



**GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE**  
CITIES INITIATIVE  
**L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES**  
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative receives \$380,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

CHICAGO, February 24, 2022 – The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative has received a \$380,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a new program that will assist communities in developing projects and applying for funding to deal with coastal resilience challenges along their shorelines.

“We are grateful for this grant, which will augment initiatives already underway in Wisconsin (funded by the Fund for Lake Michigan) and Southeast Michigan (funded by the Erb Family Foundation),” said St. Catharines, Ontario Mayor Walter Sendzik, Chair of the Cities Initiative.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative will work with partners in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota to align resources to help coastal communities develop solutions to problems such as shoreline erosion, flooding and impacts to municipal assets and infrastructure. The Cities Initiative will provide technical support for resiliency planning, project development, and funding alignment for critically needed shoreline projects.

The program will convene regional coastal resilience workgroups in each state to work closely with mayors and city staff to identify coastal resilience solutions and develop implementation frameworks for up to 60 shoreline projects in the five states. The goal is to identify high impact coastal resilience projects in the participating communities and outline detailed steps for their development, funding and implementation.

“Recent research carried out by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative found that the majority of middle sized to small communities do not have the resources or in-house capacity to tackle this major problem,” said Zion, Illinois Mayor Billy McKinney, Vice Chair of the Cities Initiative. “They need assistance to even apply for federal grants.”

The Cities Initiative’s upcoming work will position shoreline communities to compete effectively for significant funding for coastal projects included in the bipartisan infrastructure bill, including nearly \$500 million for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for coastal resilience projects; more than \$200 million for NOAA coastal zone management program; \$500 million for habitat restoration; \$1 billion for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative; and \$1.5 billion to FEMA to strengthen community resilience to natural disasters.

### **About The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative**

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational coalition of U.S. and Canadian mayors from more than 125 cities and municipalities working to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. The Cities Initiative and local officials integrate environmental, economic and social agendas to sustain a resource that represents approximately 80% of North America’s surface freshwater supply, provides drinking water for 40 million people, and is the foundation upon which a strong regional economy is based.

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