Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region, generating \$447 billion in annual wages, are in sectors that depend on clean water infrastructure and services.
4. The U.S. Federal Reserve projects that the U.S. economy will contract by 6.5% this year, with unemployment remaining near 10% at the end of the year. The Congressional Budget Office states that recovery from the current economic recession will be more difficult than the 2008 financial crisis, and one study projected that it could take up to two years for employment to return to pre-pandemic levels.
5. For every job added in the water and wastewater industry, an additional 3.68 jobs are created in the national economy.
6. According to the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, water restoration projects are the number one creators of jobs among public infrastructure projects.
7. Investments in coastal restoration and protection have high rates of job creation and return on investment. Investments in resilience, mitigation and ecosystem restoration are estimated to return more than \$6.00 for every \$1.00 spent and create 39 jobs per \$1 million spent.
8. Every million dollars spent in water resilience, mitigation and ecosystem restoration projects creates 39 jobs that can pay up to \$50,000 per job.
9. Nearly one-third of U.S. and Canadian economic activity is centered in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region, so post COVID-19 economic recovery there will fuel the larger national recovery in the U.S. and Canada.
10. In addition to economic stimulus, funding will help safeguard coastal resources and mitigate future damage from erosion, flooding and severe storm events, outdated wastewater infrastructure, exposure to toxic pollutants in the water, agricultural and urban runoff that feeds harmful algal blooms and chronically contaminated beaches.
11. Lake levels are at all-time highs. In May, all five Great Lakes were well above their long-term average. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers predicts that current levels will persist until the region experiences dry conditions for up to several years.
12. Cities along the Great Lakes have incurred more than \$500 million in damages over the past year from impacts from historically high water levels, and severe storm events, with roughly \$865 million needed for future planning, protection and mitigation efforts.

13. The Great Lakes represent 80 percent of North America's supply of fresh surface water and are the drinking water source for 40 million people.
14. The Great Lakes states have an estimated need for nearly \$200 billion over the next 20 years to maintain and upgrade drinking water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure – nearly 30% of the national need. Maintaining our water infrastructure is critical for the health of local communities and our regional economy.
15. We urge all those concerned with economic recovery, the environment and fresh drinking water to contact their elected officials and ask them to include funding for water resource priorities in the next economic stimulus program.