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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Initiative for Resilient Great Lakes Coasts Expands Support with New Projects Across the Region

Chicago, IL – October 20, 2025 – The Initiative for Resilient Great Lakes Coasts (IRGLC), a partnership between the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) and the NOAA Office of Coastal Management, funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, today announced a new round of projects advancing through the program. These projects will help shoreline communities design and implement nature-based solutions to strengthen coastal resilience, protect vital public spaces, and restore critical habitat across the Great Lakes basin.

Since its launch, IRGLC has supported over 25 projects with technical assistance, stakeholder engagement, and community-driven design. Several of the newest projects are now moving into advanced stages of engineering and design, protecting vulnerable shorelines from erosion and flooding while improving habitat and recreation access.

This fall, IRGLC expanded to include communities in the Lake Erie and Lake Ontario basins, including the Niagara River. A public webinar on October 1 introduced the program and explained how communities could apply. A recording of the webinar is available on the GLSLCI website.

In Green Bay, Wisconsin, the East River Flood Solutions project at Van Beaver Park is working to restore approximately 12 acres of wetlands, expanding the river's flood storage capacity while stabilizing the shoreline and improving habitat for fish and wildlife. This effort not only enhances coastal resilience but also helps protect nearby public and private properties from expensive flood damage. "Flooding along the East River has been a longtime challenge for the surrounding neighborhoods. By transforming Van Beaver Park into a resilient wetland, we're not just creating habitat. We're protecting homes and businesses, improving recreation spaces, and making Green Bay stronger in the face of future storms," said Mayor Eric Genrich.

In Superior, Wisconsin, work is underway to stabilize the shoreline of Barker's Island, a 53-acre community gathering space that includes a beach, marina, event space, and the historic USS Meteor. By increasing native vegetation, the project will improve both habitat and aesthetics while addressing erosion caused by fluctuating lake levels and wave action. "Barker's Island is not a natural feature of Superior Harbor. This community created it and developed it into one of our best outdoor places. We have an obligation to maintain and improve the space for future generations," said Mayor Jim Paine.

In Bay City, Michigan, restoration efforts at Veterans Memorial Park are focused on the Davidson Cut, a 600-foot inlet between the park and Kantzler Memorial Arboretum. The project will create a living shoreline that reduces erosion, improves water filtration, and protects the pedestrian bridge linking the two popular park spaces. "Veterans Memorial Park is more than green space; it's where our community gathers to celebrate, reflect, and connect," said City Manager Dana Muscott. "By investing in a living shoreline at Davidson Cut, we're protecting this

important place for generations to come, while also improving water quality and resilience along the Saginaw River."

In Oscoda Township, Michigan, the Oscoda Beach Park Dune Restoration is addressing stormwater runoffs and erosion challenges with green infrastructure solutions. Native dune grasses and a rain garden will help hold sand in place, protect the community's main swimming beach, and improve water quality along nearly 1,000 feet of shoreline and nine acres of dune habitat. "Oscoda Beach is our community's front porch on Lake Huron. By restoring native dune habitats and improving stormwater management, we're protecting both our natural resources and the families who depend on this park for recreation and tourism," said Township Supervisor Nicole Tregear.

In Duluth, Minnesota, two major projects are moving forward. Along the North Shore, efforts are focused on stabilizing shoreline overlooks along Highway 61 and restoring riparian vegetation to improve habitat while ensuring safe public access to Lake Superior's iconic vistas. At Park Point Recreation Area, the city is implementing a mix of living shorelines and vegetated stone revetments to protect 44 acres of the world's largest freshwater sandbar while adding habitat for shorebirds and pollinators. "Duluth's identity is tied to where the land and water meet. These projects allow us to use nature-based solutions to preserve safe access, restore critical habitat, and ensure the sustainability and resilience of our public lands along Lake Superior," said Mayor Roger J. Reinert.

In Ashland, Wisconsin, shoreline resilience projects are underway at both Maslowski Beach and the Bay City Creek Estuary. At Maslowski Beach, native vegetation will help stabilize the shoreline against waves and high-water levels, while at Bay City Creek, wetlands will be restored to address erosion, improve water quality, and enhance public access. Together, these projects strengthen the city's natural defenses and create healthier habitats for wildlife. "From Maslowski Beach to the end of Lake Park Road, Ashland's waterfront is part of our shared story. These projects help us write the next chapter, one where our shoreline is healthy, resilient, and inviting both people and wildlife," said Mayor Matthew MacKenzie.

In Rogers City, Michigan, the Lakeside Park Beach Restoration project is tackling stormwater management, dune restoration, and sand migration at one of the community's most popular public parks. With improved stormwater outfalls, raised boardwalks, and expanded native vegetation, the project will enhance both ecological function and recreation at this 10-acre lakeside hub. "Rogers City is proud to lead on coastal resilience. At Lakeside Park, we're showing how nature-based solutions can improve water quality, strengthen habitat, and keep our community beach thriving for generations," said Mayor Scott McLennan.

In Ecorse, Michigan, the Ecorse Creek Floodplain Restoration project builds on years of collaborative work, in partnership with the Downriver Community Conference, to expand natural flood storage and improve shoreline stability along the creek. The project will also create safe, beautiful public access for residents while enhancing water quality and wildlife habitat. "Restoring the Ecorse Creek floodplain means turning a longtime challenge into a community asset. This project will reduce flooding risks, improve water quality, and give residents a beautiful place to gather by the water," said Mayor Lamar Tidwell.

In Alpena, Michigan, shoreline stabilization work near the city's water treatment plant and improvements to Starlite Beach will protect critical infrastructure and popular recreation areas from fluctuating water levels, wave energy, and stormwater challenges. "Alpena's future depends on clean water and safe public spaces. By protecting our water treatment plant and Starlite Beach, we're securing both for decades to come," said Mayor Cindy Johnson.

Partner Acknowledgment
These projects are made possible by the Initiative for Resilient Great Lakes Coasts, led by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative in partnership with the NOAA Office of Coastal Management, with support from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and technical expertise from Dewberry and LimnoTech.

About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a multinational coalition of municipal and Indigenous government executives representing communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region who are working to promote economic prosperity in our communities and protect our fresh water for the benefit of current and future generations. With more than 350 communities represented, the Cities Initiative is leading the way in advancing the environmental, economic, and social health of the region by addressing issues impacting its residents.

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