

Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives Overview

The sustainability of natural and cultural resources and landscapes are important to quality of life and local economies.

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) address large scale natural resource challenges that transcend political and jurisdictional boundaries and require a networked approach to conservation—holistic, collaborative, and grounded in science – to ensure the sustainability of America’s land, water, wildlife and cultural resources.

LCCs collectively form a national network of land, water, wildlife, and cultural resource managers, scientists, and interested public and private organizations—within the U.S. and across our international borders—that share a common need for scientific information in conservation.

The Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative

The geographic area of the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC transcends existing state boundaries and the international border with Canada. The LCC includes portions of Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Vermont, as well as areas of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

The area includes unparalleled deepwater habitats, beaches, coastal wetlands, more than 35,000 islands, major river systems, boreal forests, and prairie-hardwood transition zones. These habitats provide for extensive resident and non-resident game



Left: The Great Lakes contain roughly 20 percent of the world’s, and more than 80 percent of North America’s, freshwater supply. Right: Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photos.

populations, fish and many other aquatic resources, waterfowl, colonial waterbirds, marshbirds, and neotropical migrant landbirds.

The unique deepwater habitats of the Great Lakes support extensive fish communities including many important sport and commercial species. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission has estimated the value of Great Lakes fisheries at \$7 billion annually. These are among the world’s largest and most valuable freshwater fisheries.

The Great Lakes are large enough to define regional weather patterns, strengthening storms and causing “lake effect” conditions.

The upper Midwest and Great Lakes have experienced major ecological changes during the past 150 years due to many stressors. New environmental challenges continue to arise even as we address these historical damages. The impacts of climate change are already evident in warmer water, longer ice-free season,

earlier spring runoff, changing water levels and resulting habitat alterations and impacts to water quality and ecological processes.

There is a long and successful history of partnership collaboration in the upper Midwest and Great Lakes. Partners of this LCC include federal agencies, fish and wildlife agencies of all included states, as well as Native American tribes and Canadian federal and provincial agencies and many nongovernmental and interjurisdictional organizations.

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For more information:
greatlakeslcc.org

Geographic Area



Geographic area defined by the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative outlined in red.

2012 Activities

Five research projects were initiated with LCC funding in 2010. An additional nine projects were initiated in 2011. Multi-year research projects currently underway with 2010 and 2011 funding include:

The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Geological Survey and natural resources partners are working to develop a web-based information management and delivery system to facilitate education, and the sharing of data and decision tools for the Great Lakes.

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin are working with scientists and conservation managers to identify the most climate vulnerable terrestrial species and natural communities within the LCC geographic region.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working alongside federal, state, academic and non-governmental

institutions across the Great Lakes basin to update and upgrade geospatial data as part of the National Wetland Inventory Program.

The Nature Conservancy is working to develop a scalable spatial model to rank the importance of coastal lands and waters as habitat for migrating birds.

Michigan State University is using data from the North American Breeding Bird Survey to estimate environmental factors impacting avian responses to climate change.

Academic researchers from Michigan and Canada are working in conjunction with the tribal and first nation communities of the upper Midwest and Great Lakes region to improve networking and collaboration on natural resource

issues related to climate change and landscape conservation.

U.S. Geological Survey and other conservation partners are working to identify vulnerabilities of river segments and fish species to climate change, and, to provide decision support tools for natural resources managers at multiple jurisdictional scales.

For a complete list of research funded by the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC since 2010 and to view LCC technical and steering committee activities, visit greatlakeslcc.org