

Sustain Our Great Lakes Partnership Announces \$6.6 Million in Conservation Grants for Great Lakes Restoration

Funding supports 25 projects across the Great Lakes basin

WASHINGTON, D.C. (August 13, 2018) – Sustain Our Great Lakes partners today announced \$6.6 million in grant funding for 25 ecological restoration projects in the Great Lakes basin. Approximately \$8.2 million in additional project support will be leveraged by grantees, for a total on-the-ground conservation impact of \$14.8 million.

The grants awarded today will support projects in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Canadian province of Ontario to sustain, restore and protect fish, wildlife and habitats. The projects will restore coastal wetland habitat, enhance the quality and connectivity of streams and riparian habitat, control invasive species, restore wetland hydrology, improve nearshore health and water quality through green stormwater infrastructure, and reduce sedimentation and nutrient runoff.

“Sustain Our Great Lakes continues to be a leader in binational ecological restoration and water quality improvements within the Great Lakes region,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “The 25 grants announced today supply critical funding for projects within each Great Lakes state and the province of Ontario to help preserve and protect the region’s globally unique habitats and natural resources.”

Sustain Our Great Lakes is a public-private partnership that supports habitat restoration throughout the Great Lakes basin and advances the objectives of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a federal program designed to protect, restore and enhance the Great Lakes ecosystem. Administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the program receives funding and other support from ArcelorMittal, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Collectively, the 25 projects receiving grants will:

- Restore 72 miles of stream and riparian habitat
- Reopen 103 miles of river for fish passage

- Remove or rectify 12 barriers to aquatic organism passage
- Control invasive species on 1,422 acres of wetland, upland and riparian habitat
- Restore 1,400 acres of wetland habitat
- Prevent more than 2,500 tons of sediment from entering waterways annually
- Add 161 million gallons of stormwater storage capacity
- Install more than 180,000 square feet of green stormwater infrastructure
- Prevent more than 33,000 pounds of nitrogen and 8,000 pounds of phosphorus from entering waterways annually

Five of the 25 grants were awarded under a special initiative in partnership with NRCS in Michigan to improve water quality and enhance habitat in Michigan through landowner technical assistance.

Charlie Wooley, acting Midwest regional director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said “Sustain Our Great Lakes not only fosters good projects, but also exemplifies the strength of public-private partnerships. Sustain Our Great Lakes brings together local, federal, state, tribal, provincial and non-governmental partners to deliver on-the-ground projects that make a difference to the fish, wildlife and people of the basin.”

“The Great Lakes region is home to 11 ArcelorMittal facilities as well as the many communities where our employees and valued stakeholders live, play and work,” said Bill Steers, general manager of communications and corporate responsibility for ArcelorMittal’s Americas region. “Our commitment to produce safe, sustainable steel transcends our physical operations and includes sustaining the vitality of Great Lakes ecosystems for future generations. Today, 11 years after joining Sustain Our Great Lakes, our commitment to this powerful public-private partnership remains strong and we believe it embodies the long-term value that trusted partners can deliver when working together to advance collective goals across the region.”

Since 2006, Sustain Our Great Lakes has awarded 312 grants worth more than \$73.6 million and leveraged an additional \$85.2 million in matching contributions, for a total conservation investment of over \$158.8 million.

For a complete list of the grants announced today, and to learn more about Sustain Our Great Lakes, including applicant eligibility, funding priorities and submission requirements, visit www.nfwf.org/greatlakes. Follow the program on Twitter (@SOGL) to keep up with the latest Great Lakes news and program announcements.

About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation’s wildlife and habitats. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private contributions. NFWF works with government, nonprofit and corporate partners to find solutions for the most intractable conservation challenges. Over the last three decades, NFWF has funded more than 4,500 organizations and

committed more than \$4.8 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at www.nfwf.org.

About ArcelorMittal

ArcelorMittal is the world's leading steel and mining company, with a presence in 60 countries and an industrial footprint in 19 countries. Guided by a philosophy to produce safe, sustainable steel, we are the leading supplier of quality steel in the major global steel markets including automotive, construction, household appliances and packaging, with world-class research and development and outstanding distribution networks.

Through our core values of sustainability, quality and leadership, we operate responsibly with respect to the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, contractors and the communities in which we operate. For more information about ArcelorMittal, visit: corporate.arcelormittal.com or www.usa.arcelormittal.com.

About the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) leads the nation's environmental science, research, education, and assessment efforts. The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. For more information, visit www.epa.gov.

About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

About the U.S. Forest Service

Established in 1905, the U.S. Forest Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live. For more information, visit www.fs.fed.us.

About the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and our other [social media channels](#).

About the Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that provides one-on-one, personalized advice on the best solutions to meet the unique conservation and business goals of those who grow our nation's food and fiber. NRCS helps landowners make investments in their operations and local communities to keep working lands working, boost rural economies, increase the competitiveness of American agriculture, and improve the health of our air, water, and soil. NRCS also generates, manages, and shares the data, research and standards that enable partners and policymakers to make decisions informed by objective, reliable science. In simpler terms, NRCS's focus is "Helping People Help the Land." For more information, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov.

About the Michigan Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS operates 56 local field offices in Michigan, collaborating with 75 local conservation districts and other partners in the state to provide conservation assistance to farmers, non-industrial private forestland owners and American Indian tribes. Michigan producers served by NRCS make up one of the nation's most diverse agricultural economies. Farmers in Michigan produce over 300 commodities and the state is among the nation's leaders in tart cherries, blueberries, cucumbers for pickles and dry beans. Michigan also ranks among the top ten states in milk production. Being surrounded by four of the five Great Lakes and containing over 20 million acres of forest makes water quality and controlling invasive species a high priority in Michigan.

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