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All Hands on Deck: Community Members Oppose Great Lakes Funding Cuts

FOX POINT-Today, community members came together to oppose the proposed [budget cuts](#) to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). President Trump's proposed budget severely cuts funding that currently helps protect the Great Lakes and eliminates the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Around the Great Lakes region, over sixty [All Hands on Deck](#) events took place including four in Wisconsin (Racine, Sheboygan, Marinette, and Fox Point).

"Our planet's finest collection of fresh water - the Great Lakes - merits both our deep affection and thorough, ongoing protection," said **Eric Hansen, a water advocate in Milwaukee**. Community members joined hands across the lake at the same time that others did across the Country.

"Millions of people who depend on the Great Lakes for their drinking water, jobs, and way of life are counting on Congress to stay the course and not give up before the job is done," said **Todd Ambs, campaign director, Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition**. "Federal investments are producing results for the environment and economy—but serious threats remain. Stopping federal investments now will only make restoration efforts more difficult and expensive the longer we wait."

Wisconsin will greatly suffer if the proposed cuts remain. "Without GLRI funding 70% of the PCB's would not have been removed from the Lower Milwaukee River," said **Cheryl Nenn, Riverkeeper with the Milwaukee Riverkeeper**. "Just recently, the discovery of the Asian Carp in Lake Michigan was made possible by GLRI funding, which funds most of the monitoring," she continued.

"Our Great Lakes are vast and beautiful, but they are also very vulnerable," said **Bill Davis, Chapter Director of the statewide branch of the Sierra Club**. "This funding and the proposed cuts are not just a number, these are critical programs and the cuts could be devastating and take years to undo the damage, if possible," concluded Davis.

The event concluded with the attendees calling Senator Baldwin and Senator Johnson asking them to make sure the funding is protected. "The tremendous support from Republicans and Democrats in Congress underscores how important that Great Lakes are to the region's people, communities, and businesses," **Ambs concluded**.

"This is a great weekend to demonstrate the importance of GLRI funding. Many are and will be on the beaches along the Lakes in Wisconsin. The GLRI funding allows us to ensure the beaches are safe and clean for everyone," **explained Nenn**.

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Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.