

RESOLUTION #4

**Maintain Funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**

**Whereas**, the federally funded Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has improved water quality, protected and restored native habitat, cleaned up environmentally-impaired areas of concern, fought invasive species and prevented beach closings in Lakes Michigan and Superior; and

**Whereas**, nearly 50 House members, including bi-partisan support from Wisconsin's House members, called for maintaining Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding at the annual level of \$300 million; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI has improved fish spawning habitat through the restoration of 300 miles of coastal wetlands and tributary habitat; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI has resulted in significant water quality improvements in the Lower Fox TMDL; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI has resulted in major soil and water quality improvements in the agricultural and forested lands of the Lake Superior basin while providing educational resources for taxpayers and decision makers; and

**Whereas**, GLRI funding supports a thriving agricultural industry and incorporates cost-effective solutions to reduce non-point source pollution, providing two dollars of economic return for every dollar invested; and,

**Whereas**, GLRI funding has infused many state and federal grant programs available to local governments, NGOs, and non-profits; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI makes equipment available for farmers reduce their "risk" in utilizing new technology while reducing their overhead costs; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI helps bridge the divides between point and non-point source dischargers to achieve improvement in water quality through cooperative solutions; and

**Whereas**, the GLRI supports protection of drinking water sources for those communities who draw their water from the Great Lakes, thus reducing infrastructure costs of water treatment; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI supports a flourishing sport fishing industry in Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, and the rest of the Great Lakes; and supports a struggling but resilient commercial fishery in parts of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan; and,

**Whereas**, the GLRI reduced the costs of industrial discharge infrastructure through improved opportunities for trading and adaptive management.

**Now therefore, be it resolved**, that the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association encourages the entire Wisconsin legislative delegation to propose the \$300 million annual funding level for the GLRI in the upcoming federal budget.

Adopted this date \_\_\_\_\_, 2017

Board of Directors - Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association