

Coastal Habitat Conservation and Restoration Projects Get \$4.6 Million Grant

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\$4.1 million will support the Gile Flowage Land Conservation Project in Iron County. The remaining \$500,000 will support the Creating a Resilient and Sustainable Valley Creek Corridor project in Port Washington.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers announced today that the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) is set to receive a total of \$4.6 million through President Joe Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act. These funds are part of a \$75 million federal investment administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office for Coastal Management to support coastal habitat restoration and conservation in partnership with state coastal management programs and national estuarine research reserves. The \$4.6 million awarded to DOA will be directed towards two habitat conservation and restoration projects.



“Our Great Lakes coastal communities are critical gateways to our state and provide fresh water, jobs, recreation, and an improved quality of life for folks across our state, but these communities also face unique risks and climate challenges that require our attention and

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action,” said Gov. Evers. “I’m grateful for our local and federal partners working together to increase community resilience through these important habitat restoration projects so we can ensure our coastlines are enjoyed by visitors and Wisconsinites for generations to come.”



“Wisconsin has 800 miles of coastline, nearly 85,000 miles of river, and 15,000 lakes that are critical to our economy, environment, and way of life,” said Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin). “If we want these ecosystems and coastlines to be around for the next generation, we have to invest in their resiliency. That’s why I am proud to have voted for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which is helping Wisconsin and Tribal communities boost conservation efforts, protecting against storms and flooding, and addressing the impacts of climate change.”

“The impact of the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program has been felt for four decades across the state, and this new funding will help make an even greater impact for our coastal and Tribal communities,” said DOA Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld.

Of the \$4.6 million, \$4.1 million will support the Gile Flowage Land Conservation Project in Iron County. The funds will allow Iron County to acquire 1,055 acres of critical habitat in Lake Superior’s coastal zone. The land proposed for acquisition will be managed for important conservation values, including habitat corridors, climate resilience, and public access. The acquisition will also support underserved and Tribal communities by ensuring permanent public access to the land and protecting treaty rights usage by the Lac du Flambeau and Bad River Bands of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians.

“This funding opportunity showcases the partnership between NOAA, Wisconsin Coastal Management, and Iron County,” said Eric Peterson, Iron County Forest Administrator. “The Gile Conservation project will protect over 1,055 acres of pristine wetlands, rugged shoreline, and upland hardwoods for public benefit in perpetuity. This acquisition will provide additional public access and passive recreational opportunities while continuing to promote existing public usage.”

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