

Great Lakes Provisions in the FY 2026 House Appropriations Bills

Prepared by Alex Eastman,
Great Lakes Program Manager,
Northeast-Midwest Institute
September 4th, 2025



The House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations has now passed nine of the twelve annual appropriations bills, including four covered in this report: Energy and Water, Interior and Environment, National Security and Department of State, Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development appropriations bills on party lines. These bills cover Army Corps projects and port infrastructure funding.

In the Interior-Environment bill, EPA funding would fall from \$9.16 billion in FY 24 to just \$7.01 billion under the House Interior-Environment bill. Critical Great Lakes programs, however, including the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and State and Tribal Assistance Grants, would remain steady. Water infrastructure funding would take a hit. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund would see a 26% decrease to \$1.21 billion and the Drinking Water SRF would see a 20.5% decrease to \$894.7 million. WIFIA funding would remain flat.

Other bills would fulfill the President's Budget requests for the Brandon Road Lock and Dam and Soo Locks and slightly increase funding for the Port Infrastructure Development Program and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

The Northeast-Midwest Institute prepared this Great Lakes summary based on the committee reports of the bills and will update it in the coming days and weeks as more information becomes available.

Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Budget Request	FY 26 Senate Bill	FY 26 House Bill	Notes
NOAA's Ocean Laboratories and Cooperative Institutes	\$39.5 million	\$0	\$39.5 million	\$40 million	This NOAA account includes funding for the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL).
Coastal Zone Management Grants	\$81.5 million	\$0	\$81.5 million	\$81.5 million	
National Sea Grant College Program	\$80 million	\$0	\$80 million	\$80 million	
Sea Grant Aquaculture Research	\$14 million	\$0	\$14 million	\$14 million	
IOOS Regional Observations	\$42.5 million	\$0	\$43.5 million	\$56 million	This NOAA account includes funding for the Great Lakes Observing System (GLOS)

Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas	\$67 million	\$40 million	\$68 million	\$67 million	
Harmful Algal Blooms (Competitive Research)	\$14 million	\$0	\$14 million	See note*	The total Competitive Research account, which the President's Budget would have eliminated, would be funded at \$20 million, as in FY24.
Regional Climate and Data Information	\$47.9 million	\$0	\$47.9 million	\$47.9 million	This NOAA account includes funding for GLISA

*The House bill provides \$20 million for the Competitive Research account. It is reasonable to assume that this includes \$14 million for HABs, but it is not explicitly delineated in the committee report as it is in the Senate version.

Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 23 Enacted	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY 26 House Bill
Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Dispersal Barriers, IL	\$14.33 million	\$13.75 million	\$12.9 million	\$12.9 million
Brandon Road Lock and Dam Aquatic Nuisance Species Barrier	\$47.88 million	\$0	\$28 million	\$28 million
Sault Sainte Marie (New Soo Lock), MI	N/A	\$257.4 million	\$176.6 million	\$176.6 million
Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study	\$3 million	\$3 million	N/A	N/A
Great Lakes Authority	N/A	\$5 million	\$0	\$4.06 million

Additional Items of Interest:

Invasive Carp

The report supports Army Corps projects combatting invasive carp, including Brandon Road. “Because these efforts are critical to keeping invasive carp out of the Chicago Area Waterways System, the Corps is urged to continue to prioritize progress, as necessary, using the additional funding provided in this Act for projects to deter the expansion of carp into areas without established populations,” the report reads.

Aquatic Nuisance Control Research Program

The bill includes \$5 million for the Harmful Algal Bloom Demonstration Program, and \$5 million for “development of next generation ecological models to maintain inland and intracoastal waterways.” It also “directs the Corps to target freshwater ecosystems” for HAB research and control programs.

Biological and Environmental Research

The report includes \$30 million for “the development of observational assets, modeling, and associated research on the Nation’s major land-water interfaces, including the Great Lakes and the Puget Sound, that leverages national laboratories’ assets as well as local infrastructure and expertise at universities and other research institutions.”

Ohio Harbors

The report notes that “the Toledo, Huron, Port Clinton, Lorain, and Sandusky Harbors are eligible to compete for additional funding in this account [the Corps’ O&M account]; that Sandusky, Lorain, and Huron qualify as emerging harbors; and that emerging harbors must be prioritized for funding, as appropriate.” The Committee also encourages the Corps to use dredged material to “fortify Lake Erie shorelines against damage from seasonal high water.”

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Program	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY26 Senate Bill	FY 26 House Bill	Notes
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)	\$368 million	\$368 million	\$368 million	\$368 million	The bill also includes \$15 million for “tribal-related activities” The committee also expressed concern about HABs in the Great Lakes, and urges the EPA to use GLRI funds to invest in “innovative projects, including wetland and other natural infrastructure projects.”
Clean Water State Revolving Fund	\$1.639 billion	\$155 million	\$1.639 billion	\$1.208 billion	The bill would direct \$559.2 million (down from the FY 24 level of \$787.7 million) of this funding to Community Project Funding grants.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	\$1.126 billion	\$150 million	\$1.126 billion	\$894.7 million	The bill would direct \$489.7 million (down from the FY 24 enacted level of \$631.7 million) of this funding to Community Project Funding grants.
WIFIA	\$72.27 million	\$8 million	\$64.5 million	\$72.27 million	

State and Tribal Assistance Grants

Program	FY 23 Enacted	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY 26 Senate Bill	FY 26 House Bill
<i>Infrastructure Assistance Grants</i>					
Reducing Lead in Drinking Water	\$25.01 million	\$22 million	\$20 million	\$32 million	\$22 million
Drinking Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability	\$7 million	\$6.5 million	\$6.5 million	\$6.5 million	\$6.5 million
Technical Assistance for Wastewater Treatment Works	\$27 million	\$25.5 million	\$10 million	\$25.5 million	\$26 million
Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Grants	\$50 million	\$41 million	\$41 million	\$39 million	\$44 million
Water Infrastructure Workforce Investment	\$6 million	\$5.4 million	\$6 million	\$5.4 million	\$5 million
Brownfields Projects	\$98 million	\$98 million	\$80 million	\$98 million	\$84.7 million
<i>Categorical Grants</i>					
BEACH Grants	\$10.62 million	\$9.75 million	\$0	\$9.75 million	\$9.8 million
Brownfields Protection	\$47.2 million	\$46.25 million	\$0	\$46.25 million	\$42.25 million
Nonpoint Source (Sec. 319)	\$182 million	\$174.5 million	\$0	\$174.5 million	\$174.5 million
Pollution Control (Sec. 106)	\$237 million	\$225.7 million	\$0	\$225.7 million	\$225.7 million
Public water system supervision	\$121.5 million	\$116 million	\$0	\$116 million	\$115 million

Additional Items of Interest

Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

The agreement provides \$6 million, equal to FY 24 levels, to investigate adverse health effects from exposure to HABs and cyanobacteria toxins and to develop methods to monitor, predict, and characterize blooms to allow for early action and management.

Lake Champlain

The bill includes \$25 million to the Lake Champlain Program, equal to FY24 levels, to be used on phosphorus pollution, biodiversity, aquatic invasive species, and resiliency, among other issues.

Department of Interior

Program	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Senate Bill	FY 26 House Bill	Notes
<i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>				
Invasive Carp Programs	\$31 million	\$28 million	\$22 million	The agreement includes \$3 million for contract fishing.
Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration program	\$3 million	\$3 million	\$3 million	
Great Lakes Sea Lamprey	\$1.01 million	N/A	\$1.01 million	
Lake Champlain Sea Lamprey	\$818,000	\$818,000	\$818,000	
<i>U.S. Geological Survey</i>				
Great Lakes Science Center	\$15 million	\$15 million	\$15 million	
National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program	\$43.5 million	\$43.5 million	\$43.5 million	This USGS account includes the Great Lakes Mapping Coalition.
Invasive Carp Research	\$11 million	\$11 million	\$11 million	\$3 million of this total is to be used for research on Grass Carp.

*Neither the USFWS nor the USGS had publicly released a budget justification at the time of publication, so the amounts requested by President's Budget for the above accounts are not known. If those documents are released, NEMWI will update this report with those numbers.

Additional Items of Interest

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Invasive Species Act (NISA)

The bill includes \$2.83 million for NISA State Plans and \$1.57 million for NISA implementation, which helps control the spread of invasive carp. Both totals are equal to FY 24 enacted levels.

Quagga and Zebra Mussels

The agreement includes \$3.5 million, equal to FY 24 enacted levels, to prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels.

Great Lakes Consent Decree

The agreement includes \$1 million for the Great Lakes Consent Decree, equal to the FY 24 enacted level.

National Parks Service

Great Lakes Gateways

The report makes reference to the Great Lakes Gateways program that would be created under H.R. 1073, the Great Lakes Gateways Network Act, introduced by Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Dave Joyce (R-OH) earlier this year. “The Committee is aware of interest in a new program to link key sites in the Great Lakes region,” it reads, requesting “a briefing... on the resource and funding needs, as well as any authorities, necessary to create such program.”

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

Harmful Algal Bloom (HABs) Research (Environmental Health Program)

The bill includes \$4.75 million, equal to FY23 and FY24 levels, for research on harmful algal blooms.

The bill would commission a report on groundwater conditions in the Great Lakes, specifically regarding “indirect ground-water discharge to the Great Lakes as well as ground-water recharge rates for the entire watershed to determine the role of ground water in the hydrologic budget of the Great Lakes.”

National Water Quality Program

The bill includes \$85.4 million for the National Water Quality program (down from \$100 million in FY 23 and \$96 million in FY 24) and \$7.49 million for harmful algal bloom research (maintained at FY 23 and FY 24 levels).

Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Management

The report claims that Canada geese and cormorants “overwhelm ecosystems near urban centers, such as around Lake Erie,” and “encourages the Service to continue to support control activities by individuals, corporations, municipalities, States, and Tribes such as public health control orders or special double-crested cormorant permits to assure public health.”

State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 23 Enacted	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY 26 House Bill	Notes
Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC)	\$50 million	\$50 million	\$39 million	\$54.83 million	\$1 million of the total must be used to address grass carp, and \$10.5 million of the total must be used in the Lake Champlain basin Lake Memphremagog basins, both equal to FY24 levels.
International Joint Commission (IJC)	\$10.88 million	\$10.88 million	\$10.88 million	\$10.88 million	

GLFC

In the wake of delays in the GLFC’s sea lamprey control program caused by staffing cuts in federal agencies, the report reads: “The Committee expects that Federal agencies” cooperate with the GLFC, “including working with any and all duly appointed Commission staff. The Committee further directs that the GLFC take all appropriate steps to ensure that the Convention mandate of the GLFC is executed fully and in an efficient and timely manner.”

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 25 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY 26 Senate Bill	FY 26 House Bill	Notes
Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development	\$40.29 million	\$41 million	\$40.6 million	\$38.1 million	The bill directs that at least \$15.9 million (down from \$16.3 million in FY24) be provided for the seaway infrastructure program.

Corporation (GLS)					The bill provides \$1 million for trade and marketing and trade development and promotion of the Great Lakes navigation system.
MARAD's Port Infrastructure Development Program	\$120.46 million*	\$550 million*	\$96.482 million	\$123.5 million*	Of the total, the agreement provides \$43.5 million, down from \$70.46 million in FY 25, for Community Project Funding.

*The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law appropriated \$450 million for the PIDP per year from FY 2022 – FY 2026, so were this funding level to be enacted, total appropriations for the program would rise from \$570.46 million in FY 25 to \$573.5 million in FY 26.

The report includes the following language on port funding inequities: “The Committee recognizes the importance of IJJA’s PIDP funds to advance critical priorities at our nation’s ports, and acknowledges the need to continue upgrading vital infrastructure at small and inland ports with deepwater shipping channels. The Committee supports MARAD’s consideration of cost-effectiveness when awarding PIDP grants and encourages the Secretary to also consider geographic diversity in its award of PIDP awards at the state and national levels.”

Within Community Project Funding for the PIDP, the bill would fund Rep. Stauber’s (R-MN) request for \$5 million for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority Gantry Crane Refurbishment Project.