

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grant Fuels Local Hiring, Green Initiative at Marquette Park

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant supports local hiring and environmental management at Marquette Park.

Gary (January 29, 2013) – The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) has received a \$351,073 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for stormwater management around the Marquette Park lagoon.

The lagoon is currently the site of a \$1 million EPA dredging project that is removing decades of accumulated sediment. The RDA is partnering with the City of Gary and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to create a conservation corps to implement green stormwater best management practices in the Marquette Park Lagoon watershed.

"Many of the projects made possible by this grant are green infrastructure projects that will be constructed by conservation corps workers," said Susan Hedman, EPA Region 5 Administrator and Great Lakes National Program Manager. "Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding will be used to put people to work improving storm water management in Gary – near Marquette Park."

The lagoon is impacted by sedimentation and nutrient runoff from stormwater outflows originating in the Miller neighborhood of Gary. The project will create jobs for unemployed residents in the area while reducing nutrient and sediment loading to the Marquette Park lagoons. It will also support Gary's green infrastructure stormwater initiative, which offers community engagement opportunities for citizens to participate through workshops, forums and demonstration projects provided by the City of Gary's Department of Green Urbanism and Gary

GLRI GRANT ADD 1

Storm Water Management District (GSWMD). This project will also be coordinated with Gary's "Vacant to Vibrant" initiative, funded by the Great Lakes Protection Fund, to repurpose lands using green infrastructure. A community kick-off meeting will be held on February 28.

"This project is another way we are leveraging the RDA's \$28 million investment in Marquette Park," said Bill Hanna, President and CEO of the RDA. "It will help to ensure that the work we do here today will last to be enjoyed by future generations of Northwest Indiana residents."

The project, scheduled to begin in March and run through November, will employ four graduates of the City of Gary's brownfield training program as well as a supervisor from the Student Conservation Association (SCA), a non-profit group dedicated to the protection and restoration of national parks, marine sanctuaries, cultural landmarks and community green spaces.

The grant is part of the EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). For more information, visit greatlakesrestoration.us.

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About the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority

Established in 2005 through a bipartisan effort including Governor Mitchell E. Daniels, Congressman Peter J. Visclosky, key state legislators, and local elected officials, the RDA is quasi-governmental development entity entrusted to make public investment decisions within a regional framework for supporting catalytic infrastructure projects and inducing private sector investment. Its mission is to be a catalyst for transforming the economy and quality of life for Northwest Indiana. For more information, visit www.rdatransformation.com or www.in.gov/rda

About the Student Conservation Association

The Student Conservation Association helps tomorrow's conservation leaders take action for the planet by providing high school and college students, young veterans and others with hands-on conservation experiences in all 50 states, from urban communities to national parks and forests. Since 1957, SCA has developed new generations of conservation leaders, provided America's youth with green job training and skill building, restored community green spaces, preserved our trails and recreation resources, and engaged millions of Americans in conservation service and outdoor education. SCA is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, DC with offices in Boise, ID, Charlestown, NH, Chicago, IL, Oakland, CA, Pittsburgh, PA, and Seattle, WA. For further information, visit www.thesca.org