

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Calls on Biden administration invest in Great Lakes resiliency

Posted on Friday, Mar 17, 2023

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, Chair of the Commerce Subcommittee on Oceans, Fisheries, Climate Change, and Manufacturing, is calling on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to improve the Great Lakes' resiliency to extreme weather events and better protect communities from the impacts of climate change. Under the *Inflation Reduction Act*, which Senator Baldwin voted to pass, NOAA received \$3.3 billion for maintaining and protecting our nation's coastal resources and water bodies. The funding would help localities and tribes in the Great Lakes region prepare, adapt, and build resilience to weather and climate events.

Senator Baldwin is advocating for the funding to go towards the Great Lakes, which provide drinking water for more than 30 million people and represents 21 percent of the world's freshwater, and make a meaningful investment in Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, thirty-five percent of the population live on the coasts of the Great Lakes where they are exposed to the impacts of climate change as a result of flooding, harmful algal blooms, and coastal erosion.

"The Great Lakes and their stewards are an important piece of the NOAA mission, especially in protecting the water bodies' contribution to our nation as a vital economic engine, a precious ecosystem, and a critical resource that spans more than 4,530 miles of coastline and supplies drinking water for over 10 percent of Americans," **wrote Senator Baldwin.** "However, the Great Lakes are long overdue for investments to improve their resiliency to environmental damage and climate change. In order to protect this precious resource, I encourage NOAA to prioritize the investment of IRA funds in programs and infrastructure that will advance

research, enhance resilience, and support the management of the Great Lakes.”

The full letter can be found [here](#) and below:

Richard W. Spinrad, Ph.D.

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Under Secretary Spinrad,

I write to you today regarding the implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). This legislation provided \$3.3 billion for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to support the agency’s mission of science, service and stewardship. With this additional funding, the agency has the opportunity further its mission through building our nation’s resilience to extreme weather events and improving research on our climate and coasts including along the Great Lakes and in Wisconsin.

The Great Lakes and their stewards are an important piece of the NOAA mission, especially in protecting the water bodies’ contribution to our nation as a vital economic engine, a precious ecosystem, and a critical resource that spans more than 4,530 miles of coastline and supplies drinking water for over 10 percent of Americans. However, the Great Lakes are long overdue for investments to improve their resiliency to environmental damage and climate change. In order to protect this precious resource, I encourage NOAA to prioritize the investment of IRA funds in programs and infrastructure that will advance research, enhance resilience, and support the management of the Great Lakes.

In Wisconsin alone, thirty-five percent of residents live on the coasts of the Great Lakes where climate change-related weather disasters have become increasingly common. The extreme weather events are exacerbating coastal erosion and flooding risks to communities to the point of causing states of emergency across multiple counties. NOAA investments of IRA funds in Wisconsin’s coasts would provide for increasing resiliency to extreme weather events and enhancement of the state’s current coastal zone management programs. Additionally, the benefits

from NOAA's investments in Wisconsin are already being felt nationwide. The agency's support for the Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary, the Wisconsin Sea Grant Program, the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Wisconsin Office of Coastal Management are playing a vital role in understanding, protecting and managing our freshwater coasts.

Wisconsin shares the NOAA mission of science, service and stewardship, and I encourage continued partnership from the agency in building our nation's resilience to weather and climate events and improving research on our coasts and climate. I look forward to working with you to ensure continued vitality of the Great Lakes with the funding provided in the Inflation Reduction Act, and I thank you for your consideration of this request.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).