

PROJECT PROFILE

Project Title: Investing in Success: Great Lakes Restoration Project by Project

Grantee Organization: National Wildlife Federation

Project Team: Jennifer Hill, National Wildlife Federation; Celia Haven, National Wildlife Federation; Jordan Lubetkin, National Wildlife Federation; Todd Ambs, National Wildlife Federation; Cheryl Kallio, Freshwater Future; Jill Ryan, Freshwater Future.

Contact Person: Jennifer Hill, Assistant Campaign Director, Great Lakes Restoration, National Wildlife Federation (hillj@nwf.org)

Grant Amount: \$100,000

Time Frame: January 27, 2016 to December 31, 2016

Focus Area: Special Project

Brief Project Summary: The Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition (HOW) has completed this project as part of the Coalition's Implementation Grant Program. The project supported work by the Coalition to continue a small grants program which provides funding to local organizations to build needed capacity to leverage federal dollars for Great Lakes restoration projects from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and to illustrate the ecological and economic benefits of restoration. In 2016, the grant program successfully awarded 17 grants to local organizations for projects addressing (but not limited to) stream and wetland habitat restoration, invasive species, and fish passage in eight priority areas across the Great Lakes.

Project in Context

The HOW Coalition's continued leadership in the Great Lakes restoration community makes the organization well positioned to provide the resources needed by the community to effectively implement restoration projects under the GLRI. HOW has proven with its seventh successful annual grant cycle that it plays a critical role in providing resources to local organizations to ensure project success and leverage significant federal funding dollars. HOW has built and continually maintains excellent working relationships with the other entities doing work on GLRI implementation in the region. The HOW Grant Program supports the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy's vision and the GLRI's long-term investment in Great Lakes restoration. After seven years of this successful grant program, it remains evident that ensuring organizations of all sizes have the opportunity to receive GLRI funding for high priority restoration projects is important to ensure the success of the GLRI in the region. The HOW Grant Program continued to meet the needs of the Great Lakes implementation community through small grants to build capacity and help groups prepare for GLRI grant applications and small grants that engage the community on existing federal GLRI projects. In fact, in 2016, the HOW Grant Program awarded more grants than any other year of the program, demonstrating the continuing need for this ongoing small project support.

In addition, HOW was successful in communicating with a variety of different audiences including local organizations engaged in Great Lakes restoration work in HOW priority areas and groups throughout the basin.

Goals of the Effort

The main goal of HOW's Priority Area Implementation Grant Program is to help local organizations succeed in implementing the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy through the GLRI.

This is achieved through:

- A. Providing local organizations with small grants targeted to 1) provide capacity building assistance for a project before federal funding is sought under the GLRI, 2) help current GLRI grantees successfully carry out the federal grant guidelines for their project, or 3) allow groups to engage the local community in GLRI projects being implemented by state or federal agencies.
- B. Developing and distributing additional tools and resources as needed (factsheets, webinars, one on one project consultation) to help HOW Coalition members successfully navigate the federal funding opportunities available under the GLRI.
- C. Maintaining a steady drumbeat of communication to illustrate to the public, the media, the Great Lakes community and public officials the economic and ecological benefits from the federal government's continued investment in the GLRI.

Results

HOW continued to manage a small grants program able to administer capacity building grants to local organizations to do restoration work throughout the Great Lakes region. Grants ranged from \$5,000 to \$15,000 and were awarded to 17 projects. Of the 17 projects awarded funding, six projects were partially funded through Trust funds. These projects addressed habitat restoration, fish passage, and sediment runoff.

HOW continued to provide project implementers and partners in the Great Lakes restoration community with additional help to take advantage of available GLRI dollars, including one on one consultation, development of HOW grant applications and dissemination of federal funding opportunities as they became available. HOW continued its work to chronicle restoration success stories throughout the basin to illustrate to the Great Lakes community, the media and others that federal investment in the GLRI continues to be a sound investment of federal funding. Throughout the year, Great Lakes restoration success stories were added to HOW's robust collection of over 140 online success stories which are featured prominently on the HOW website.

We have shown that the HOW program is helping non-profit organizations apply for and implement GLRI projects and that these projects do their part to contribute to the resounding success of the GLRI. Each year, as more projects are implemented with GLRI funds, we are seeing more and more signs of success.

Products and Resources

WEBSITES

- Main HOW Coalition Website (www.healthylakes.org)
All communications, resources, and publications produced by the HOW Coalition for the broader HOW campaign are accessible here.
- HOW Implementation Program website (<http://healthylakes.org/implementation-grant-program/>)
All materials produced for the HOW Grant Program (Current RFP, Application, Program Successes, Priority Area Factsheet) and a list of HOW grantees are accessible here.
- HOW Restoration Success Story Library (<http://healthylakes.org/successes/restoration-success-stories/>)
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- HOW Interactive Success Story Map (<http://healthylakes.org/map>)
- Freshwater Future website (www.freshwaterfuture.org)
Freshwater Future administers the HOW Grant Program for the Coalition, all Grant Program materials including the RFP and application are posted.

PUBLICATIONS

- *Implementation Grant Program Outcomes and Successes*
HOW published a report in 2016 tabulating the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of the first six years of the grant program. The report may be accessed online here: <http://www.healthylakes.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Implementation-Grant-Program-Outcomes-and-Successes-Report-v3-FINAL.pdf>
- *Great Lakes Restoration Projects Producing Results for People, Communities*
HOW produced a report featuring successful restoration projects around the region in September 2016. The report may be accessed at: <http://www.healthylakes.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2016-Great-Lakes-Day-Success-Stories-FINAL.pdf>

COMMUNICATIONS

- HOW Website (www.healthylakes.org)
The HOW Website contains all communications, resources, and publications produced by the HOW Coalition for the Implementation Grant Program and the broader HOW campaign.

EVENTS

- The 12th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference was held in Sandusky, Ohio in September 2016. Hosted by the Healing Our Waters – Great Lakes Coalition, the 12th Annual Conference brought together the leading decision makers, implementers, and stakeholders for restoring the Great Lakes. The conference featured workshops and presentations that focused on policy, project implementation, grassroots restoration movements, and emerging Great Lakes issues, including several workshops with a focus on successful restoration projects and plenary presentations focused on incorporating an urban lens into restoration partnerships and on addressing algal blooms in Lake Erie. The 2016 Conference featured representatives from both Presidential candidates' campaigns to discuss the importance of Great Lakes restoration. The conference also included robust communications efforts, including online coverage by Detroit Public Television and live-streaming and social media work of plenaries and sessions by HOW staff.

Investing in Success: Great Lakes Restoration Project by Project
Final Narrative Report to the Great Lakes Fishery Trust
Grant 2015.1599
February 2017
National Wildlife Federation
on behalf of the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition

Background/Overview

1. Briefly summarize the project description as outlined in the original proposal.

The HOW Coalition is made up of over 140 conservation, science, environmental, and civic organizations across the Great Lakes basin and plays a critical role in advancing the restoration of the Great Lakes at a regional and national level. HOW's goal is to improve the overall health of the Great Lakes through the successful implementation of a comprehensive restoration plan to clean up toxic hotspots, end sewage overflows, and restore hundreds of thousands of acres of wetlands and thousands of miles of streams and coastlines. HOW has been critical to obtaining over \$2.2 billion in federal Great Lakes restoration funding since 2010 and recently was instrumental in the passage of a 5 year authorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) at \$300 million per year.

One of HOW's priorities continues to be to enable local groups to use GLRI funding to conduct effective restoration efforts in key locations around the Great Lakes. To that end, HOW operates the Priority Area Implementation Grant Program (Grant Program). The HOW Grant Program provides local and state organizations with small grants to build the capacity they need to capture and leverage federal dollars for the most important restoration projects under the GLRI.

2. Was the project completed as originally intended? If not, how did the final outcomes differ from what was anticipated? Does your experience suggest that original expectations were realistic? What factors hindered or helped progress?

Yes, the project was completed as originally intended.

Outcomes

3. What activities were pursued in relationship to intended outcomes, and to what extent did you achieve the following intended outcomes listed in your proposal?

The Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition (HOW) successfully enacted the grant deliverables over the granting period. Specifically, through HOW's Implementation Grant Program, HOW has:

Conducted One on One Outreach to Potential Applicants: HOW and Freshwater

Future conducted one on one outreach to organizations throughout the Great Lakes region. Outreach included consulting with groups who showed interest in applying for a HOW grant, talking through creating a feasible proposal, and communicating about proposal improvements to prospective applicants.

Produced and released HOW RFP: The HOW Request for Proposals was refined and updated to reflect the amount of funding available for the 2016 calendar year. As in past years, the RFP was released on a rolling deadline. The program began receiving applications in mid-winter through early summer. The RFP was broadly disseminated through the HOW listserv, the Great Lakes Information Network (GLIN), Freshwater Future's large on the ground network, and in various social media outlets. The 2016 RFP is attached in Appendix A.

4. **Evaluated Proposals and Made Awards:** HOW continues to use a grant reading team made up of two HOW staff members, one Governance Board member, and one Coalition member who is a GLRI project implementer. HOW grant readers evaluated proposals throughout the spring, and awarded all \$195,000 available in 2016 to 17 projects. The 2016 HOW grant recipients are: Grand Rapids Whitewater, White Lake Environmental Network, Conservation Resource Alliance, Duck Creek Watershed Assembly, Pere Marquette Watershed Council, Green Michigan, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, Friends of Detroit River, Clinton River Watershed Council, Friends of St. Clair River, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Trout Unlimited, Inc, Audubon Great Lakes, Conservation Resource Alliance, Root Pike WIN, Urban Rivers, and Schlitz Audubon.

Detailed descriptions of each project, as well as a breakdown of which projects were funded using GLFT funds may be found in Appendix B. GLFT funds were only used to fund projects that align closely with the mission of the GLFT and were not used to fund advocacy of any kind. Examples of projects funded in 2016 include:

- Conservation Resource Alliance received funds to develop a preliminary design, as well as cost estimates and permitting work to prepare for a GLRI proposal that will complete restoration work in the next phase of their Benzie River Care Initiative. This restoration work is part of the fourth phase of an initiative that will connect and improve habitat for brook trout and other native and sport fish in Michigan.
- Audubon Great Lakes received funds to develop a Great Lakes conservation map to prioritize critical watersheds for restoration within the Great Lakes Basin. Funding will be utilized to develop the Lake Michigan basin portion of this map. This project lays the foundation for Audubon's Great Lakes Conservation Initiative, and the tool will empower Audubon's expansive network of staff, chapters, members, and nature centers to develop, implement, and sustain Great Lakes Restoration Initiative restoration projects at strategically prioritized sites. Great Lakes coastal wetlands such as Illinois Beach State Park, Galien River Wetland, Ogontz Bay Wetlands, Indian Ridge Marsh and Muskegon River Wetlands serve as critical habitat for both permanent resident fish such as brown bullhead, central mudminnow, and longnose gar; as well as migratory fish that use coastal wetlands as spawning and nursery grounds (such as northern pike, yellow perch, and spottail shiner). The restoration of more diverse, native plant communities, elimination and control of common carp, and restoration of natural hydrologic management improves conditions not only for birds, but also for migratory and resident fish.
- Root Pike WIN received funds for support in writing federal grants that will support the prioritized projects of their strategic plan, with the ultimate goal of implementing watershed restoration plans for Southeastern Wisconsin's most impaired Lake Michigan tributaries. The work will target the Root River, Pike River, and Wind Point watersheds.

Identified Needs Within the Implementation Community: HOW and Freshwater Future staff are well positioned to identify needs within the Great Lakes restoration community. Staff maintain communication with implementers throughout the region. Additionally, Jennifer Hill maintains membership on the Great Lakes Advisory Board, which allows her to provide input to ongoing conversations regarding adaptive management in Great Lakes restoration programs.

Provided One on One Consultation to Grantees: HOW and Freshwater Future staff are made available to HOW grantees on a regular basis to help them as they pursue their restoration project and execute their grant. This work is ongoing and is on an as needed basis.

Produced Restoration Success Stories: HOW produced a steady drumbeat of success stories throughout the grant period. This includes producing new success stories every month which have been published on HOW's website. In addition to our online work, HOW has produced an online packaged success stories report which featured success stories in and around the Sandusky area. This work was done in conjunction with our 12th Anniversary Great Lakes Restoration Conference. HOW continues to produce reports that provide educational materials regarding project successes across the basin. All success stories produced by the Coalition are disseminated to our networks through our listserv, the Coalition's state leaders, GLIN, Twitter, and Facebook. Each success story is also added to our interactive map and to our state-specific slideshows as a way to further increase the visibility of this work (see more at www.healthylakes.org).

Communicated Progress on HOW Benchmarks: HOW staff were able to compile successes from the Implementation Grant Program through 2013; a detailed account of these grant outcomes are included in Question 5. Now that the Grant program has passed its sixth year, HOW staff have compiled a report on the program's longer-term benchmarks, entitled *Implementation Grant Program Outcomes and Successes*. This report includes information on qualitative and quantitative outcomes based on the benchmarks of success model established at the beginning of the program, and will be used to communicate the successes of the grant program to Coalition members, partners, and funders. HOW continues to communicate about the program's successes to target audiences at strategic times through multiple platforms.

Illustrated success of HOW program and GLRI with benchmarks: HOW continues to use restoration success stories along with the success of the HOW Grant Program to demonstrate the need for the small starter grants as well as show the success of the GLRI overall. The HOW Grant Program goes hand in hand with the GLRI and both are providing important results.

5. What audience(s) were you particularly hoping to reach? To what extent did you reach them? Did you receive feedback?

As in years past, HOW staff worked throughout the grant period to share the outcomes and results of the Program with HOW Coalition members and partners, federal and state agency officials, the Obama Administration, members of Congress, and the media. Grant Program successes are a demonstration to decision makers that the HOW Coalition and the Great Lakes community are doing their part to ensure the success of the GLRI and putting restoration efforts into action. We are bridging a critical gap between project inception and the realization of restoration goals. As a new Administration comes into power, it is more important than ever to effectively communicate the success of the program.

HOW utilizes many avenues to promote the success of the HOW Grant Program, including through our website, on Twitter, and on Facebook. However, our most frequent and effective form of communication about our program is through the frequently-published restoration success stories produced by the Coalition. HOW produces two success stories per month and pushes them out on the HOW website, through social media, through email listservs, and in paper publications. We have found that our success stories are the most effective method of communicating frequently and successfully with the targeted audiences mentioned above. We consistently receive feedback from Coalition members, federal agency staff, the Administration, staffers on the Hill, and our non-governmental partners that the Coalition's success story work is extremely valuable to the work they are doing and in demonstrating the importance of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

6. What relationships or opportunities were developed or strengthened through the work?

HOW staff and Freshwater Future staff reached out to past grantee groups to gather information, anecdotes, and photos in the creation of the *Implementation Grant Program Outcomes and Successes* report. These groups expressed their appreciation for the small grants they received and conveyed the outcomes and successes of their projects. Staff also worked with previous grantees to tabulate the outcomes specific to subsequent grants received – this ongoing contact with grantee groups strengthens relationships among Coalition, staff, Freshwater Future, and grantee groups.

7. Was an evaluation included as part of this project? If so, what were the key findings?

The evaluation plan for the Grant Program is based on the Program's developed benchmarks, which catalog successes in year increments. Since the Grant Program began in 2010, HOW has been able to measure the program's outcomes against the developed benchmarks. In particular, HOW has looked to evaluate the amount of GLRI applications being submitted as a result of HOW funding and from there, the amount of GLRI funds awarded to HOW projects. In addition, HOW is tracking funding outside of the GLRI that is being leveraged by these projects. As the amount of GLRI funds made available for competitive grants decreases, HOW is happy to see that projects are also leveraging funds outside of the GLRI in order to implement the restoration work needed to bring the Lakes back to health.

This section includes information that we have built upon as the HOW Grant Program has grown. We include our program outcomes from 2010 through partial 2014 outcomes and we plan to continue to compile the outcomes from 2015 through the present in the coming months and years as results become available. There is significant lag time between the awarding of a HOW grant and when staff can compile the outcomes of the grant: before results can be tabulated, a grantee must have time to execute their project, prepare an application under the GLRI or other funding program, wait for the appropriate Request for Proposals to become available, and finally wait for a decision from the funding entity. This can take up to several years – meaning that there is a delay in between the HOW grant award and the appropriate time to compile outcomes of a specific year's grant program.

In its first year, the 2010 HOW Grant Program expended \$200,000 to fund fifteen projects, eight of which were partially funded by Trust funds. The recipients of these fifteen awards were subsequently able to generate twelve applications for GLRI funds, six of which were accepted and funded – a total of \$1,693,963. 2010 grant recipients who were unsuccessful in securing GLRI funds were also able to apply for and receive \$4,215,832 in non-GLRI funding.

HOW's 2010 grants have leveraged a total of \$5,909,795: a 29 to 1 return on investment overall, and a 10 to 1 return on investment of GLRI funds alone.

The eight 2010 projects funded using Great Lakes Fishery Trust funds generated six applications under the GLRI, three of which were funded for a total of \$626,950. These eight projects also brought in \$4,042,800 in other subsequent funding, for a total of \$4,669,750 generated. This represents a 10 to 1 return on GLFT investment in GLRI funds, and a 77 to 1 return on GLFT investment overall.

- An example of the remarkable outcomes of the 2010 program comes from Alliance for the Great Lakes, who received a HOW grant of \$15,000 to build partnerships to support a federal GLRI funding proposal for a ravine improvement prioritization and tracking system and a joint GLRI proposal with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for implementation of the Lakewide Management Plan for Lake Michigan. The grant allowed the Alliance for the Great Lakes the time and resources needed to bring stakeholders together and develop solid, multi-jurisdictional partnerships that were reflected in the subsequent GLRI grant proposals. The Alliance for the Great Lakes received subsequent funding for multiple projects, including collaborating with the Illinois DNR and other organizations to develop and implement an Illinois Lake Michigan Implementation Plan, which will improve the implementation of restoration projects throughout the Lake Michigan Watershed. This project has directly led to improved habitat restoration projects and strengthened Lake Michigan's ecosystem health.

In 2011, the HOW Grant Program expended \$133,000 on eleven projects. The recipients of these eleven awards were able to generate ten applications for GLRI funds, three of which were accepted and funded, totaling \$1,079,050. In addition to this GLRI funding, the grant recipients in 2011 have also applied for and received \$499,721 in non-GLRI (both federal and non-federal) funding. In total, the HOW 2011 grants have leveraged a total of \$1,578,771, a nearly 12 to 1 return on investment overall. In addition, five of the 2011 HOW grants provided additional technical assistance to enable the completion of previously awarded GLRI grants totaling over \$5.8 million. All of the projects that received subsequent funding as a result of their small grant from HOW were partially funded using GLFT funds.

- For example, Friends of the Shiawassee River was able to secure \$130,000 in additional grant funding as a result of their original \$14,180 award from the 2011 HOW Grant Program. The group received the funds to accomplish multiple dam removal projects in the Shiawassee River watershed that will both restore habitat, increase fish access, and directly benefit fish populations.

The results of the 2012 program are impressive: the program included eleven projects totaling \$145,000. These eleven projects were able to produce 8 applications under the GLRI, 7 of which were funded, totaling \$5,803,000 in subsequent GLRI investment. Additionally, these projects received \$5,810,813 in non-GLRI funds for a grand total of \$11,613,813 in funding received by 2012 HOW grantees. This represents an 80 to 1 return on investment overall for the 2012 Grant Program! Out of the eleven projects funded in the 2012 program, five were funded using GLFT funds. These five projects applied for and received two GLRI grants, totaling \$833,000, and \$84,720 in additional funds, for a total of \$917,720.

- The 2012 HOW Grant program awarded \$15,000 to Huron Pines to expand the scope and impact of their conservation efforts in the Northern Saginaw Bay

Watershed. The award allowed Huron Pines to create a priority map of sensitive ecosystems and then work closely with landowners and volunteers to complete several stream bank restoration projects. One streambank erosion control project resulted in 600 feet of native plantings and eliminated an estimated 183 tons of annual sediment loading. The HOW grant helped Huron Pines to receive two subsequent GLRI grants and over \$900,000 total in funding that is allowing the group to complete habitat improvement projects, invasive species control, streambank erosion control, and fish passage restoration. All of the work being done as a result of this grant is having direct and indirect beneficial impacts to the local fishery.

- Clinton River Watershed Council received a 2012 HOW grant of \$15,000 to survey and inventory impairments to tributaries to Paint Creek, a cold water trout fishery in southeastern Michigan. The information gathered during this project helped to guide the engineering design for a larger project that will minimize stormwater runoff and pollution into Paint Creek and directly benefit the creek's fish habitat.
- Minnesota Land Trust was extremely successful in leveraging the \$7,189 it received from the HOW Grant Program into over \$4 million in GLRI funds and over \$5 million in non-GLRI funds. MLT worked closely with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the St. Louis River Alliance to prepare several applications under different GLRI programs. Their work will directly affect habitat restoration in the St. Louis River estuary, benefiting fish populations, reducing pollution, and protecting valuable ecosystems.

In 2013, the HOW Grant program awarded grants to seven projects totaling \$100,000. Groups from these projects were able to put together 10 proposals under the GLRI, 2 of which were subsequently awarded totaling \$501,000. Additionally, these groups were also able to apply for and receive \$2,791,000 in non-GLRI funds. In total, 2013 HOW grantees received \$3,292,000 in subsequent funding, a 33:1 return on investment.

- Milwaukee Riverkeeper received \$15,000 in HOW grant funds to design a larger scale restoration project that was then used in several applications under the GLRI. The group was also able to meet with several landowners to discuss impediments to fish passage for future projects. Milwaukee Riverkeeper's work will directly benefit fish passage in Milwaukee's Rivers.
- Grand Rapids Whitewater received \$18,293 in 2013 towards their goal of restoring the rapids in the Grand River. The funding was used for a critical study of endangered mussels early on in the project that was necessary to move forward with plans to restore the rapids. Restoration of the Grand River will improve habitat conditions for fish populations.

In 2014, HOW awarded \$104,000 to nine projects. These projects were able to leverage these grants into an impressive \$11,791,480 in subsequent GLRI funding, including seven GLRI projects. On top of this, these groups received \$202,500 in funding for non-GLRI grants. Even though the results from the 2014 grants are still being tabulated and are not complete, the 2014 program has still produced the highest return through subsequent funding of all grant program years, with

a return on the original small grant investment of 115 to 1. Examples of projects funded in 2014 include:

- The Alliance for Rouge Communities received a \$15,000 award in 2014. The group applied HOW funds toward a fish migration barrier inventory, barrier removal design, and riparian restoration design to help with several grant applications. The group received nearly \$4 million in subsequent funding for fish passage and oxbow restoration projects in and around Michigan's Rouge River. These projects will be valuable for fish spawning and fish populations and will allow the Rouge River Area of Concern to move closer to removing habitat Beneficial Use Impairments.
- Friends of the Detroit River received a small HOW grant of \$7,000 to investigate funding for a larger project on Stony Island in the Detroit River. FDR was able to submit proposals to the GLRI for a large restoration project on Stony Island in three phases and received all requested funding, totaling \$7.5 million. The work on Stony Island will restore fish and wildlife habitat in the Detroit River Area of Concern.

HOW will continue to utilize this model of highlighting successes as we receive outcomes from our grantees and will use the outcomes of these grants to continue to measure our progress against the established evaluation plan. As HOW staff work to compile these grant outcomes there is a common thread among conversations with program grantees: their work would not have been able to move forward without the small grant they received from the Implementation Program. HOW grant money was essential in developing key partnerships, performing informative research, and executing critical projects. This increased capacity led to larger restoration projects under the GLRI and other programs that will benefit fish populations, restore habitat, and help the Great Lakes.

In addition HOW has followed the program's benchmarks rubric to tabulate the outcomes of the first six years of the grant program in a report, entitled *Implementation Grant Program Outcomes and Successes*. The report describes not only the quantitative outcomes of the program, such as habitat acres restored or streambank miles restored, but also the qualitative outcomes, such as increased capacity or partnerships enabled due to the program. This report gives a bigger picture overview of the importance of the small grants program and provides compelling information collected from grantees on the importance of the HOW grant program to their work restoring the Great Lakes. The report is provided as an attachment.

8. Whether they were intended or unintended, what do you consider the most important benefits or outcomes of this special project?

The most important benefit of this project continues to be the ability of HOW's implementation grants to leverage such large amounts of federal funding for restoration work. The heart of the restoration of the Great Lakes is not people sitting around a table and strategizing about what's next (although that is an important piece of the pie), it's actually the folks working on the ground and in the water to do the actual projects that must get done to restore the Lakes. It's moving the dirt, restoring the stream, taking out the dam, removing the invasive species and making the Lakes a better place for our children in the process. HOW's Implementation program helps make these projects possible and it allows our Coalition members and partners to be integral on the ground implementers who are getting out into the field and doing the work. Both of these benefits are critical to ensuring the Lakes are brought back to health and we are proud to be doing our part.

Related Efforts

9. Was this project a standalone effort or was there a broader effort beyond the part funded by the GLFT? Have other funders been involved either during the time of your GLFT grant or subsequently?

The HOW Coalition secured additional resources from the following foundations for the Implementation Program and the overall HOW Campaign in 2016. These foundations include:

- The Frey Foundation: Awarded \$150,000 over two years for the Implementation Program (2015 and 2016)
- The Wege Foundation: Awarded \$500,000 per year for five years (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017)
- The Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation: Awarded \$150,000 per year for three years (2016, 2017, and 2018)
- The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation: Awarded \$50,000 per year for two years (2016 and 2017)
- The Joyce Foundation: Awarded \$300,000 for 2016

10. Has there been any spinoff work or follow-up work related to this project?

Because the HOW Implementation Program is an ongoing effort, there has not been any spin-off work.

Communication/Dissemination

11. List publications, presentations, websites, and other forms of formal dissemination of the project deliverables, tools, or results, including those that are planned or in process.

WEBSITES

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PUBLICATIONS

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COMMUNICATIONS

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The HOW Website contains all communications, resources, and publications produced by the HOW Coalition for the Implementation Grant Program and the broader HOW campaign.

EVENTS

- The 12th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference was held in Sandusky, Ohio at Cedar Point in September 2016. Hosted by the Healing Our Waters – Great Lakes Coalition, the 12th Annual Conference brought together groups from around the Great Lakes region to talk, network, and collaborate around Great Lakes restoration and protection. The event brought together leading decision makers, project implementers, new community groups, and other stakeholders to talk about policy, project implementation, grassroots restoration movements, and emerging issues. The 2016 conference included a focus on environmental justice and equity in the Great Lakes restoration arena as well as pertinent issues such as algal blooms in Lake Erie. The 2016 Conference also featured representatives from both major presidential campaigns speaking about their commitments to Great Lakes restoration programs. Finally, as always, the 2016 Conference included robust communications efforts, including extensive live-streaming coverage on social media and online coverage from Detroit Public Television.

12. Please characterize your efforts to distribute and encourage use of products, processes, programs, etc, developed through this grant.

HOW distributed information about the Implementation Grant Program widely through the HOW email listserv, website, and social media. The most pertinent audience to reach were local organizations engaged in Great Lakes restoration work within the eight HOW priority areas but also throughout the Great Lakes basin. Local organizations across the Great Lakes continued to be the target audience for the tools and resources developed by HOW and its partners for groups to successfully navigate the GLRI funding. HOW was successful in reaching this audience, interacting with over 100 local organizations through a variety of means, including events such as one on one consultation services, the 12th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference, the Coalition email listserv, the HOW website, and social media. In addition, HOW widely shared information about new success stories through the same channels as well as press releases and a success story publication.

Reflections

13. Please describe any unanticipated benefits, challenges, surprises, and/or important lessons learned over the course of the project.

HOW continues to see the benefits of providing a long-term, critical service to the implementation community by helping groups jump-start needed restoration projects with small grants. HOW sees the importance of continued investment in Great Lakes restoration through the work that grantees accomplish every year, the impressive outcomes of previous years' programs, and the growing network of partners dedicated to comprehensive Great Lakes restoration. At the creation of the GLRI, it was understood that restoring the Great Lakes would require a long-term, concerted commitment of funding and work. This has certainly proven to be the case, and the ability to continue to both build on successful projects but also create new and lasting relationships with grantees that are implementing these GLRI projects will, we believe, be key to making lasting progress on habitat enhancement, nutrient reductions that lead to improved water quality, and overall fish ecosystem improvement.

14. What recommendations (if any) would you make to other project directors working on similar efforts, or to the GLFT?

Because of the unique nature of this program, I don't believe there are other programs in the region doing what the HOW Implementation program is doing. Therefore, I don't have any recommendations to make at this time.

Attachments

15. Please attach any reports or materials developed through the grant.

The following documents are included as attachments and referenced throughout the narrative report:

- 2016 Grant Program RFP
- 2016 Grant Summary
- *Implementation Grant Program Outcomes and Successes* Report