



November 11, 2009

The Honorable Peter Orszag  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Orszag:

On behalf of the Healing Our Waters<sup>®</sup>-Great Lakes Coalition, thank you for supporting the \$475 million in the fiscal year 2010 president's budget request for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Because consistent funding will be a critical component of success for the GLRI, we ask that you support at least the same funding level in the fiscal year 2011 budget.

As you may know, the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition is a group of over 110 national, regional, and local organizations working to restore and protect the Great Lakes.

This is an exciting time for the Great Lakes as we begin the long delayed task of restoring this international treasure. President Obama pledged in his campaign to provide billions to this effort. That is why we were excited to see such a strong commitment to the Great Lakes in the President's fiscal year 2010 budget. The GLRI focuses on funding measurable, results-driven restoration activities that will prevent invasive aquatic species, clean up contaminated sediment, reduce polluted runoff, and restore and increase important wetlands and native species habitat.

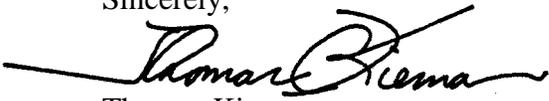
But as you know, the health of the Great Lakes is seriously threatened by a long history of environmental damage. The eight states that border the Great Lakes, as well as the numerous organizations devoted to their restoration, have invested over the years an incredible amount of time and resources in preserving these bodies of water. These past efforts have not kept pace, however, relative to the magnitude of the problem. Without consistent funding for the GLRI over the next few years that supplements and does not supplant funding for existing programs, progress will continue to be delayed and Great Lakes problems more expensive and more complicated to solve.

In addition, we also expect that funds in fiscal year 2011 will be further targeted on fewer programs and in the most critical ecological areas. This year the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was able to use the strategy from the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration to help in a short timeframe identify the most pressing needs for Great Lakes restoration. However, we need to learn lessons from this year's effort, which suggest that we can be even more targeted in how we address the Great Lakes top restoration priorities.

As stakeholders who care deeply about the restoration of the Great Lakes, our Coalition is also eager to remain involved in the implementation of the GLRI. We appreciate how open this Administration has been to our views and wish to continue open communications with the White House and all the agencies involved in the massive process of restoring the Great Lakes. It is important that the GLRI be informed by the many stakeholders in the Basin. In order for GLRI to be successful, it must be well funded, well organized, and a systematically managed program. Our Coalition is ready to help the Initiative achieve each of these goals.

We appreciate your support for the Great Lakes and again urge you to support a request of at least \$475 million for the GLRI in fiscal year 2011 budget request. Please do not hesitate to contact Chad Lord, our Coalition's policy director, at 202-454-3385 or [clord@npca.org](mailto:clord@npca.org) with questions.

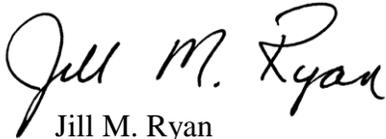
Sincerely,



Thomas Kiernan  
Co-chair



Andy Buchsbaum  
Co-chair



Jill M. Ryan  
Co-chair