

Great Lakes Provisions in the FY 2027 House Appropriations Bills

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The House Appropriations Committee has passed nine of the twelve appropriations bills for fiscal year 2027. The Commerce, Justice, and Science bill would fund NOAA at \$5.8 billion, \$300 million below FY 26 enacted levels, but \$1.3 billion above the President’s Budget. NOAA’s Operations, Research, and Facilities would receive \$4 billion, down from \$4.5 billion in FY 26, but an increase of \$700 million over the President’s Budget. It would reject cuts to NOAA research, the National Ocean Service, and NOAA Fisheries, and would flat-fund most of the Great Lakes accounts that NEMWI tracks, though the IOOS Regional Observations account would see an \$8.5 million (17.9%) increase.

The Energy, Water Development, and Related Agencies bill includes funding for construction of the Soo Locks and for operations and maintenance of the electric dispersal barriers at the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. It also includes \$5 million for the Great Lakes Authority. The accompanying bill report includes language supporting the Brandon Road Interbasin Project aimed at keeping invasive carp out of the Great Lakes. It “recognizes the national importance” of the project, and instructs the Army Corps “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.” It also reminds the Corps to complete the Great Lakes Recreational Boating Study authorized in WRDA 2022.

The Interior-Environment bill would cut funding for the EPA by 20%, but the bill would fund the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative at \$369 million, equal to FY2026 levels. The bill would also restore funding for capitalization grants that would have been cut by the President’s Budget. The Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds would be funded at a combined \$2.1 billion, down 24% from FY 26. These cuts, however, would be concentrated in CDS (or “earmarked”) funds, so the funding going to State Revolving Fund programs would stay largely flat.

The Northeast-Midwest Institute prepared this Great Lakes summary based on the text and Committee Report for the bills.

Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 26 Enacted	FY 27 Budget Request	FY 26 House Bill	FY 27 House Bill	Notes
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration					
<i>National Ocean Service</i>					
Navigation, Observations, and Positioning	\$186.3 million	\$140 million	\$183.7 million	\$183.7 million	Includes funding for NWLON and PORTS.

IOOS Regional Observations	\$47.5 million	\$0	\$56 million	\$56 million	Includes funding for the Great Lakes Observing System (GLOS).
Coastal Zone Management Grants	\$81.5 million	\$0	\$81.5 million	\$81.5 million	
Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas	\$67 million	\$40 million	\$67 million	\$67 million	
Harmful Algal Blooms (Competitive Research)*	\$14 million	\$0	\$14 million	\$14 million	
<i>Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research</i>					
Ocean Laboratories and Cooperative Institutes	\$40 million	\$0	\$40 million	\$40 million	Includes funding for the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL).
National Sea Grant College Program	\$80 million	\$0	\$80 million	\$80 million	
Sea Grant Aquaculture Research	\$14 million	\$0	\$14 million	\$14 million	
Regional Climate and Data Information	\$48.9 million	\$0	\$47.9 million	\$49.9 million	Includes funding for GLISA.

*\$20 million is provided 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.

Research Vessel Laurentian

The report requests a briefing on “plans to replace the R/V Laurentian by its end of life in 2029; opportunities to partner with other State, Federal, and private sector entities to utilize NOAA ships on the Great Lakes for environmental monitoring, science, and management; and recent and planned investments in other environmental monitoring, science, and management platforms for the unique challenges in the Great Lakes.”

Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS)

The report “notes the importance of the IOOS network,” especially with regards to “disaster response, weather forecasting and hurricane prediction, forecasting of freshwater and marine water quality, detection of harmful algal blooms, and safe maritime operations.”

Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

The report supports the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act (HABHRCA), especially mitigation efforts, and directs NOAA to “explore innovative methods” of HABs monitoring and forecasting in freshwater systems.

Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 26 Enacted	FY 27 Request	FY 27 House Bill
Great Lakes Authority	\$5 million	N/A	\$5 million
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers			
Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Dispersal Barriers, IL	\$12.98 million	\$5.38 million	\$12.06 million
Sault Sainte Marie (New Soo Lock), MI	\$176.6 million	\$67 million	\$78 million*

*The report also reiterates the request for a briefing on a special salary rate for employees at the Soo Locks, demanding a briefing from the Corps “as soon as possible.”

Invasive Carp

The report emphasizes the importance of preventing invasive carp from invading the Great Lakes. It supports the Brandon Road Interbasin Project and the electric dispersal barrier at the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, instructing the Army Corps to “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,” and to collaborate with other agencies within the Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee. Further, “The Committee expects the Corps to continue working in close partnership with states and other stakeholders to advance design and construction expeditiously.”

Great Lakes Recreational Boating Study

The report reiterates a requirement under WRDA 2022 for the Corps to complete an update of the study.

Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration (GLFER) Program

“The Committee directs the Corps to reevaluate its cap [not raised since 2011] on federal costs for projects carried out through the GLFER”

Dredging

With regard to beneficial reuse of dredged material, the report directs the Corps to “utilize greater latitude and flexibility in interpreting and applying the beneficial use standard across the Great Lakes Navigation System,” particularly in the case of using dredged material from Lake Erie for agricultural purposes “to improve soil health and reduce runoff.”

Great Lakes Harbors

The report requests that the Corps include funding requests for Indiana Harbor and the Toledo, Huron, Port Clinton, Lorain, Sandusky, Toussaint, and Vermilion Harbors in future budget requests.

Thermal Reuse

“The Committee directs the Department to provide not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act a detailed feasibility assessment of opportunities to capture and reuse thermal energy discharged into the Great Lakes—including from wastewater treatment and management systems, electricity generation plants (including nuclear power plants), industrial facilities, and other point-source thermal discharges in the United States, and to the extent practicable, in Canada—and to calculate its monetary value.”

Critical Minerals, Materials, and Manufacturing

The report requests a report on “suitable locations within the United States for expanding electronics and electrochemical recycling capacity,” with a focus on the Great Lakes Region.

Great Lakes Science

“The Committee directs the Department to provide not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act a report that assesses the scientific and laboratory capabilities in the Great Lakes Region. The report shall evaluate work conducted by the Great Lakes Region in the fields of advanced manufacturing, strategic materials science, resilient energy technologies, and grid modernization. The report shall also discuss where opportunities for enhanced scientific and laboratory capabilities exist.”

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.”

Aquatic Nuisance Control Research Program

The report includes \$5 million for Harmful Algal Blooms research and control, especially in freshwater ecosystems; \$5 million for the HAB Demonstration Program; and \$5 million to continue development of next generation ecological models to maintain inland and intracoastal waterways.”

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 26 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY 26 House Bill
Environmental Protection Agency			
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)	\$369 million	\$367.7 million	\$369 million*
WIFIA	\$72.27 million	\$7.8 million	\$72.27 million
<i>Infrastructure Assistance Grants</i>			
Clean Water State Revolving Fund Account (total)	\$1.639 billion	\$155 million	\$1.19 billion
CWSRF Program	\$745 million	\$155 million	\$667 million
CWSRF Congressionally Directed Spending	\$893 million	\$0	\$525 million
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Account (total)	\$1.126 billion	\$150 million	\$911 million
DWSRF Program	\$411 million	\$150 million	\$405 million
DWSRF Congressionally Directed Spending	\$715 million	\$0	\$506 million
Reducing Lead in Drinking Water	\$22 million	\$20 million	\$22 million
Drinking Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability	\$6.5 million	\$16.5 million	\$7.5 million
Technical Assistance for Wastewater Treatment Works	\$25.5 million	\$19 million	\$26 million
Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Grants	\$41 million	\$41 million	\$42 million
Water Infrastructure Workforce Investment	\$5.4 million	\$5 million	\$5 million
Brownfields Projects	\$98 million	\$80 million	\$85.1 million
<i>Categorical Grants</i>			
BEACH Grants	\$9.75 million	\$0	\$9.75 million
Brownfields	\$46.25 million	\$0	\$42.25 million

Nonpoint Source (Sec. 319)	\$175.2 million	\$0	\$178.63 million
Pollution Control (Sec. 106)	\$226.4 million	\$0	\$226.4 million
Public water system supervision	\$116.7 million	\$0	\$116.7 million

* This figure includes \$15 million for the Distinct Tribal Program. 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.”

Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

The bill provides \$6 million, equal to FY 26 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 \$25.5 million to the Lake Champlain Program, equal to FY 26 levels, to be used on phosphorus pollution, biodiversity, aquatic invasive species, and resiliency, among other issues.

Program	FY 26 Enacted	FY 26 Request	FY 27 House Bill
Department of Interior			
<i>Fish and Wildlife Service</i>			
Invasive Carp Programs*	\$31 million	\$13.9 million	\$27 million
Invasive Carp Contract Fishing	\$4 million	\$0	\$4 million
Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration program	\$3 million	\$0	\$3 million
Great Lakes Sea Lamprey	\$1.01 million	\$1.01 million	\$1.01 million
Lake Champlain Sea Lamprey	\$818,000	\$0	\$818,000
<i>United States Geological Survey</i>			
Great Lakes Science Center	\$15 million	N/A	\$15 million
National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program**	\$43.5 million	\$23.7 million	\$43.5 million
Invasive Carp Research**	\$11 million	\$11 million	\$11 million

* inclusive of below

** Includes the Great Lakes Mapping Coalition

*** This line item does not explicitly include \$3 million for grass carp, but the report requests a report of grass carp eradication.

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 26 enacted levels.

Quagga and Zebra Mussels

The bill includes \$3.5 million, equal to FY 26 enacted levels, to prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels.

Great Lakes Consent Decree

The bill includes \$1 million for the Great Lakes Consent Decree, equal to the FY 26 enacted level.

Mass Marking

The bill includes funding for Great Lakes Mass Marking and requests a briefing from the FWS “on the level of funding that would be necessary to expand the mass marking of hatchery-produced fish stocks in the Great Lakes to meaningfully enhance the amount of data collected.”

National Parks Service

Great Lakes Gateways

The report reiterates language in the FY 26 bill report supporting 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) last year. The Committee “encourages the Service to work with partners on enhancing the visitor experience at parks managed by the Service in the Great Lakes region.”

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

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

The bill includes \$4.75 million, equal to FY24 levels (FY 26 levels for this line item were unspecified), for research on harmful algal blooms.

Water Availability and Use Science

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.”

Climate Adaptation Science Centers

The bill includes \$65 million for Climate Adaptation Science Centers around the country, including the Midwest CASC at the University of Minnesota. It directs USGS “to prioritize the funding to the Regional Centers and expedite the processing of funds to university-led consortia.”

National Water Quality Program

The bill includes \$85.4 million for the National Water Quality program (down from \$94.5 million in FY 26) and \$7.49 million for harmful algal bloom research (maintained at FY 26 levels).

Geothermal Energy

The bill urges USGS to work with the Department of Energy to assess Great Lakes geothermal resources.

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 26 Enacted	FY 27 Request	FY 27 House Bill
Great Lakes Fishery Commission*	\$52.4 million	\$39 million	\$58 million
Lake Memphremagog and Lake Champlain Basins	\$10 million	\$0	\$13 million
Grass Carp	\$1 million	\$0	\$1 million
Lake Memphremagog Fishery	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
International Joint Commission	\$10.9 million	\$10.9 million	\$15 million

* inclusive of below

Great Lakes Fishery Commission

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.”

International Joint Commission

The report requests increased IJC funding from Canada. “Any increase to the United States Section of the International Joint Commission should be met with a commensurate increase to the Canadian Section.”

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

Program	FY 26 Enacted	FY 27 Request	FY 27 House Bill
Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation*	\$38.1 million	\$50 million	\$42.2 million
Seaway Infrastructure Program	\$15.95 million	\$25 million	\$18.2 million
Trade and Economic Development	\$1 million	N/A	\$1 million
MARAD Port Infrastructure Development Program*	\$103.3 million	\$550 million**	\$538.2 million**
PIDP Community Project Funding***	\$43.5 million	N/A	\$38.2 million

* Inclusive of below

** The President’s Budget would fund this account with \$500 million from the Marine Security Trust Fund, while the House bill would instead pull \$500 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law’s Intercity Passenger Rail Program. Because the PIDP received a supplemental appropriation of \$450 million from the last year of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding last year, this funding level is a small decrease from \$553.3 million in total funding in FY 26.

*** This includes \$250,000, requested by Rep. Kennedy, to the Erie County Industrial Development Agency for a project at the Port of Buffalo.

The report continues language on port funding inequities for “small and inland ports with deepwater shipping channels,” and “encourages the Secretary to also consider geographic diversity in its award of PIDP awards at the state and national levels.”