



2026 Great Lakes Environmental Summit

Northeast-Midwest Institute
Great Lakes Washington Program
Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 1:00-5:00 PM
385 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20002



SPONSORS



The Nature Conservancy helps advance conservation across six continents, including in more than 80 countries and territories and all 50 U.S. states. And, for more than 65 years, The Nature Conservancy has helped protect and restore millions of acres of lands and waters throughout the Great Lakes. Guided by science and leveraging decades of on-the-ground experience, they collaborate with countless public and private sector partners to scale innovative solutions for the biggest conservation challenges, ensuring both people and nature can thrive.

CO-SPONSORS



Since 2004, the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition has been harnessing the collective power of more than 200 groups representing millions of people, whose common goal is to restore and protect the Great Lakes. Learn more at HealthyLakes.org or follow on social media @HealthyLakes.



The Great Lakes Commission, an intergovernmental agency established in 1955, recommends policies and practices to balance the use, development, and conservation of the water resources of the Great Lakes and brings the region together to work on issues that no single community, state, province, or nation can tackle alone.



The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is a binational organization established via treaty between Canada and the United States in 1955 to advance freshwater science, promote cross-border collaborations, and to control invasive sea lamprey in the Great Lakes. Together with our partners, the Commission works to support a healthy and sustainable Great Lakes ecosystem through a voluntary, collaborative, science-based approach that has been delivering positive results for decades.

AGENDA

- 1:00 pm** **Welcome**
Dr. Michael Goff, President and CEO, Northeast-Midwest Institute
- 1:05 pm** **A Word From Our Sponsor**
The Nature Conservancy
- 1:15 pm** **Great Lakes Task Force Update**
Alex Eastman, Great Lakes Program Manager, Northeast-Midwest Institute
- 1:30 pm** **Legislative Opportunities for the Great Lakes in the 119th Congress**
- 1:30-1:45:** Byron Brown, Chief Counsel, Majority, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
- 1:45-1:55** **Break**
- 1:55-2:00** **A Word From our Co-Sponsor**
Great Lakes Fishery Commission
- 2:00-2:15:** Ryan Seiger, Professional Staff Member, Minority, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment
- 2:15-2:30:** Ed Higgins, Legislative Assistant; Minority; Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
- 2:30-2:45:** Katie Williams, Professional Staff Member, Majority; and Daniela Todesco, Professional Staff Member, Minority; Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
- 2:45-3:00:** Mike Schmidt, Senior Advisor, Minority, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
- 3:00 pm** **Congressional Great Lakes Task Force**
Rep. Debbie Dingell
- 3:15 pm** **Congressional Great Lakes Task Force**
Sen. Gary Peters
- 3:30 pm** **Break**
- 3:40 pm** **EPA GLNPO Great Lake Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Update**
Todd Nettesheim, Deputy Director, Great Lakes National Program Office
- 3:55 pm** **Impacts to Great Lakes Science and Restoration**
Deborah Lee, PE, PH, BC.WRE, ENV SP, F.ASCE
- 4:10 pm** **A Word From Our Co-Sponsor**
Great Lakes Commission
- 4:15 pm** John Busovsky, Professional Staff Member, Majority, House Committee on Agriculture
- 4:30 pm** **Great Lakes Regional Priorities Discussion and Overview**
- 5:00 pm** **Adjourn**

CONGRESSIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS

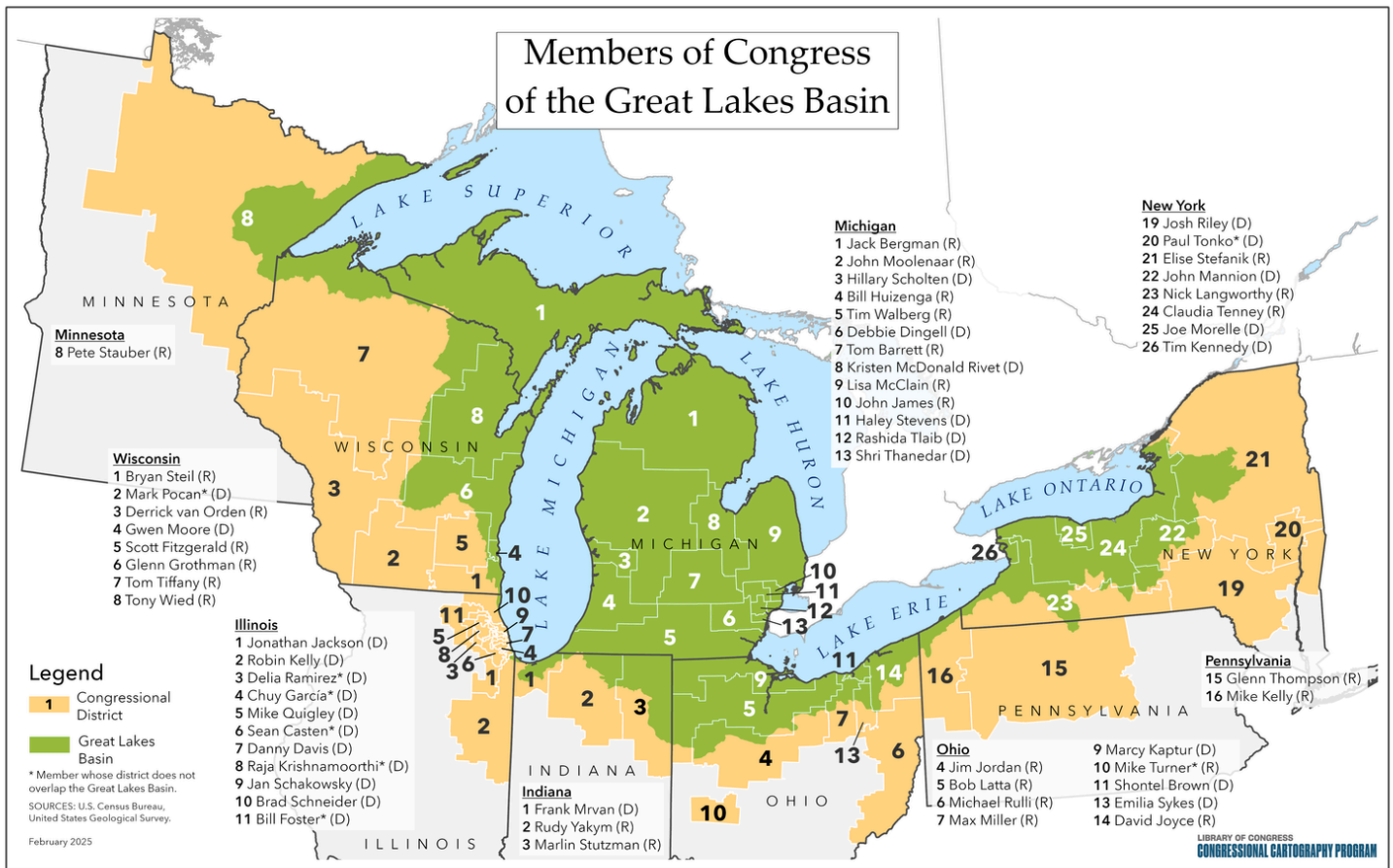


Senator Gary Peters (D-MI)
Great Lakes Task Force Co-Chair



Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI)
Great Lakes Task Force Co-Chair

CONGRESSIONAL GREAT LAKES TASK FORCES



*Map provided by Rep. Marcy Kaptur's office

SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Sen. Dave McCormick, R-PA (Chair of Energy Subcommittee)

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-WI (Ranking Member of Labor-HHS Subcommittee)

Sen. Dick Durbin, D-IL

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-NY (Ranking Member of Transportation, HUD Subcommittee)

Sen. Gary Peters, D-MI

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Sen. Tina Smith, D-MN (Ranking Member of Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth Subcommittee)

Sen. Todd Young, R-IN (Chair of Health Care Subcommittee)

Sen. Ron Johnson, R-WI (Chair of Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth Subcommittee)

SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Sen. Jon Husted, R-OH

SENATE COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-WI (Ranking Member of Oceans, Fisheries, Climate Change, and Manufacturing Subcommittee)

Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-IL (Ranking Member of Aviation Subcommittee)

Sen. John Fetterman, D-PA

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-MN

Sen. Bernie Moreno, R-OH

Sen. Gary Peters, D-MI (Ranking Member of Surface Transportation Subcommittee)

Sen. Todd Young, R-IN (Chair of Surface Transportation Subcommittee)

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-MN (Ranking Member)

Sen. Tina Smith, D-MN

Sen. Dick Durbin, D-IL

Sen. John Fetterman, D-PA

Sen. Elissa Slotkin, D-MI (Ranking Member of Livestock, Dairy, Poultry, and Food Safety Subcommittee)

***Bold** indicates Great Lakes Task Force membership



HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Rep. Pete Stauber, R-MN (Chair of the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee)

Rep. Tim Walberg, R-MI

Rep. Debbie Dingell, D-MI

Rep. Tom Tiffany, R-WI (Chair of the Federal Lands Subcommittee)

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Rep. David Joyce, R-OH (Chair of the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee)

Rep. John Moolenaar, R-MI

Rep. Marcy Kaptur, D-OH (Ranking Member of the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee)

Rep. Mike Quigley, D-IL (Ranking Member of the Transportation and HUD Subcommittee)

Rep. Joseph Morelle, D-NY

Rep. Frank Mrvan, D-IN

Rep. Mike Quigley, D-IL

Rep. Lauren Underwood, D-IL

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

Rep. Mike Kelly, R-PA (Chair of the Tax Subcommittee)

Rep. Claudia Tenney, R-NY

Rep. Gwen Moore, D-WI

Rep. Brad Schneider, D-IL

Rep. Rudy Yakym, R-IN

Rep. Danny Davis, D-IL (Ranking Member of the Work and Welfare Subcommittee)

Rep. Max Miller, R-OH

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Rep. Tom Barrett, R-MI

Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet, D-MI

Rep. Pete Stauber, R-MN

Rep. Emilia Sykes, D-OH

Rep. Tony Wied, R-WI

Rep. Hillary Scholten, D-MI

Rep. Chuy Garcia, D-IL

HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE

Rep. Debbie Dingell, D-MI

Rep. John James, R-MI

Rep. Robin Kelly, D-IL

Rep. Nick Langworthy, R-NY

Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-IL (Ranking Member of Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade Subcommittee)

Rep. Bob Latta, R-OH (Chair of Energy Subcommittee)

HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Rep. GT Thompson, R-PA (Chair of full Committee)

Rep. Tony Wied, R-WI

Rep. Shontel Brown, D-OH

Rep. John Mannion, D-NY

Rep. Shri Thanedar, D-MI

Rep. Josh Riley, D-NY

Rep. Jonathon Jackson, D-IL

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LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

Bill	Sponsors	Status	Description
H.R. 284 & S.528: GLRI Act of 2025	Reps. Dave Joyce (R-OH); Marcy Kaptur (D-OH); Bill Huizenga (R-MI); Debbie Dingell (D-MI) +39 Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI); Bernie Moreno (R-OH) + 11	House: Provisions passed Transportation and Infrastructure Committee through the American Water Stewardship Act Senate: Awaiting Environment and Public Works Committee Hearing	This bill reauthorizes the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) for five years through fiscal year 2031.
H.R. 1809 & S.2878: Great Lakes Fishery Reauthorization Act	Reps. Mike Quigley (D-IL), Dave Joyce (R-OH); Marcy Kaptur (D-OH); Bill Huizenga (R-MI); Debbie Dingell (D-MI) +7 Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI) and Jon Husted (R-OH)	Enacted on 12/26/2025	Reauthorizes the Great Lakes Fishery Research program for another five years through FY 2030. Provides the USGS Great Lakes Science Center with dedicated funding to conduct critical research supporting the approximately \$5 billion sport and commercial fishing industry in the Great Lakes. Maintains the current research program authorization level at \$15 million each year.
H.R. 1917 & S.2880: Great Lakes Mass Marking Program Act	Reps. Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Bill Huizenga (R-MI) +5 Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI) and Jon Husted (R-OH)	House: Passed 7/22/25 Senate: Awaiting Environment and Public Works Committee Hearing	This bill would establish a program within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to work with state & tribal governments to implement mass marking of fish at hatcheries in the Great Lakes, and make all relevant data available to the public. The FWS initiated the program in 2010 on a limited scale. The bill would authorize \$2.7 million for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.
H.R. 4375: Great Lakes Icebreaker Act of 2025	Reps. Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-MI), Tony Wied (R-WI), and Max Miller (R-OH) +1	Enacted through the National Defense Authorization Act on 12/18/2025	Requires the Coast Guard to provide Congress with a plan to design and build a new Great Lakes Icebreaker, at least as capable as the Coast Guard cutter Mackinaw. Authorizes a five-year pilot program for the Coast Guard to test the extent to which the Coast Guard Great Lakes icebreaking cutter fleet can maintain tier one and tier two waterways open 95% of the time during an ice season.
H.R. 4191: Military PFAS Transparency Act	Reps. Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-MI), Jack Bergman (R-MI), Debbie Dingell (D-MI) + 2	Enacted through the National Defense Authorization Act on 12/18/2025	Requires the Secretary of Defense to submit annual reports detailing site-specific funding, progress, and barriers for PFAS cleanup efforts. Requires the Department of Defense to accelerate their cleanup strategies and to create a public dashboard within one year to display updated PFAS cleanup data and cleanup efforts.
H.R. ____ Safeguarding Aquatic Fisheries and Ecosystem Pathways Act	Reps. Glenn Grothman (R-WI), Mark Pocan (D-WI), and Tony Wied (R-WI)	Awaiting introduction	Requires federal agencies to consider threats from invasive species before constructing new fishways.



LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

Bill	Sponsors	Status	Description
H.R.2731: Great Lakes Mapping Act of 2025	Reps. Lisa McClain (D-MI) and Debbie Dingell (D-MI) +17	House: Awaiting Natural Resources Committee Hearing	This bill would direct the Administrator of the NOAA to conduct high-resolution bathymetric mapping of the lakebeds of the Great Lakes, and conclude by Dec. 31, 2030. NOAA would work with organizations such as the Great Lakes Observing System and make all relevant data available to the public. The bill would authorize \$50 million for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029.
H.R.6053 - Save Great Lakes Fish Act of 2025	Reps. Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Tim Walberg (R-MI) + 6	House: Awaiting Natural Resources Committee hearing	Provides \$500 million for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to combat invasive species of mussels.
H.R. 1073 Great Lakes Gateways Network Act	Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Dave Joyce (R-OH)	House: Awaiting Natural Resources Committee hearing	The Great Lakes Gateways Network Act of 2025 will help conserve the Great Lakes Watershed by catalyzing public and private investment in a linked network of gateway sites. Modeled on the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998, the bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to provide matching grants to public and private sector organizations to develop and conserve important resources within the gateway system. The bill authorizes \$6 million annually for fiscal years 2026 -2031.
H.R. 644 & S.93: HABHRCA	Reps. Dave Joyce (R-OH) and Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) +4 Sens. Dan Sullivan (R-AK) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) + 14	House: Awaiting Natural Resources Committee Hearing Senate: Passed Senate 9/11/2025	This bill reauthorizes the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act through 2030 at \$27.5 million per year. The bill requires NOAA to establish (1) a national network of observing systems for monitoring, detecting, and forecasting harmful algal blooms; and (2) a national-level incubator program to increase the number of strategies available to mitigate, and control harmful algal blooms
H.R. 583 & S.508: BEACH Act	Reps. Dave Joyce (R-OH) and Frank Pallone (D-NJ) + 34 Sens. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Thom Tillis (R-NC)	House: Awaiting Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Hearing Senate: Awaiting Environment and Public Works Committee hearing	This bill reauthorizes annual BEACH grant program funding at \$30 million through FY 2029. The bill also expands eligible uses of BEACH Act grants to include identification of sources of pollution, clarifying that "nearby upstream shallow waters" that are "adjacent to or present on" beaches or similar points of access are eligible, and directs EPA to support and encourage innovations in testing technologies.
H.R. 3184: PFAS Alternatives Act	Reps. Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Glenn Ivey (D-MD), and GT Thompson (R-PA) +86	House: Awaiting Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing	This bill would authorize \$2.5 million annually for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029 to support the development of new materials, and an additional \$2 million annually to support guidance and training. The funding would go towards: accelerating the development of PFAS-free turnout gear; supporting guidance and training for firefighters on best practices for reducing harmful exposures through the proper wearing, and cleaning of turnout gear.

