

Grants Approved June 2017

The mission of the Fund for Lake Michigan is to support efforts, and in particular those in southeastern Wisconsin, that enhance the health of Lake Michigan and its shoreline and tributary river systems for the benefit of the people and communities that depend upon the system for water, recreation, and commerce. Since 2011, the Fund has awarded 270 grants totaling over \$18 million to non-profit organizations and local government agencies to improve the health of Lake Michigan. In June, the Fund approved the following 22 projects totaling \$1.6 million in grants that range from \$20,000 to \$200,000. These grants leverage \$5.3 million in federal, local, and private dollars.

City of Kenosha (\$175,000)

The City of Kenosha will use this \$175,000 award for the second phase of its restoration effort at the most heavily used beach in Kenosha, Simmons Beach. With the goal of removing Simmons Beach from the list of impaired waters, the City of Kenosha plans to install an extensive system of green infrastructure to improve water quality. Activities will range from planting native vegetation, to creating sand dunes, to installing porous pavement in place of existing asphalt surfaces. Taking these actions will reduce the number of beach closures and advisories, as well as decrease blooms of algae.

City of Sheboygan (\$30,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is proud to continue supporting the City of Sheboygan which will use this \$30,000 award to implement its Adopt-a-Beach and Adopt-a-Habitat programs for the 2017 and 2018 school years. With the ultimate goal of instilling students with a sense of stewardship for the lake, these programs will afford 3rd and 7th graders hands-on learning opportunities such as water testing and native planting at Sheboygan's Deland and King Beaches. The programs will involve a total of twenty beach visits each year, and the activities students will partake in will directly support beach restoration investments.

Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (\$75,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is supporting Ducks Unlimited with this \$75,000 award to promote wetland restoration of the Duck Creek Delta in Howard, WI. By focusing on shoreline protection and restoration of the shallow water habitat behind the Cat Island Chain with engineered log jams, Ducks Unlimited will rehabilitate this wetland complex to revitalize its fish and wildlife along the coastal wetlands of Green Bay. Not only will this work benefit local wildlife and provide shoreline protection, but it will also benefit water quality. The restoration activities will take place over a two-year period.

Friends of Schlitz Audubon (\$100,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is supporting the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center with this \$100,000 award for the first phase of a restoration project designed to combat erosion, increase the stormwater holding capacity, and create educational opportunities at the nature center. By implementing “shovel-ready” stormwater management plans over the course of nine months, the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center anticipates that this project will add 2,453,300 gallons of annual stormwater storage capacity to the area. Furthermore, these habitat restoration activities will reduce sediment runoff into Lake Michigan.

Harbor District, Inc. (\$200,000)

This \$200,000 award will support Harbor District, Inc. for two years of initiatives to restore and revitalize Milwaukee’s Inner Harbor. In an effort to redevelop the Harbor District into a destination that draws people to the water’s edge, Harbor District, Inc. will lead and coordinate efforts to improve water quality and increase access to the waterfront around the Inner Harbor. These initiatives include plans to design and raise funds for a trash wheel along the Kinnickinnic River, as well as to create a new public park with access to the water at the end of Greenfield Avenue.

Hyslop Foundation / Hawthorn Hollow (\$75,000)

Hawthorn Hollow Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum will use this \$75,000 award to restore three and a half acres of wetland on the South Branch of the Pike River. The South Branch of the Pike River is listed as impaired, and the Pike River Watershed Plan describes the ravines on this site as in critical need of restoration. This funding will therefore support both the planning of the site, as well as the implementation of those plans next year. Restoration activities will ultimately increase the area’s stormwater capacity and reduce the erosion in the ravines that feed into Pike River.

Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership (\$100,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is supporting the Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership with this \$100,000 award to restore the Manitowoc River. As one of the most polluted rivers in Wisconsin, the Manitowoc River has become a top priority at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. This award will therefore support the creation and work of a team that will collect information such as land cover, manure management, and crop rotation which will be essential for the restoration effort and the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the river.

Mequon Nature Preserve (\$25,000)

With this \$25,000 award, the Mequon Nature Preserve will continue its efforts to restore a 438-acre property in the City of Mequon just north of the Milwaukee County Line. This particular project will focus on a 25-acre portion of that property within the Little Menomonee Watershed. By removing invasive species, breaking drain tiles, deepening existing wetlands, creating berms to hold more water on site, and adding a bridge along the path, the Mequon Nature Preserve will significantly restore this area.

Milwaukee Environmental Consortium/Milwaukee Water Commons (\$45,000)

This \$45,000 award will support the Milwaukee Water Commons' "Water School" program, which serves approximately 30 community leaders from five Milwaukee neighborhoods each year. During this program, these representatives learn about the water cycle and how water impacts their daily lives so that they can then choose a water stewardship or green infrastructure project that addresses a particular water challenge to bring home to their communities. In this way, this program simultaneously raises awareness and makes lasting water quality improvements in these communities. More than 500 residents have participated in the projects that the community leaders have selected to date.

Milwaukee Riverkeeper (\$75,000)

In response to an infestation of emerald ash borer, the Village of Elm Grove removed 40 mature ash trees near Underwood Creek late last year. Milwaukee Riverkeeper will use this \$75,000 award to restore the approximately 22,585 square feet of denuded wetland and flood plain area that has been affected by the infestation. This project will prevent the site from becoming overrun by invasive species from adjacent areas, as well as reduce polluted runoff and improve the water quality of Underwood Creek and the Menomonee River. Furthermore, this project will provide educational and stewardship opportunities to nearby Tonawanda Elementary school students, faculty, and families.

Ozaukee County Planning and Parks (\$100,000)

Ozaukee County will use this \$100,000 award to significantly improve the health of the Little Menomonee River, which is currently listed as an impaired waterway due to high fecal coliform, elevated water temperatures, chlorides, and total phosphorus. By restoring aquatic connectivity, reconnecting wetlands within the flood plain to the river, and re-meandering the channel, Ozaukee County will rehabilitate 248 acres across eight different properties along the Little Menomonee River. Once done, this project will reconnect 4.32 miles of river for fish passage, as well as increase stormwater retention, reduce pollutant loading, and provide improved fish habitat.

Ozaukee Washington Land Trust (\$39,200)

This \$39,200 award will support the wetland restoration of 183 acres across four properties in the Milwaukee River Watershed in Ozaukee County. The Ozaukee Washington Land Trust's restoration activities will include: removing invasive species; planting native buffers and other native wetland and prairie plants; and monitoring water quality in the long term. Not only will this project restore nearly a mile of shoreline along the Milwaukee River over the next two years, it will also filter and store agricultural runoff before it enters the waterway.

Racine County (\$100,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is supporting Racine County's efforts to evaluate the prospective repair or removal of the Horlick Dam on the Root River in the City of Racine. The first step of this evaluative process will be for the county to comprehensively study the Horlick Dam with the assistance of expert engineers later this year. This study will determine the best of these potential interventions in terms of safety, long-term maintenance, and water quality and habitat benefits. Further, this analysis will identify options for dealing with the sediment that has accumulated behind the dam.

Riveredge Nature Center (\$20,000)

The Riveredge Nature Center has received this \$20,000 award to launch an educational initiative that aims to motivate residents and businesses in the Village of Newburg in Ozaukee County to improve the water quality of the Milwaukee River. By holding community festivals on the river, as well one-on-one and community gatherings with residents, the Riveredge Nature Center intends to not only foster interest in the river, but also to inform residents of the impacts they have on water quality. Furthermore, the Riveredge Nature Center will provide technical assistance and materials such as rain barrels, land management plans, and native plants.

Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network (Root-Pike WIN) (\$37,500)

Root-Pike WIN is one of the environmental non-profits specifically focused on improving water quality in the counties of Racine and Kenosha. As such, Root-Pike WIN has built relationships with many municipal leaders, elected officials, government agencies, and community groups. This \$37,500 award will assist Root-Pike WIN as it continues to grow toward financial stability so that it can continue to serve this area. With this funding, Root-Pike WIN intends to develop and implement detailed fundraising and board development plans with professional consultation. Moreover, Root-Pike WIN has set promising financial goals for 2017, which bodes well for this growing conservation group.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) (\$127,000)

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission will use this award to conduct a comprehensive study that seeks to examine the environmental impact of increasing chloride concentrations in the surface and groundwater of Southeast Wisconsin. Over the next four years, the SEWRPC aims to carefully evaluate and monitor how chloride enters and interacts within the region, with the end goal of developing strategies to reduce chloride loads and thereby mitigate the adverse effects that excessive chloride levels have on surface and groundwater resources. This study will ultimately provide guidance on how to better manage sources of chloride in the region.

Southeast Wisconsin Watersheds Trust (Sweet Water) (\$60,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is happy to continue supporting Sweet Water's popular Mini-Grant program with this two-year, \$60,000 award. This program supports projects that advance local water quality initiatives, promote green infrastructure, and improve riparian buffers and habitat at the neighborhood-level. Sweet Water awards grants up to \$5,000 to community, civic, and non-profit organizations for these types of on-the-ground projects. Past grantees have reached a wide group of stakeholders in the community through their various projects. Furthermore, this program helps effectively further the objectives of the Menomonee, Kinnickinnic, Root, Pike, and Wind Point Watershed Restoration Plans.

Southeast Wisconsin Watersheds Trust (Sweet Water) (\$90,000)

This \$90,000 award will support Sweet Water's goal of educating municipalities about the dangers that tar-based pavement sealers pose to both human health and to the environment. Research indicates that these tar-based sealants contain toxic compounds linked to cancer and other health problems for people and aquatic organisms alike. Therefore, Sweet Water aims to encourage communities to adopt bans on tar-based sealants, as well as large landowners to prohibit the use of these sealants on their properties, in favor of using safe and affordable alternatives that are readily available. This advocacy work will be done over a two-year period.

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (\$100,000)

Scientists at the Great Lakes Genomic Center of UWM's School of Freshwater Sciences received this \$100,000 award in support of their project to sequence the DNA of three species of fish: Yellow Perch, Hexagenia Mayfly, and Lake Whitefish. As the first phase of their project to create a library of genomics data for Lake Michigan species, this research aims to lay groundwork that future researchers can build on for years to come. This research will greatly impact the understanding of Lake Michigan, and it will

also inform resource management decisions made by agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources.

Village of Bayside (\$75,000)

The Village of Bayside will use this award to work with the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center and its surrounding neighborhood to map and assess the sources of drainage and stormwater pollution in the area. This area includes 165 homes that have experienced years of flooding, and this flooding contributes significantly to the water quality problems of Indian Creek, a tributary of the Milwaukee River. After assessing and mapping the sources of drainage and stormwater pollution, the Village of Bayside will work with residents to develop three options for ditches to lessen drainage problems and pollution.

Village of Brown Deer (\$50,000)

With this \$50,000 award, the Village of Brown Deer will remove the eight-foot-wide, concrete-lined channel of Beaver Creek that stretches between the Brown Deer Recreational Trail and N. Green Bay Road. This restoration effort will reduce flooding, improve water quality, and provide both enhanced recreational opportunities as well as greater aesthetic appeal to this tributary of the Milwaukee River. River stone will replace the 33,000 square feet of concrete to not only control erosion, but also allow more infiltration and groundwater recharge. The Village also plans to construct meanders and riffles to slow river velocity and provide fish spawning areas.

Wisconsin Wetlands Association (\$26,000)

The Fund for Lake Michigan is supporting Mequon Preservation Partners—a collaboration of the City of Mequon, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Ozaukee County, the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust, and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District—in their project to develop a strategy to protect and restore critical land and water resources within the city of Mequon. This strategy will then inform the City of Mequon's Open Space Preservation Plan, with the goal that the city will adopt this plan by the end of 2018. Mequon Preservation Partners will also provide technical assistance to key landowners to improve water quality and habitat.